

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/23/01270/FULL
LOCATION	Land at and to the rear of 72 North Street and 2 Bedford Street Leighton Buzzard LU7 1EN
PROPOSAL	Conversion of the former Public House to 6 no. 1 bedroom flats, conversion of the offices at 2 Bedford Street to 2 no. 2 bedroom flats and construction of a new independent block of 5 no. 1 bedroom flats and 5 no. 2 bedroom flats fronting Lamma Walk all with associated car parking, paths and fences and relocated vehicular access. Demolition of workshop at 2 Bedford Street.
PARISH	Leighton-Linslade
WARD	Leighton-Linslade North
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Bligh, Cllr Carnell, Cllr Pughe
CASE OFFICER	Peter Vosper
DATE REGISTERED	14 April 2023
EXPIRY DATE	14 July 2023
APPLICANT	Bridgewater Homes (Leighton Buzzard) Ltd
AGENT	Optimis Consulting
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE RECOMMENDED DECISION	Major Application and an Objection from Leighton-Linslade Town Council
APPENDIX	No

Reason for Deferral:

The application was deferred at Development Management Committee on Wednesday 24th July 2024 to:

- Allow members to have more time to consider a Financial Viability Assessment (Optimis Consulting, June 2023) submitted in support of the application, and a Viability Assessment (Aspinall Verdi, May 2024) reviewed independently for the Council.
- To enable a briefing to members in respect of technical matters relating to viability assessments. This briefing took place on Wednesday 14th August 2024.

Reason for Recommendation:

The proposal is for the conversion of a former public house and offices, and the construction of a new residential block, to create a total of 18 flats.

The application site is within the Settlement Envelope of Leighton Linslade. Within such settlements Local Plan Policy SP7 (Windfall Development) supports housing proportionate to the scale of the settlement.

Furthermore, the site is in a sustainable location a short distance to the north of the Town Centre, and is previously developed or 'brownfield' land in a built-up area. Development of such land, for residential and other uses, is considered acceptable in principle in the Local Plan. Also, the proposal would offer an environmental enhancement and uplift to the area.

The proposal would relate to the scale and pattern of surrounding development and be compatible with the character and appearance of the street scene and the Conservation Area.

The development would not cause harm to the amenity of existing neighbouring occupants and the quality of living environment to be created is found acceptable.

Whilst there are viability issues with the development, for the reasons outlined in this report, the impact on some infrastructure can be adequately mitigated.

Therefore, for the reasons outlined in the report, when the Development Plan is considered in the round, the proposed development would comply with Local Plan Policies SP7, T2, T3, EE3, HQ1 and HE3 and it is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted.

Site Location:

The application site is located a short distance to the north of the Town Centre boundary of Leighton Buzzard and fronts onto North Street to the west, Bedford Street to the north and Lammas Walk to the east. The site is roughly rectangular in form and covers an area of 1938 sq m. The site comprises the former, now vacant, Crown Public House at No. 72 North Street and land to the rear including the associated former car parking area, as well as the former, now vacant, offices and workshops at No. 2 Bedford Street. The rear of the site is currently unkempt and contains overgrown vegetation, and has also been subject to flytipping.

Directly to the north west of the site is a pedestrian route connecting Lammas Walk and Bedford Street to North Street and the Town Centre. The west boundary of the site abuts the rear of properties fronting onto North Street. To the south east of the site is Nos. 2-8 Lammas Walk, flatted development and associated access and amenity space.

Lammas Walk is largely residential in character, with a predominance of two storey dwellings focused primarily to the south; this character is also reflected to the east section of Bedford Street. To the west of Bedford Street and leading to North Street the predominance of two storey development is largely retained with a mix of commercial and residential development.

Part of the site, i.e. the former public house and No. 2 Bedford Street, is located within the Leighton Buzzard Conservation Area which extends to North Street and beyond. The site has no other designations in the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan. Six Silver Birch trees, previously protected under TPO No. 5/1994, were previously removed from the site.

The application site is located within a Zone of Influence (ZOI) as endorsed by Natural England, which covers much of the south of Central Bedfordshire. This incorporates a 12.6km zone around Ashridge Commons and Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), part of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and represents the core area surrounding the SAC where likely significant effects from net increases in development due to recreational impacts cannot be ruled out, triggering the need for an Appropriate Assessment.

The Application:

Full planning permission is sought for the conversion of the former public house at No. 72 North Street to 6 no. 1 bedroom flats, the conversion of the offices at No. 2 Bedford Street to 2 no. 2 bedroom flats, and the construction of a new residential block of 5 no. 1 bedroom flats and 5 no. 2 bedroom flats fronting Lammas Walk. A total of 18 new flats would be created. Associated works incorporate the provision of landscaping, a re-located access, and vehicular and cycle parking.

A workshop at No. 2 Bedford Street would be demolished.

The new flatted development would attach to the proposed converted building at No. 2 Bedford Street and have a central access from Lammas Walk. A car parking area containing 24 spaces would be provided, and the new access to Lammas Walk would be at the south east corner of the site.

For context there have been two former planning permissions granted on different parts of the application site. These are application CB/17/00902/FULL, relating to land fronting Lammas Walk for the erection of a residential block consisting of 4 no. 1 bedroom and 4 no. 2 bedroom flats, and application CB/16/05851/FULL, relating to the Crown Public House at No. 72 North Street and the change of use to 4 no. 2 bedroom flats.

The proposal varies from a more recent previous planning application (CB/22/01491/FULL), which was refused, in the following ways:

- The proposed number of apartments has reduced from 20 to 18.
- The former public house at No. 72 North Street is again to be converted to 6 no. 1 bedroom flats, and the offices at No. 2 Bedford Street is again to be converted to 2 no. 2 bedroom flats; however, the new residential block previously contained 7 no. 1 bedroom flats and 5 no. 2 bedroom flats - as such there is now a reduction of 2 no. 1 bedroom flats.
- The density of the proposed development has been lowered from 103 to 92 units per hectare.
- The height of the proposed new residential block has reduced from three to two storeys, in turn reducing its size and scale.
- The area of communal amenity space has increased from 173 sq m to 240 sq m.
- The area of hardstanding for car parking has been reduced by 11% which allows for the greater area of amenity space.

Relevant Policies:

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015 - 2035, July 2021

Policy SP1: Growth Strategy
Policy SP2: NPPF - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy SP7: Windfall Development
Policy H1: Housing Mix
Policy H2: Housing Standards
Policy H4: Affordable Housing
Policy T2: Highways Safety and Design
Policy T3: Parking
Policy T5: Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles
Policy EE2: Enhancing Biodiversity
Policy EE3: Nature Conservation
Policy EE4: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
Policy EE13: Outdoor Sport, Leisure and Open Space
Policy CC1: Climate Change and Sustainability
Policy CC3: Flood Risk Management
Policy CC5: Sustainable Drainage
Policy CC8: Pollution and Land Instability
Policy HQ1: High Quality Development
Policy HQ2: Developer Contributions
Policy HQ3: Provision for Social and Community Infrastructure
Policy HQ4: Indoor Sport & Leisure Facilities
Policy HQ5: Broadband and Telecommunications Infrastructure
Policy HQ11: Modern Methods of Construction
Policy HE1: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
Policy HE3: Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Built Heritage

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2023

Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
Section 4: Decision-making
Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
Section 10: Supporting high quality communications
Section 11: Making effective use of land
Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

On 30 July 2024 the Government published a consultation on proposed reforms to the NPPF and made a written ministerial statement (WMS) titled 'Building the homes we need'. Whilst little weight can be given to the NPPF reforms at this stage given they are at consultation stage, the WMS states *'The first port of call for development should be brownfield land, and we are proposing some changes today to support more brownfield development: being explicit in policy that the default answer to brownfield development should be yes'*.

Neighbourhood Plan

Leighton Buzzard: Not designated

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), August 2023

Housing Policy Technical Guidance, Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), August 2023

Parking Standards for New Developments, Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), August 2023

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), June 2024

Relevant Planning History:

Application Number	CB/22/01491/FULL
Description	Conversion and extension of 72 North Street to provide 6 x no. 1 bedroom flats. Conversion of 2 Bedford Street to provide 2 x no. 2 bedroom flats. Erection of independent block of 7 x no. 1 bedroom flats and 5 x no. 2 bedroom flats. Associated parking, paths, fences and relocated vehicular access. Demolition of workshop at 2 Bedford Street.
Decision	Refused
Decision Date	27 January 2023
Application Number	CB/18/03471/NMA
Description	Non-Material Amendment: Alterations to front elevation of proposed development. (Original planning permission CB/16/05851/FULL - Change of Use from Public House to 4 X 2 Bedroom flats. Demolition of rear single storey extension, smoking shelter and timber out building).
Decision	Non-Material Amendment - Granted
Decision Date	5 November 2018
Application Number	CB/16/05851/FULL
Description	Change of Use from Public House to 4 X 2 Bedroom flats. Demolition of rear single storey extension, smoking shelter and timber out building.
Decision	Conditional Planning Permission
Decision Date	14 April 2017
Application Number	CB/17/00902/FULL
Description	Erection of four one-bedroom and four two-bedroom flats
Decision	Conditional Planning Permission
Decision Date	12 April 2017

Consultees:

Leighton-Linslade Town Council Objection on the following grounds:

- Overdevelopment of the site and concerns that minimum habitable space requirements may not be met
- Lack of provision of affordable housing
- Potential risk of surface water flooding
- Potential issues with lack of foul water capacity
- Concerns regarding proposed access and egress, particularly during the build process
- Whilst noting the town centre location, concerns regarding adequacy of car parking due to the surrounding residents parking zone, as well as insufficient cycle parking
- Inadequate net floor areas and communal areas

Should Central Bedfordshire Council be minded to approve the application, the Town Council would be keen to see S106 funds agreed towards the provision of town centre community facilities as well as community health, policing and cycling requirements. The Town Council would also request a condition ensuring no adverse impact on neighbouring established uses.

