

Summary of consultation

2.1 Introduction

1.1 The application was registered on 31 January 2013 and was subsequently advertised in the press and on site as both a major application and a departure from the development plan, in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2012 and The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. All consultees, including the public, were asked to respond by 31 March.

1.2 This appendix provides a summary of the consultation responses received and is divided into the following five categories:-

- 1) Replies from statutory consultees;
- 2) Replies from local societies;
- 3) Local residents' associations and campaign groups
- 4) Other third party representations and petitions, including individual local residents

1.3 Amended information and plans were submitted on 19 August. All consultees and neighbours were re-consulted together, and there was notification in the press and site notices. All consultees, including the public, were asked to respond by 12 September. Further and more limited amendments were submitted and advertised by the applicants on 19 October.

2.0 Statutory Consultation responses

2.1 Hertfordshire County Highways comments are set out in Essential Reference Paper D1.

2.2 The Highways Agency comment that conditions be attached with any grant of planning permission in order to secure capacity improvements to the J.8 roundabout on the M11.

2.3 Essex County Council comment that, following the publication of the transportation modelling work completed by Essex Highways on behalf of Uttlesford District Council in connection with their Local Plan it has been established that Junction 8 of the M11 will not operate satisfactorily in future year scenarios from 2018 onwards. The effect of this could be

severe impacting not only on the safe and effective operation of the junction but also on residents and businesses of Bishop's Stortford and the surroundings.

Having regard therefore to the additional traffic which the BSN proposal is likely to attract, Essex County Council as a Highway Authority strongly recommends that the application is not determined until such time as the matter has been further reviewed and any appropriate mitigation is identified.

2.4 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Development Services Team **Letter dated 05 April 2013** - initially provided the County Council's view in respect of planning obligations sought towards education, early years, youth, library, adult care, waste (disposal) and fire and rescue services to minimise the impact of development on HCC services for the local community.

HCC have determined educational need based upon in-house modelling where the housing mix is not yet known but has been tested at appeal in relation to development 'West of Stevenage':-

- Early education facilities are required for 3 and 4 year olds;
- Taking into account a long peak in the demand for pupil places is likely to arise on a large new development, the proposal will result in the need for 5 forms of entry at primary level. This could be addressed through the provision of two schools. Sites should be flat, accessible and of sufficient size to accommodate ancillary uses;
- The proposal will result in the need for 5 forms of entry at secondary level, however further work is required to check these initial calculations and should include sufficient allowance for the changes to the school leaving age requirements.

Children's Services are currently reviewing the education strategy for Bishop's Stortford. In May 2011 the view was held that development at Bishop's Stortford North should make financial contributions amounting to the cost of expanding local schools by 5 forms of entry as it was anticipated that proposals to relocate and expand schools would be able to accommodate the additional demand resulting from the development. However, following the dismissal of a planning appeal in relation to a proposal to secure new secondary school sites to the south of the town, the current strategy involves a different approach and HCC consider that a site for secondary education should be identified on the Bishop's Stortford North site itself.

There is a need to ensure that there is a new Children's Centre as well as childcare for 0-5year olds, to ensure that there is sufficient childcare for parents who wish to work or take part in training and to ensure sufficient Early Education places for 3 and 4 year olds.

A financial contribution is sought for youth facilities in the town towards enhancement of existing facilities.

New residential development will result in additional pressure on existing library facilities and a contribution towards libraries is requested.

Regarding the fire service, the County Council recommend the installation of sprinkler systems to reduce the impact of the development on both the residents and the increase in calls that will come from a development of this site. Bishop's Stortford Fire Station is currently operated on day shifts and are on-call at night. The development may require that arrangement to alter therefore increasing the operating costs associated with the Fire Station. A single contribution figure cannot be calculated at this stage, and further work is necessary.

All dwellings must be adequately served by fire hydrants and the County Council therefore seek the provision of fire hydrants as part of a legal agreement.

Additional work needs to be carried out to determine the level of and type of requirement to accommodate adults with special needs.

The County Council do not consider that the existing household waste recycling centre at Woodside Industrial Estate has capacity to accommodate the proposed development. The County Council request the provision of a new household waste recycling centre at the development site.

Letter dated 15 July 2013 - Written in relation to HCC's revised strategy for secondary education provision for Bishop's Stortford. They caveat their response by stating that