Highways
(Development
Management)
(most recent
response)

On behalf of the highway authority I make the following comments:

Having considered the revised drawing I am now content that the application can now be approved with listed standard conditions.

Strategic Housing Summary

Strategic Housing object to the application as it does not provide for the affordable housing as required by the Local Plan:

- No affordable housing has been proposed on site. A minimum of 30% affordable housing is required on site, to a 72% affordable rented, and 28% shared ownership tenure split. This equates to a minimum of 6 affordable dwellings. No viability assessment has been provided with this application. While we acknowledge that a viability assessment was provided for the previous application for the site, an updated viability assessment is required for the revised site with a reduced number of total dwellings. Strategic Housing request the provision of a sufficient amount of onsite affordable housing; if a viability assessment is submitted, Strategic Housing request to review the viability assessment prior to independent review.

- There is no provision of M4(3) adaptable dwellings on site. While the proposal exceeds the minimum provision of 7 M4(2) adaptable dwellings, the site does not provide for any M4(3) adaptable dwellings. A minimum of 1 M4(3) adaptable dwelling is required on site to meet the 5% minimum in policy H2.

Proposal

The application proposes for 18 dwellings, none of which are proposed as affordable housing. The market housing proposed indicates a provision of:

Apartment Type	Number of Units	Block and Flat Numbers
1-Bedroom, 1-Person	5	Lammas Walk: Flats 2, 3, 4, 8 72 North Street: Flat 14
1-Bedroom, 2-Person	6	Lammas Walk: Flat 10 72 North Street: Flats 11, 12, 13, 15, 16
2-Bedroom, 3-Person	7	Lammas Walk: Flats 1, 5, 6, 7, 9 Bedford Court: Flats 17, 18
Total	18	

However, no viability assessment has been submitted with the application. Local Plan Policy H4 outlines that:

All qualifying sites of 10 or more units will provide 30% affordable housing. The affordable housing from qualifying sites should be provided on-site.

Off-site financial contributions will only be considered where evidence is provided to confirm that on-site provision is not viable or that off-site contributions are more appropriate. This evidence must be agreed by the Council prior to independent verification. In such cases, a financial contribution will be calculated assuming 50% of the open market value of each dwelling in question.

The affordable homes should meet all of the following requirements:

1. Provide 72% affordable rent and 28% intermediate tenure or have regard to the most up to date SHMA*.
2. Affordable units should be dispersed throughout the site and integrated with the market housing to promote community cohesion & tenure blindness.
3. Large clusters of affordable units should be avoided and will be considered at the design stage and determined on a case-by-case basis.
4. Affordable units to meet all nationally described space standards, in accordance with H2: Housing Standards.

5. Where policy compliant affordable housing cannot be achieved, viability will determine affordable housing provision on a case-by-case basis; and
6. Quality and design of the affordable homes must be of an equally high standard to that of the private units on site.

* This proportion may change in accordance with the most up to date version of the SHMA, in which event the new revised proportions will be applied

The application does not propose for an onsite affordable provision and has also not included an updated viability assessment to demonstrate whether the provision of onsite affordable housing is viable. On this basis, Strategic Housing object to the application.

Onsite Affordable Housing Provision

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Central Bedfordshire outlines the affordable housing needs in Central Bedfordshire, which equates to the following percentage requirement by unit type and tenure:

Unit Type	Affordable Rent	Intermediate Tenure
1 Bedroom Apartment	12%	3%
2 Bedroom Apartment	9%	4%
2 Bedroom House	24%	10%
3 Bedroom House	23%	10%
4 Bedroom House	4%	1%
Total	72%	28%

Based on the information outlined in the SHMA and assuming a minimum of 6 affordable dwellings to provide at least 30% affordable dwellings, Strategic Housing would expect the following onsite affordable housing provision:

Unit Type	Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership
1 Bedroom Apartment	2	1
2 Bedroom Apartment	2	1
Total	4	2

We expect to see the affordable units dispersed throughout the site and integrated with the market housing to promote community cohesion and tenure blindness. We would also require the units to meet all Nationally Described Space Standards. We expect the affordable housing to be let in accordance with the Council's allocation scheme and enforced through an agreed nominations agreement with the Council.

Policy H2 (Housing Standards) in the Local Plan outlines “In requiring adaptable and accessible homes from all future developments; the Council will:

1. Require all new build dwellings to deliver at least 35% Category 2 Requirement M4 (2) adaptable homes (or any new or revised regulations that revoke or modify the Building Regulations); and
2. Require all new build dwellings to deliver at least 5% Category 3, Requirement M4 (3) wheelchair adaptable homes (or any new or revised regulations that revoke or modify the Building Regulations).”

Strategic Housing expect this requirement to be delivered with parity between the affordable dwellings and the market units on the development. The design and access statement outlines that eight of the dwellings will be delivered to category M4(2) adaptable. This equates to 44% of the total provision. While this exceeds the minimum provision of 7 M4(2) adaptable dwellings, the site does not provide for any M4(3) adaptable dwellings. A minimum of 1 M4(3) adaptable dwelling is required on site to meet the 5% minimum in policy H2. This would be required for Strategic Housing to support the application.

Green
Infrastructure

From the previous application it appears the proposals have now included the trees that were removed during clearance work on the site, six trees. As the removed trees were previously subject to TPOs, it is important that considerations are made to ensure the proposed trees reach maturity and that they are located in the public realm. Green Infrastructure features can be used to support trees, for further guidance please see comments from the Trees and Landscape Officer and relevant Design Guides.

An management and maintenance plan should be included for the proposed vegetation, use of native species is recommended to support local wildlife populations. It is recommended that a mix is used for grass areas, to include species such as clover. It is beneficial to the soil, requires less management, and provides a food source for wildlife.

Landscape

Gardens and private amenity space

New building units 1-10 – No private amenity space has been provided, unacceptable and contrary to Design Guide: 5.06.08 Apartments. Within flatted developments, each apartment must have access to private open space. This can be provided in the form of private gardens for ground floor flats, balconies, roof gardens or terraces, or private shared gardens. Applicant to provide private amenity space.

Existing Building 11-15 & 17-18 – although communal amenity space has been provided none of which is private. No private space has been provided for recreation or laundry and contrary to Design Guide.

5.06.16 Communal gardens should be enclosed by walls or buildings with no public access or visibility from the street or other public areas. They should however be overlooked by the occupants of the dwellings they serve.

Applicant to revisit layout and reduce footprint of new build.

Cycle parking

Cycle storage details to be provided. Applicant to consider green roofs. To be conditioned.

Boundary treatment

No details have been provided and to be conditioned.

Lighting

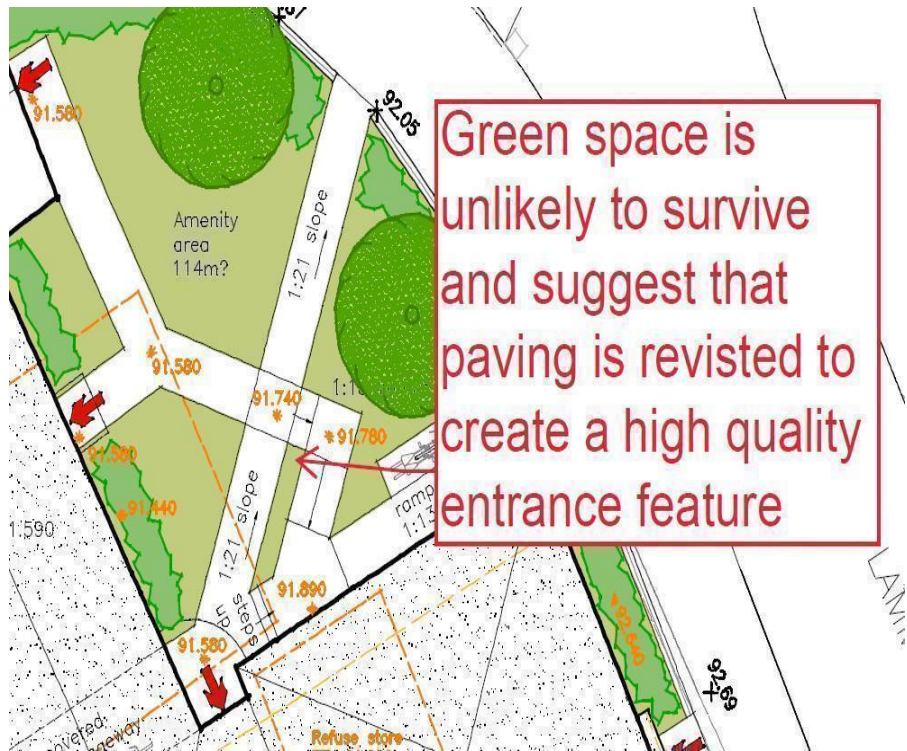
No details have been provided and to be conditioned.

Landscaping

Hard landscaping – no details have been provided. Car parking areas to be permeable. To be conditioned

Soft landscaping – no details have been provided. To be conditioned

Trees – New trees fail due to lack of soil and water and 1m³ of soil is not adequate for a small tree. Applicant to provide sufficient root space for all trees. Trees planted in areas with a high ratio of hardstanding above their rooting area deserve a soil structure system to ensure they have the best rooting environment in this harsh location. Applicant to provide a cross section of tree planting pits and details of method and volume of soil structure systems are to be provided. A plan to be included indicating location and extent of tree pit designs.



Trees and Landscape

Having examined the plans and documents associated with this application, I note that the 6 Silver Birch trees, which were apparently removed from this site without the knowledge of the LPA (these trees were previously protected under TPO No. 5/1994) are now being replaced as part of indicative new planting, as being shown on the Proposed Block Plan.

I therefore welcome this proposal and suggest that the four trees to be planted within the car parking spaces are incorporated into pre-constructed tree pits, each measuring 1 cubic metre, which can incorporate suitable quality top soil into the backfill mix, and be protected by ornate metal tree grids and guards. This is in order to compensate for the tree loss, and to protect the replacement trees from vehicle damage, and also will enhance the quality of the urban street scene.

This should be secured with a condition for an appropriate landscape scheme.

Ecology

Having reviewed the TPO database, parts of the site appear to be within a TPO area. There was no mention of trees within the ecological appraisal, and no trees appear present within photographs of the site. Clarification is required as to whether these trees are present on site, pre clearance of these trees would be considered unacceptable.

The submitted Ecological Appraisal has identified that the site hold limited ecological value, ecological enhancements have been suggested and these are welcomed. Precautionary working methods have also been proposed and these should be followed.

Listed conditions are advised.

SuDS Management Team We consider that planning permission could be granted to the proposed development and the final design and maintenance arrangements for the surface water system agreed at the detailed design stage, if stated recommendations and planning condition are secured.

Sustainable Growth Submitted Sustainability Statement, dated March 2023, shows that policy compliance is achievable. To ensure that the proposed development is delivered to be policy compliant it is requested that a condition requiring submission of a Post-Construction Verification Report with as built evidence is submitted prior to occupation of the last dwelling.

Conservation Design and No objection subject to build quality and appropriate detailing for both new and retained buildings being secured by Condition, as recommended.

The current application includes apartment block redevelopment of a site embedded within an existing residential area which forms the setting of the northernmost section of the designated Leighton Buzzard Conservation Area. The proposed apartment block is a further reworking of the Scheme approved by the Local Planning Authority in April 2017 (ref. CB/17/00902/FULL).

The immediate townscape context of the development as currently proposed remains the residential area served by Lammas Walk, and this has a distinctive character, predominated by modest housing of traditional dual-pitched roof form with some hipped roof building variations.

The two storey, hipped roof apartment building design approved in 2017 responded to this distinctive area character, the Planning Case Officer for the 2017 application specifically noting that “the scale, design and layout of the proposed development would complement and harmonise with the surroundings of the application site and would not appear dominant or out of keeping.”

These conclusions of the Planning Case Officer in 2017 articulate the key design ‘test’ for acceptable site development in this sensitive setting context.

Following refusal of an earlier reworking of the apartment block element of the Scheme, away from its previously approved form, in January 2023 (ref. CB/22/01491/FULL), the current application reverts back, acceptably, to an articulated hipped roof form for the apartment block, but also proposes a dual pitched link range connecting the apartment block to the existing Nos.2/2A Bedford Road to be retained.

Nos.2/2A Bedford Road are a north-east extension of The Crown building group and have historic pedigree in their own right, being shown on late 19th century Ordnance Survey mapping and in old photographs.

The introduction of this link element, albeit set back from the Lammas Walk site frontage, does reduce the openness of the site. However, I accept that this northern end of Lammas Walk, at its junction with Bedford Street, is strongly enclosed by built form, and the link structure is therefore an addition rather than an intrusion.

On these grounds and on the grounds that the proposed apartment block reverts back to the previously approved form, I confirm that I am happy to support the proposed development subject to use of a satisfactorily high-standard of external materials and constructional detailing (such as face brickwork, windows and external doors), throughout. I am happy that this can be secured through Condition.

In specific respect of external materials and detailing, I would wish the historic and architectural integrity of Nos.2/2A Bedford Road to be retained, in the proposed linkage, by the use of subtly contrasting face brick and roof tile covering.

In the selection of external materials, for Local Planning Authority agreement under Condition, particular attention will also need to be paid, as appropriate, to the use of closely matching brick in the 'making good' (ie. infill sections) of the frontage of The Crown building group, as shown in the current proposed elevation drawings – the North Street elevation of this building group currently makes a vital positive contribution to Conservation Area character and appearance, and it is expected that this contribution will be fully maintained.

Archaeology An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on part of this site in 2016 and did not reveal any significant archaeological remains. Therefore, no comments on this application.

Rights of Way There are no public rights of way within the development site, however Leighton Buzzard Bridleway No.20 runs adjacent to the site along Lammas Walk.

There will be an increase in vehicle movements along and across Lammas Walk and the Bridleway if the development goes ahead, however the road is tarmaced and is most likely used by pedestrians and cyclists rather than horseriders due to its urban nature and these users will be used to dealing with traffic in this environment, so I am satisfied the development will not adversely affect the bridleway or users of it.

Public Protection Topics considered

- Contaminated land
- Noise
- Light
- Odour

Compliant with Policy

Reason for Support

Regarding *Policy CC8 "Pollution and Land Instability"*; regarding noise impact, fenestration sound insulation is proposed and detailed calculations set out for this to demonstrate effectiveness. Our opinion is that the noise limit for non-anonymous noise such as premises including kitchen extract fan ought to be five decibels lower than is commonly used limits for anonymous noise such as from road traffic. We see this is feasible and therefore advise a condition also including for a ventilation system with air purification to deodorise kitchen or other smells from commercial premises. By doing so, the future dwelling occupiers will enjoy the amenity of their homes and consequently the risk of nuisance action against noise and odour polluting premises (agent of change matters) is reduced. With these measures in place we would not object.

Waste Services

Wherever possible, refuse collection vehicles will only use adopted highways. If an access road is to be used, it must be to adoptable standards suitable for the refuse vehicle to manoeuvre safely around site (please see vehicle dimensions below). A vehicle tracking will need to be submitted to the Highways Team to confirm this is possible. Typically, until roads are adopted or if the RCV is unable to manoeuvre around the site, bins are to be brought to the highway boundary or a pre-arranged point. Bins must not encroach on or cause a hazard or obstruction to the public highway. Waste vehicles will reverse a maximum of 15m to the point of collection. If there are any parts of the development that are not accessible to the RCV, bin collection points will need to be provided as near to the highway as is practicable.

Digital Communications Officer

It is now a requirement that all multiple unit developments have gigabit-capable broadband services available. Whilst we remain agnostic about the supplier, developers must engage before the build begins. Confirmation or sight of a contractual agreement for this provision should be provided before the application is approved.

Leisure and Open Space

1. Indoor Sport: £18,308 is sought towards the establishment of a new leisure centre in Leighton Buzzard and upgrades to the existing facilities at Tiddenfoot LC.

2. Outdoor Sport: £4,597 is sought towards improvements to the facilities at Leighton Buzzard Hockey Club, including the provision of a replacement artificial surface and new pavilion.

3. Children's Play Facilities: £25,000 is sought for new and improved play facilities at Mill Road Play Area.

Education Using the DfE cost multiplier £14,145.95 and early years children per household of 0.06 and 1.5 year groups 18 new dwellings would create a pupil yield 1.62. Therefore, the contribution we seek for Early Years from this development is £4,455.97.

No other requests from Education as the proposal would produce very little pupils. The 1 bedroom flats would not incur a charge and the 2 bedroom flats would be a 50% reduction. There are also places in the local area.

Meeting the Accommodation Needs of Older People (MANOP)

Policy H2 of the Local Plan outlines the requirement for adaptable and accessible homes in all future developments. The policy states:

1. A requirement for all new build dwellings to deliver at least 35% Part M Category 2 adaptable homes and
2. A requirement for all new build dwellings to deliver at least 5% Part M Category 3 wheelchair adaptable homes.

In addition, we would encourage the applicant to consider the Council's evidenced need for 23% of planned housing growth to be suitable for older people when designing this scheme.

SANG Officer

Total number of new dwellings & SANG units required - 18

Proposed SANG units to be reserved at Linslade Wood.

Please note the strategic SANG allocation is made in accordance with the agreed Mitigation Strategy and may be subject to change.

Natural England

Objection - further information required to determine impacts on designated sites - development within 12.6 kilometres of Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Within 12.6 kilometres.

Between 500 metres to 12.6km from Chilterns Beechwoods SAC, a Habitats Regulations Assessment is required to determine Likely Significant Effect. Mitigation measures will be necessary to rule out adverse effects on integrity:

- Provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) or financial contributions towards a strategic SANG.
- Financial contributions towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) strategy.

Anglian Water

The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Leighton Linslade Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows.

The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option.

NHS Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board This application will result in circa 43.2 additional patient registrations and create a constraint that will require premises reconfiguration, extension or even re-location to create additional clinical capacity.

A requested total contribution of £13,554.00 is calculated only on the number of additional new registrations and patient activity requirements this development will generate and will therefore contribute proportionately towards the enhancement/expansion/relocation of the existing Leighton Buzzard premises and/or contribute proportionately to the provision of new integrated healthcare facilities in Leighton Buzzard, supporting the delivery of the NHS long term plan.

Bedfordshire Police Designing Out Crime Team No objections in principle to the proposal.

Other Representations:

Neighbours Two representations received:

Extension of access road would result in the loss of on street parking.

Lack of on site car parking spaces for visitors which would not be available on the nearby roads subject of resident permit scheme.

What hours would the construction be undertaken and where would construction workers park?

No further tree clearance should be undertaken until planning approval has been granted.

The site is not currently secure resulting in anti-social behaviour.

Critical that adequate surface water drainage arrangements are included which would not allow surface water to build up in the vicinity.

Determining Issues:

The main considerations of the application are:

1. Principle of Development
2. Climate Change and Sustainability
3. Design and Layout, and Impact on Character and Appearance
4. Impact on Amenity of Neighbouring Occupants
5. Quality of Living Environment Created
6. Ecology Impact
7. Effect on the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
8. Highway Considerations
9. Financial Contributions and Affordable Housing Provision
10. Other Considerations
11. Conclusion and Planning Balance

Considerations:

1. Principle of Development

- 1.1 Sections 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require the Council to determine any application in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.2 In consideration of the current application due regard is therefore given to implemented planning permissions CB/16/05851/FULL and CB/17/00902/FULL for respectively the conversion of the existing Public House at No. 72 North Street to provide 4 no. 2 bedroom flats and the erection of a flatted development to provide 4 no. 1 bedroom and four no. 2 bedroom units.
- 1.3 Given that this development has been implemented and could be built out at any time, the grant of these permissions is a material planning consideration which must be afforded due weight in any subsequent decisions. The principle of residential development of the application site has therefore been established through the grant and implementation of these permissions.
- 1.4 Nonetheless, since the applications were determined the Council has adopted the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015-2035 in July 2021. The current application therefore falls to be considered in line with the relevant policies contained within the most up to date development plan. Local Plan Policy SP1 (Growth Strategy) details the growth strategy for new homes and jobs over the period 2015-2035; the application site is not an allocated site for development. As such the proposal would constitute windfall development for the purposes of the development plan.
- 1.5 Evidence set out in the Windfall Topic Paper demonstrates there is sufficient and compelling evidence to justify the addition of a moderate windfall allowance, however this is from years 6-15 of the Plan. Nonetheless, in accordance with Local Plan Policy SP2, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Planning applications that accord with the policies set out in the Local Plan, and where relevant, Neighbourhood Plans, will be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 1.6 The application site lies within the Inset Settlement of Leighton Linlade. Inset Green Belt Settlements are excluded from the Green Belt and the inner Green Belt Boundary acts as a Settlement Envelope. Within these settlements Policy SP7 (Windfall Development) applies. Policy SP7 supports housing, amongst other uses, within a Settlement Envelope proportionate to the scale of the settlement, taking into account its role and function within the settlement hierarchy.
- 1.7 Leighton Linlade is identified as a Major Service Centre within the Settlement Hierarchy of the Local Plan; this is defined as a larger settlement with a highly diverse range in services and facilities, including schools, healthcare and varied retail offerings and a strong availability of public transport. The application, seeking a total provision of 18 residential units within a Major Service Centre, would therefore be considered proportionate to the scale of the centre and as such would present no conflict with this Policy.
- 1.8 Furthermore, whilst the Council can currently demonstrate a 5.36 years housing land supply (Five year housing land supply position - 1st April 2024), Section 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes) of the NPPF sets out the Government's objective of '*significantly boosting the supply of homes*' and paragraph 70 highlights that '*Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly*'. In this respect the contribution of the 18 units proposed by the scheme is acknowledged.
- 1.9 The proposal, seeking the conversion of the public house, also falls to be considered in accordance with Local Plan Policy HQ3 (Provision for Social and Community Infrastructure); this policy seeks to protect community facilities and states that permission will only be granted for a change of use or redevelopment where the applicant can demonstrate conformity with one of the below requirements:
- 6. The use no longer serves the community, and significant evidence is provided to demonstrate that it is surplus to requirements and there is a lack of need for any other community uses at the facility; or*
- 7. The loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision either on site or at a suitable accessible location; or*
- 8. Evidence is provided which satisfactorily demonstrates that the use is no longer financially viable, and all reasonable efforts have been made to sell or let the premises for a community use at a reasonable price for at least 12 months.*
- 1.10 The loss of the public house was considered acceptable under previous applications CB/16/05851/FULL and CB/22/01491/FULL, the latter assessed against Policy HQ3, on the basis it no longer served the community and was surplus to local requirements. This remains the case and the proposal would comply with leg 6 of Policy HQ3; as such the principle of the loss of the community facility is found acceptable.
- 1.11 In terms of the proposed residential development, the application site is in a sustainable location a short distance to the north of the Town Centre. It is also previously developed or 'brownfield' land in the built-up area of Leighton Linlade. Development of such land, for residential and other uses, is considered acceptable in principle in the Local Plan, for example in the aforementioned Policy SP7 (Windfall Development). Paragraph 118 in Section 11 (Making effective use of land) of the NPPF states that '*Planning ...*

decisions should (c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs'.

1.12 In view of the above, the principle of developing the site for residential purposes is acceptable.

2. Climate Change and Sustainability

- 2.1 The Council adopted the Central Bedfordshire Council Sustainability Plan in 2020, the objectives of which focus on how the Council can: improve its own operations and processes; lead by example in buildings it is responsible for; facilitate investments in infrastructure-led projects; and influence, support and enable residents and local businesses to adopt sustainable behaviours and practices. Objectives for new building projects are to embrace sustainability, be resource efficient through orientation, layout, design and choice of materials, reduce carbon emissions, maximise on renewable energy generation, be climate resilient, use water resources sustainably and enhance the ecological value of a site.
- 2.2 The preamble to Local Plan Policy CC1 (Climate Change and Sustainability) identifies that The Climate Change Act (2008) establishes a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels. The Government's expectation set through the NPPF is that each local authority contributes to meeting this target through setting local requirements for the sustainability of buildings that are consistent with the Government's zero carbon policy, adopt nationally described standards, and promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources.
- 2.3 Policy CC1 is key to achieving improved sustainable standards within the design of development and is further supported by the objectives of Policies T5, EE2, EE4, CC3, CC5 and HQ1.
- 2.4 In relation to all new development Policy CC1 requires that development increases its resilience to the impacts of climate change, take full advantage of opportunities to incorporate renewable energy technologies, reduce carbon emissions, and achieve higher water efficiency standards.
- 2.5 This policy also places a requirement for all major developments of 10 or more dwellings to provide a Sustainability Statement which must demonstrate, amongst other things, a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by at least 10%, how opportunities to use renewable and low carbon sources have been maximised, and how the performance gap between build and designed energy use will be negated. All major developments must also submit a post construction verification report to confirm that the development has been delivered to the approved specification.
- 2.6 The application is supported by a Sustainability Statement (AP Consulting Engineers, March 2023) which as stated in the Sustainable Growth consultation response, shows that policy compliance is achievable. To ensure that the proposed development is subsequently delivered to be policy compliant a condition should be attached to any planning permission granted requiring submission of a post construction verification report with as built evidence prior to occupation of the last dwelling.

3. Design and Layout, and Impact on Character and Appearance

- 3.1 Local Plan Policy HQ1 (High Quality Development) seeks to ensure that all developments are of the highest possible quality and respond positively to their context. Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the NPPF sets out expectations for achieving well-designed places, including paragraph 135 which states '*Planning decisions should ensure that developments (a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development and (c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting*'.
- 3.2 Part of the site is located within the Leighton Buzzard Conservation Area and as such Local Plan Policy HE3 (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Built Heritage) is also of relevance. This policy requires that development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets of local importance will be granted where they preserve, sustain and enhance the special character, significance and/or special architectural or historic interest of the asset in terms of scale, form, proportion, design, materials and retention of features in accordance with national planning policy and guidance.
- 3.3 These policies conform with Sections 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) and 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF which require that planning policies and decisions should ensure developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate landscaping, establish a strong sense of place using the arrangement of spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places, and are sympathetic to local character and history.
- 3.4 Further, paragraphs 205 to 208 in Section 16 states that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, any harm or loss of significance should require clear and convincing justification, and that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm, this should be outweighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 3.5 As previously set out the proposal would comprise three parts, namely the conversion of two existing buildings and the construction of a new residential block. The latter would be attached to and be sited to the south east of the former and would front directly onto Lammas Walk. The existing vehicular access to the site would be relocated to the south east of the new block. The remainder of the site would consist of landscaping, amenity areas, car parking and cycle storage.
- 3.6 As with application CB/22/01491/FULL the conversion works proposed to the former public house would be relatively minimal, and again acceptable. Concern was raised with application CB/22/01491/FULL with the proposed conversion of the office building in respect of the failure of the proposals to reinstate window openings within the north west elevation of the building fronting Bedford Street. This has now been addressed with the reinstatement of window openings to enhance this element of the street scene and increase levels of natural surveillance along the pedestrian route.

- 3.7 Part of one of the reasons for the refusal of previous planning application CB/22/01491/FULL was that the proposed new residential block would present a solid mass of three storey development amongst two storey, modest development and would, as a result, be visually prominent and dominate the existing development. In contrast, the current proposal, including a proposed connection to the proposed building for conversion at No. 2 Bedford Street, has been reduced to two storeys, and features primarily hipped-pitched roofs. The scale and design of structure reflects that found to be acceptable by the scheme approved by application CB/17/00902/FULL. The Conservation and Design (C&D) consultation response states '*... the current application reverts back, acceptably, to an articulated hipped roof form*'. The building now proposed would be of a size, scale and massing compatible with existing local surroundings.
- 3.8 The C&D response also comments that the introduction of the link element between the new residential block and No. 2 Bedford Street, albeit set back from the Lammas Walk site frontage, does reduce the openness of the site. However, it is accepted that this northern end of Lammas Walk, at its junction with Bedford Street, is strongly enclosed by built form, and the link structure is therefore an addition rather than an intrusion.
- 3.9 Previous planning application CB/22/01491/FULL was also refused as the proposed layout, resulting in a proliferation of hardstanding and car parking, necessitated by the scale of the development and the number of units proposed, would present an over intensive and cramped form of development dominated by built form with limited areas of open green space and amenity provision.
- 3.10 The current proposal varies in that the number of units has reduced from 20 to 18, lowering the density of the development from 103 to 92 units per hectare. Furthermore the area of hardstanding for car parking has been reduced by 11% which allows for the area of communal amenity space to increase from 173 sq m to 240 sq m. The result of these changes, together with the reduction in height and scale of the proposed building, is a less intensive proposal and instead a scheme which would be compatible with the surrounding street scene and character of the area.
- 3.11 In addition to the comments above, it is noted that the C&D response expresses support for the proposal subject to use of a satisfactorily high-standard of external materials and constructional detailing (such as face brickwork, windows and external doors) for both new and retained buildings. This is required to maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting, and can be secured by the attachment of conditions to any planning permission granted.
- 3.12 Six Silver Birch trees, previously protected under TPO No. 5/1994, were previously removed from the site. It is noted that these are being replaced as part of indicative new planting, as shown on the Proposed Block Plan (2020/979/12H), which is welcomed. A condition for an appropriate hard and soft landscape scheme, to include consideration of the relationship between green space and paving within the frontage corner of the site facing Bedford Street and Lammas Walk, should be attached to any planning permission granted.

- 3.13 The proposal would regenerate derelict land, which is currently unkempt and contains overgrown vegetation and has been subject to flytipping, and vacant former public house, office and workshop buildings. The development would therefore provide an environmental enhancement and offer an uplift to the area.
- 3.14 Overall, the proposal would relate to the scale and pattern of surrounding development and be compatible with the character and appearance of the street scene and the Conservation Area compliant with Local Plan Policies HQ1 and HE3, and Sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF.

4. Impact on Amenity of Neighbouring Occupants

- 4.1 Local Plan Policy HQ1 (High Quality Development) seeks to ensure that all developments do not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon nearby existing or permitted uses, including impacts on amenity, privacy, noise or air quality. Paragraph 135 in Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the NPPF states *'Planning decisions should ensure that developments (f) create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users'*
- 4.2 To the south of the site is another two storey block of flats, Nos. 2-8 Lammas Walk, which has four north west facing flank windows which appear to serve bathrooms and circulation areas. Nos. 2-8 would be 11.2m away from the flank elevation of the proposed new residential flat block. Due to this separation distance and the nature of the rooms served, the development would not be unduly dominating or lead to detrimental loss of light or overlooking impact to Nos. 2-8.
- 4.3 Nos. 2-8 also have first floor windows in the south west elevation with views onto the proposed residential development. However, a 45 degree site line would be achieved between the proposed development and the closest upper floor window. This would accord with the Design Guide, August 2023, which states that a 45 degree site line should be achieved in order to maintain a reasonable relationship, avoid an overbearing visual impact and prevent excessive daylight loss or overshadowing.
- 4.4 In light of the foregoing the impact on the occupiers of No. 2-8 Lammas Walk is found acceptable.
- 4.5 A number of residential dwellings are sited to the west of the proposed residential development fronting onto North Street; however a separation distance of over 22m would be provided between the proposed new residential flat block and these properties - in excess of the 20m rear to rear distance referred to in the Design Guide - and as such, no adverse impacts would result in terms of overlooking, loss or privacy or visual intrusion.
- 4.6 A separation distance of 19 metres would be provided between the proposed residential development and the side elevation of the existing residential dwelling at No. 2 Bedford Road, located on the opposite side of Lammas Walk. There are no windows in this side elevation, and the proposal would not result in any adverse impacts to the occupants of No. 2.

4.7 Overall, it is not considered that the development would cause harm to the amenity of existing neighbouring occupants compliant with Local Plan Policy HQ1, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

5. Quality of Living Environment Created

5.1 In terms of the standard of living accommodation, Local Plan Policy H2 (Housing Standards) requires that internal space standards for all residential development are applied to all dwelling types and tenures in accordance with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). Further all new build dwellings are required to deliver at least 35% Category 2 Requirement MA (2) adaptable homes and at least 5% Category 3 Requirement M4 (3) wheelchair adaptable homes.

5.2 Part of one of the reasons for the refusal of previous planning application CB/22/01491/FULL was that the proposed development would fail to achieve the NDSS within three of the units thereby resulting in a cramped living environment. The current application addresses this with all proposed 1 bedroom, 1 person units achieving at least the required 39 sq m, all proposed 1 bedroom, 2 person units achieving at least the required 50 sq m, and all proposed 2 bedroom, 3 person units achieving at least the required 61 sq m. All habitable living areas across the development would be served by window openings providing sufficient sources of natural daylight and ventilation.

5.3 Eight of the proposed units (44.44%) would be delivered as MA (2) adaptable homes, exceeding the minimum requirement of Policy H2 of 7 units. However, no M4 (3) wheelchair adaptable homes are proposed. The minimum requirement of Policy H2 is for one unit to be M4 (3). In this instance, eight of the proposed 18 flats would be conversions of the former public house and offices, whereas Policy H2 refers to new build dwellings. Given this and the excess provision of MA (2) units, the lack of M4 (3) units is not objectionable.

5.4 Previous planning application CB/22/01491/FULL was also refused as the proposed development would fail to provide high quality, private external amenity provision to serve the occupants of the residential units.

5.5 The Design Guide, August 2023, states that one and two bedroom apartments should, where possible, have a minimum area of private outdoor space each (balcony, roof garden or ground level patio or open space) of 5 sq m. For the proposed development of 18 apartments, this equates to 90 sq m. There should also be a minimum area for usable communal amenity space of 50 sq m, plus 5 sq m per additional unit over five units. For the proposed development of nine apartments, this equates to 115 sq m. Therefore the total requirement is 205 sq m.

5.6 The development proposes 240 sq m of communal amenity space but no private amenity space. This space would be partly to the rear of the former public house building and the former office proposed for conversion, and partly on the corner of the site fronting Bedford Street and Lammas Walk.

- 5.7 It is acknowledged that the 240 sq m exceeds the 205 sq m required by the Design Guide but this is entirely communal space. It is also noted that as a result of the proposed reduction in the area of hardstanding, the provision of amenity space has increased from the approximately 173 sq m proposed by application CB/22/01491/FULL which was for two additional dwellings (20 instead of 18). Furthermore it noted that the Design Guide states that private amenity space for apartments should be provided where possible, and the site is close to the Town Centre with nearby recreation grounds.
- 5.8 Notwithstanding the above, there is the potential for ground floor flats to have private amenity space, and in this regard a condition should be attached to any planning permission granted requiring the submission of a plan to identify the exact location, design and form of both private and communal amenity space.
- 5.9 As recommended in the Public Protection consultation response, a condition should be attached to any planning permission granted to ensure the implementation of measures to prevent adverse impacts from noise and odour to future occupants of the development.
- 5.10 In light of the foregoing the quality of living environment to be created is found acceptable compliant with Local Plan Policy HQ1 (High Quality Development), and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the NPPF.

6. Ecology Impact

- 6.1 The provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In accordance with the Act, developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. Where proposals are shown to be exempt from requiring a 10% BNG, the adopted Central Bedfordshire Local Plan also requires the provision of a net gain in biodiversity with Policy EE2 (Enhancing biodiversity).
- 6.2 This application is exempt from providing a BNG of 10%, due to the submission of the application prior to 12th February 2024 when the 10% requirement for major applications came into force. However, in accordance with Policy EE2 a the provision of a net gain is required. The Ecology consultation response states '*The submitted Ecological Appraisal (Samsara Ecology, February 2023) has identified that the site holds limited ecological value, ecological enhancements have been suggested and these are welcomed*'. To ensure the development demonstrates a net gain in terms of biodiversity a condition requiring an Ecological Enhancement Strategy (EES) should be attached to any planning permission granted.

7. Effect on the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

- 7.1 Natural England (NE) wrote to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on 14th March 2022 following the publication of the Footprint Ecology Report and as a result the Council is unable to grant permission for planning applications which result in a net gain of dwellings located within the Zone of Influence of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (CBSAC) until

an appropriate assessment of the scheme can be undertaken and appropriate mitigation secured to offset the recreational pressures and adverse effects of new development to the CBSAC.

- 7.2 As such, in light of the obligations set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the LPA consider that, as the scheme is for new dwellings and there is a likelihood that these dwellings could adversely affect the integrity of the CBSAC it is necessary to secure Mitigation to reduce the impact on the SAC (SAMM) and discourage visitors away from the SAC (SANG).
- 7.3 Central Bedfordshire Council have produced a Mitigation Strategy which sets out specific tariffs towards SAMM and SANG, on a 'per dwelling' calculation to offset the negative impacts of the development on the integrity of the SAC.
- 7.4 The National Trust has confirmed that these Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) measures will cost a total of £18.2million. This cost will be shared across all of the affected local authorities. In Central Bedfordshire, this means that developers will be required to pay a tariff of £182.49 for each new home built.
- 7.5 To help to reduce recreational pressures on Ashridge Commons and Woods, alternative green spaces need to be identified. All new developments within the Zone of Influence will need to make provision for a new Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), or alternatively contribute towards the maintenance of a suitable SANG project elsewhere. Larger developments (10 or more new homes) must be located close to a suitable SANG. Smaller developments can contribute towards an existing SANG. We have so far identified Sundon Hills Country Park, Linslade Wood, Cottage Bottom Fields and Studham Common as SANGs. Developers that are unable to provide a suitable new SANG will be required to make a payment to us towards the long-term management and maintenance of these sites, which equates to £4,273 per two bedroom plus new dwelling and £3,205 per one bedroom dwelling.
- 7.6 The LPA will seek this financial contribution in order to complete its obligations under the Habitat Regulations.
- 7.7 As the proposal is a smaller development, and the developer is not providing a new SANG, the SANG Officer has identified that proposed SANG units are to be reserved at Linslade Wood.
- 7.8 The proposed scheme of 18 dwellings, consisting of 11 no. 1 bedroom units and 7 no. 2 bedroom units generates a required contribution of £68,450.82. The applicant has agreed to pay this contribution and therefore in the event that Development Management Committee grant planning permission this will be subject to the completion of a Unilateral Undertaking (UU) to secure the contributions. This would ensure that occupiers of the additional dwellings would be very unlikely to add at any time to the recreational pressures on CBSAC, and to ensure that the proposal is compliant with the Habitat Regulations, paragraphs 180 and 181 in Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the NPPF, and Local Plan Policy EE3 (Nature Conservation).

7.9 The securing of mitigation measures in the form of financial contributions towards SAMM and a strategic SANG would rule out the adverse effects on the integrity of the Chilterns Beechwoods identified in the objection response from Natural England. Following the completion of a UU, Natural England would be re-consulted with an Appropriate Assessment and following their response a Decision Notice can be issued.

8. Highway Considerations

8.1 Vehicular access to the site would be taken from a new access from Lammas Walk. There is an adequate area within the application site for a light goods delivery vehicle to be able to enter, turn and re-enter the highway in forward gear.

8.2 As mentioned above the proposal provides 24 car parking spaces would when the authority's standard is 29. This includes two disabled parking spaces. Considering the difference between the standard and the provision Highways (Development Management) are not of the view that this would cause a degree of congestion on the existing highway in a location close to the Town Centre and therefore do not raise a reason for refusal on this basis.

8.3 One of the reasons for the refusal of previous planning application CB/22/01491/FULL was that the proposed development would make inadequate provision for the storage and parking of cycles and therefore failed to promote sustainable modes of transport. Initial concern was raised by Highways (Development Management) to the current application that cycle storage would not be to standard and of a good quality. Following this amended plan 2020/979/12H (Proposed Block Plan) and a document entitled 'Secure Cycle Storage' were submitted providing full details of the proposed secure cycle store including size, design, material, colour and security details. On the basis of this plan and document Highways (Development Management) are now satisfied with the proposed cycle provision.

8.4 Overall subject to the attachment of conditions to any planning permission granted the proposal is acceptable in a highway context, compliant with Local Plan Policies T2 (Highways Safety and Design) and T3 (Parking), and Section 9 (Promoting sustainable transport) of the NPPF.

9. Financial Contributions and Affordable Housing Provision

9.1 In accordance with Local Plan Policy HQ2 (Developer Contributions) developments will be required to make appropriate contributions to provide new physical, social and environmental infrastructure or the enhancement of existing infrastructure, where necessary, to mitigate the impact of development.

9.2 Further Local Plan Policy H4 (Affordable Housing) requires that all qualifying sites of 10 or more units will provide 30% affordable housing which should be provided on-site. Off-site contributions will be considered where evidence is provided to confirm that on-site provision is not viable or that off-site contributions are more appropriate.

- 9.3 As such, and as stated in the Strategic Housing consultation response, the proposal for 18 flats generates a requirement for 6 affordable units.
- 9.4 The application has been considered in consultation with key stakeholders and contributions have been sought as follows:
- Education: £4,455.97 towards pre-school education provision.
 - NHS Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board: £13,554.00 towards the enhancement/expansion/relocation of the existing Leighton Buzzard premises and/or the provision of new integrated healthcare facilities in Leighton Buzzard.
 - Leisure and Open Space: A total of £47,905 towards the establishment of a new leisure centre in Leighton Buzzard and upgrades to the existing facilities at Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre, improvements to the facilities at Leighton Buzzard Hockey Club, and new and improved play facilities at Mill Road Play Area.

Total: £134,365.97

- 9.5 A Financial Viability Assessment (Optimis Consulting, June 2023) has been submitted in support of the application which concludes that the completion of the development would result in a significant deficit making it not viable to deliver any planning obligations on this site, neither in the form of affordable housing nor financial contributions towards community infrastructure.
- 9.6 The Viability Assessment has been reviewed by an independent assessor (Aspinall Verdi, May 2024) who has concluded that the scheme cannot viably provide affordable housing or financial contributions. The appraisal further demonstrates that delivery of an entirely private scheme (i.e. with no affordable housing) is also not viable.
- 9.7 Paragraph 58 in Section 4 (Decision-making) of the NPPF states *'It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force.'*
- 9.8 Similar, the Planning Obligations SPD, June 2024 states at paragraph 26.2.1: *'When an applicant has failed to provide the affordable housing and/or infrastructure requirements set out in the Local Plan, the Council will use the viability assessment to establish whether the level of contributions proposed by the developer is the maximum that can be reasonably delivered, or whether there is scope for further contributions to be made. The viability assessment will be a material consideration in the planning balance but the weight given to it will be for the decision maker to decide.'*
- 9.9 As stated the submitted Financial Viability Assessment concludes that the scheme cannot viably provide affordable housing or financial contributions, and this has been independently verified. This independent verification, particularly, provides significant weight in the planning balance.

Furthermore, following a period of negotiation, the applicant has offered a contribution of £10,000 to be secured by S106 Agreement. Paragraph 58 of the NPPF (above) states *'The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case'*. In this instance, as stated above, the proposal would involve the use of previously developed or 'brownfield' land. It would regenerate derelict land, which is currently unkempt and contains overgrown vegetation and has been subject to flytipping, and vacant former public house, office and workshop buildings. The development would therefore provide an environmental enhancement and offer an uplift to the area.

- 9.10 It is also recognised that there would be some social and economic benefits through the construction period, resulting for support for construction jobs, albeit these would only be temporary. There would also be an increase in the local population (although the extent of this cannot be confirmed as occupants may move from elsewhere in Leighton Buzzard), and a resultant increase in economic support for local services and facilities. However, these benefits would be minor given the scale of the proposed development. As such, they can only be afforded limited weight.
- 9.11 The supporting text to Policy H4 states *'If a scheme is approved on the basis of a robustly evidenced affordable housing offer which is below policy requirements, the S106 Agreement will include provision for a re-appraisal of viability. The purpose of this viability review will be to see a future uplift in affordable housing provision'*. In the case of this application the evidence has been independently reviewed and can be considered robust. The independent review recommends the provision of a review mechanism for the re-appraisal of viability in the S106 if, for example, there are any improvements in sales values achieved.
- 9.12 In light of the foregoing specific circumstances of the application site and proposal, and the provision of a contribution of £10,000, a scheme not offering affordable housing or full financial contributions, is not considered objectionable.
- 9.13 In terms of the allocation of the £10,000, the Planning Obligations SPD states at paragraph 3.19.3 *'Key priorities for the Council are education and affordable housing. Contributions for these infrastructure requirements will be prioritised. Other priorities will be determined on a case by case basis, depending on the circumstances of the scheme. It is likely that any wider community improvement works to support health and wellbeing will be prioritised over other requirements'*. As such, it is recommended that firstly the £4,455.97 towards pre-school education provision is prioritised, with the remainder being allocated to the improvement of healthcare facilities.

10. Other Considerations

10.1 Response to Town Council and Neighbour Objections

The matters raised are generally considered in the discussion and / or consultation responses above, and / or can be addressed by conditions attached to any planning permission granted.

Whilst it is noted that the Town Council would be keen to see S106 funds agreed towards the provision of town centre community facilities as well as community health, policing and cycling requirements, the approach to the allocation of S106 funds, in accordance with prioritisation outlined in the Planning Obligations SPD, is stated above.

Whilst a concern that the site is not currently secure resulting in anti-social behaviour is noted, this is not a material planning consideration.

10.2 *Human Rights and Equality Act Issues*

Based on information submitted there are no known issues raised in the context of Human Rights / The Equalities Act 2010 and as such there would be no relevant implications.

10.3 *Environmental Impact Assessment*

Consideration has been given to the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017 and it has been determined that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required for the proposed development.

10.4 *Codes of Practice*

The Council has adopted a Construction Code of Practice for Developers and Contractors in order to minimise the impact of construction work on residents who live near to development sites. The applicant has agreed to comply with the requirements of the Code, and compliance will be secured by condition.

The Council has also adopted an Environmental Code of Practice for Developers and Contractors in order to minimise the impact of construction work on the natural environment on and around development sites. The applicant has agreed to comply with the requirements of the Code, and compliance will be secured by planning obligation.

11. Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 11.1 The proposal is for the conversion of a former public house and offices, and the construction of a new residential block, to create a total of 18 flats.
- 11.2 The site benefits from implemented planning permissions for a total of 12 flats, which could be built out at any time, and therefore the principle of residential development has previously been established.
- 11.3 The loss of the public house is considered acceptable as it no longer serves the local community and is surplus to requirements.
- 11.4 The application site is within the Settlement Envelope of Leighton Linlade. Within such settlements Local Plan Policy SP7 (Windfall Development) supports housing proportionate to the scale of the settlement.
- 11.5 Furthermore, the site is in a sustainable location a short distance to the north of the Town Centre, and is previously developed or 'brownfield' land in a built-up area. Development of such land, for residential and other uses, is considered acceptable in principle in the Local Plan.

- 11.6 The proposal would relate to the scale and pattern of surrounding development and be compatible with the character and appearance of the street scene and the Conservation Area.
- 11.7 The development would not cause harm to the amenity of existing neighbouring occupants and the quality of living environment to be created is found acceptable.
- 11.8 Also the proposal is acceptable in a highway context.
- 11.9 The application is supported by a viability assessment, which has been independently reviewed - both assessments conclude that the scheme cannot viably provide affordable housing or financial contributions. This independent verification, particularly, provides significant weight in the planning balance. Furthermore, following a period of negotiation, the applicant has offered a contribution of £10,000 to be secured by S106 Agreement.
- 11.10 Paragraph 58 of the NPPF states '*The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case*'. In this instance, as stated above, the proposal would involve the use of previously developed or 'brownfield' land. Also, it would regenerate derelict land, which is currently unkempt and contains overgrown vegetation and has been subject to flytipping, and vacant former public house, office and workshop buildings. The development would therefore provide an environmental enhancement and offer an uplift to the area.
- 11.11 However, the failure to provide the full sought financial contributions would result in unmitigated impact on community infrastructure and this weighs negatively against the proposed development.
- 11.12 The completion of a Unilateral Undertaking in the form of financial contributions would mitigate the impact on the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC.
- 11.13 Careful consideration has been given to the above points. Having regard to the implemented planning permissions, the benefits associated with the redevelopment and regeneration of a derelict previously developed site in a sustainable location, the environmental enhancement and uplift to the area, and the provision of a limited contribution towards mitigating impact on infrastructure, the identified harm would be outweighed.
- 11.14 Therefore, when the Development Plan is considered in the round, the proposed development would comply with policies SP7, T2, T3, EE3, HQ1 and HE3 of the Local Plan and it is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following:

And the completion of a S106 Agreement in respect of:

- £4,455.97 towards pre-school education provision.
- £5,544.03 towards the improvement of healthcare facilities.
- The provision of a review mechanism for the re-appraisal of scheme viability.

And the completion of a Unilateral Undertaking to secure a contribution of £68,450.82 to mitigate impact on the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 **The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of high-standard materials and constructional detailing to be used for the windows and external walls, roofs and doors, to include all proposed window and external door products (manufacturers product details), of the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained.**

Reason: To control the appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and the Conservation Area. (Policies HQ1 and HE3, CBLP July 2021, and Sections 12 and 16, NPPF December 2023)

- 3 **The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of the junction between the proposed estate road and the highway have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the junction has been constructed in accordance with the approved details, amended as necessary by the technical and safety audit process, and opened to traffic.**

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and the development. (Policy T2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 9, NPPF September 2023)

- 4 Before the new access is first brought into use a triangular vision splay shall be provided on each side of the new access and shall measure 1.8m along the fence, wall, hedge or other means of definition of the front boundary of the site, and 1.8m measured into the site at right angles to the same line along the side of the new access drive. The vision splays so described and on land under the applicant's control shall be maintained free of any obstruction to visibility exceeding a height of 0.6m above the adjoining footway level.

Reason: To provide adequate visibility between the existing highway and the proposed access, and to make the access safe and convenient for the traffic which is likely to use it.

(Policy T2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 9, NPPF September 2023)

- 5 The maximum gradient of the vehicular access shall be 10% (1 in 10).

Reason: In the interests of the safety of persons using the access and users of the highway.

(Policy T2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 9, NPPF September 2023)

- 6 Any gates provided shall open away from the highway and be set back a distance of at least 5.0m from the nearside edge of the carriageway of the adjoining highway.

Reason: To enable vehicles to draw off the highway before the gates are opened.

(Policy T2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 9, NPPF September 2023)

- 7 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until surfacing details of all on site vehicular areas to ensure satisfactory parking of vehicles outside highway limits have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Arrangements shall be made for surface water from the site to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge into the highway. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details, and subsequently retained.

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction, and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the premises.

(Policy T2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 9, NPPF September 2023)

- 8 Before the new access is first brought into use any existing access within the frontage of the land to be developed, not incorporated in the access hereby approved, shall be closed in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and to reduce the number of points at which traffic will enter and leave the public highway.

Policy T2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 9, NPPF September 2023)

- 9 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of proposed electric vehicle charging points have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained.

Reason: To assist with the transition to low-emission vehicles.

(Policy T5, CBLP July 2021, and Section 9, NPPF September 2023)

10 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a satisfactory landscaping scheme to include all hard and soft landscaping, and to include consideration of the relationship between green space and paving within the frontage corner of the site facing Bedford Street and Lammas Walk, a scheme for landscape maintenance for a period of five years following the implementation of the landscaping scheme, and details of landscape management, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall then be implemented by the end of the full planting season immediately following the completion and/or first use of any part of the development (a full planting season means the period from October to March). The trees, shrubs and grass shall subsequently be maintained in accordance with the approved landscape maintenance scheme and any which die or are destroyed during this period shall be replaced during the next planting season.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable standard of landscaping.
(Policy EE4, CBLP July 2021, and Section 15, NPPF December 2023)

11 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a detailed tree planting scheme and specification have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, incorporating the tree planting positions being indicatively shown on the Proposed Block Plan (Drawing No. 2020/979/12H). The trees shall be of a minimum planting size of 10 to 12cm girth (Selected Standards), and shall comprise of 2 No Field Maple (*Acer campestre* 'Elegant'), 2 No. Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) and 2 No. Chanticleer Pear (*Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer'). Trees planted within the car parking spaces shall be incorporated into pre-constructed tree pits, each measuring 1 cubic metre, incorporating a suitable quality top-soil backfill, and be protected by ornate metal tree grids and guards. The tree planting scheme shall be supported by a planting and maintenance specification (including an adequate watering programme) to cover an aftercare of 5 years. The approved tree planting scheme shall then be implemented by the end of the full planting season immediately following the completion and/or first use of any part of the development (a full planting season means the period from October to March), with any tree losses to be replaced within the 5 year maintenance period, and in accordance with the approved planting scheme.

Reason: To ensure the replacement, aftercare and establishment of protected trees previously removed from this site, so as to restore visual amenity and biodiversity, and to provide a planting scheme more resilient to climate change and urban usage.
(Policy EE4, CBLP July 2021, and Section 15, NPPF December 2023)

- 12 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of boundary treatments have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained.

Reason: To control the appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and the Conservation Area. (Policies HQ1 and HE3, CBLP July 2021, and Sections 12 and 16, NPPF December 2023)

- 13 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of any external lighting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained.

Reason: To control the appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and to ensure no adverse impact to future dwelling occupants. (Policies CC8 and HQ1, CBLP July 2021, and Section 12, NPPF December 2023)

- 14 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until an Ecological Enhancement Strategy (EES) for the creation of new wildlife features such as hibernacula, the inclusion of integrated bird/bat and bee boxes in buildings/structures, hedgehog holes in fences and tree, hedgerow, shrub and wildflower planting/establishment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The content shall include the:

- a) purpose and objectives for the proposed works;
- b) detailed design(s) and/or working method(s) necessary to achieve stated objectives (including, where relevant, type and source of materials to be used);
- c) extent and location of proposed works shown on appropriate scale maps and plans;
- d) timetable for implementation, demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of construction;
- e) persons responsible for implementing the works; and
- f) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.

The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To ensure development is ecologically sensitive and secures biodiversity enhancements. (Policy EE2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 15, NPPF December 2023)

- 15 All ecological measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Samsara Ecology, February 2023) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the Local Planning Authority prior to determination.

Reason: To ensure development is ecologically sensitive. (Policy EE2, CBLP July 2021, and Section 15, NPPF December 2023)

- 16 The surface water drainage shall be constructed to manage surface water runoff from the development for up to and including the 1 in 100 year event (+40%CC) via infiltration. The final detailed design shall be based on the agreed Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Report (Scott White and Hookins, April 2023) and DEFRA's Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (March 2018) and shall be implemented and maintained as approved. Maintenance will ensure the system functions as designed for the lifetime of the development. Any variation to the connections and controls indicated on the approved drawing which may be necessary at the time of construction would require the resubmission of those details to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The discharge rate from the development will be limited to the equivalent 1 in 1 year rate, or an appropriate rate as agreed by the Bedford Group of Internal Drainage Boards.

Reason: To ensure the approved system will function to a satisfactory minimum standard of operation and maintenance and prevent the increased risk of flooding both on and off site.

(Policies CC3 and CC5, CBLP July 2021, and Section 14, NPPF December 2023)

- 17 Prior to the occupation of the last dwelling hereby permitted, a Post-Construction Verification Report with as built evidence to demonstrate policy compliance with the measures outlined in the submitted Sustainability Statement (AP Consulting Engineers, March 2023) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To demonstrate high quality sustainability standards.

(Policy CC1, CBLP July 2021, and Sections 2 and 14, NPPF December 2023)

- 18 **The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of fenestration sound insulation and a ventilation system with air purification to achieve internal room and (if provided) external amenity noise standards in accordance with the criteria of BS8233:2014 *'Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings'* and with reference to the Institute of Air Quality Management's *'Guidance on assessment of odour for planning'*. Approved details shall be implemented prior to occupation of the development and thereafter be permanently retained.**

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact to future dwelling occupants from odour and noise.

(Policies CC8 and HQ1, CBLP July 2021, and Section 12, NPPF December 2023)

- 19 **The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a plan identifying the exact location, design and form of both private and communal amenity space has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved plan and thereafter retained.**

Reason: To ensure acceptable provision of private and communal amenity space.

(Policy HQ1, CBLP July 2021, and Section 12, NPPF December 2023)

- 20 Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, any works of external 'making good' to the exterior of the existing buildings to be retained as part of the development hereby approved, including brickwork, timberwork, roof coverings, renders, mortars and decorative finishes, shall be undertaken with materials and in a manner which are strictly compatible with the traditional constructional character and detailing of the buildings, close-matching with existing materials and detailing as appropriate.

Reason: To ensure that the approved development is carried out in manner which maintains the traditional character and appearance of the existing buildings to be retained and is appropriate to the character and the appearance of the Conservation Area in which the buildings are located.
(Policy HE3, CBLP July 2021, and Section 16, NPPF December 2023)

- 21 **Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, full details of any kitchen and bathroom extract vents or flues exiting in any respect upon the exterior of the existing buildings to be retained as part of the development hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any installation on site and the approved development shall thereafter be implemented strictly in accordance with the approved details and subsequently retained.**

**Reason: To ensure that the approved development is carried out in manner which maintains the traditional character and appearance of the existing buildings to be retained and is appropriate to the character and the appearance of the Conservation Area in which the buildings are located.
(Policy HE3, CBLP July 2021, and Section 16, NPPF December 2023)**

- 22 The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in full accordance with the Council's adopted 'Construction Code of Practice for Developers and Contractors - November 2023 Update' https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/44/planning/674/codes_of_practice_for_planning.

Reason: In order to minimise the impact of construction work on the amenities of nearby residential properties.
(Section 12, NPPF December 2023)

- 23 The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in full accordance with the Council's adopted 'Environmental Code of Practice'. https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/44/planning/674/codes_of_practice_for_planning/3

Reason: In order to minimise the impact of development on existing trees, landscape features and biodiversity.
(Section 15, NPPF December 2023)

- 24 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers 2020/979/10C, 2020/979/11B, 2020/979/12H, 2020/979/15F, 2020/979/16A, 2020/979/17A, 2020/979/20, 2020/979/21 and 2020/979/22.

Reason: To identify the approved plans and to avoid doubt.

INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT

1. GDP Policy Informative – Central Beds Local Plan

In accordance with Article 35 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the reason for any condition above relates to the Policies as referred to in the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.
3. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with Condition 3 of this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Central Bedfordshire Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. You are advised to contact the Highways Agreements Officer, Community Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ. E-mail highwaysagreements@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
4. The applicant is advised that the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 will apply to any works undertaken within the limits of the existing public highway. Further details can be obtained from The Street Works Co-ordinator, Bedfordshire Highways, by contacting the Highways Helpdesk 0300 300 8301.
5. The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with this development should take place within the site and not extend into the public highway without authorisation from the Highway Authority. If necessary further details can be obtained from The Street Works Co-ordinator, Central Bedfordshire Highways, by contacting the Highways Helpdesk 0300 300 8301.
6. The applicant should address the following points 1 to 3 when submitting details to discharge condition 16:
 1. Permeable block paving should be laid to CIRIA C768 "Guidance on the construction of SuDS" guidelines. This guidance also stipulates following Interlay guidance.
 2. The Council does not, and is not required to, adopt any SuDS feature. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the surface water drainage system, in its entirety, will be effectively maintained in the long-term. We therefore expect confirmation of the proposed arrangements for maintenance to be provided with the final detailed design, including the future maintenance and operational needs and the responsible bodies for undertaking maintenance (for all public and private drainage components).

3. The final detailed design including proposed standards of operation, construction, structural integrity and ongoing maintenance must be compliant with the 'Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems' (March 2015, Ref: PB14308), 'Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Drainage Guidance' (Adopted April 2014, Updated May 2015), and recognised best practise including the Ciria SuDS Manual (2016, C753).
7. Please note that there is a contribution to pay for the supply/delivery of the bins. A purchase order must be raised for the quantity of bins required and sent to Environmental Services quoting the relevant planning reference number. A map of the site detailing street names, plot and house numbers is also required.
8. It is now a requirement that all multiple unit developments have gigabit-capable broadband services available. Whilst we remain agnostic about the supplier, developers must engage before the build begins. Confirmation or sight of a contractual agreement for this provision should be provided before development commences.

Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 6, Article 35

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because of the following statutory exemption:

The application for planning permission was made before 12th February 2024.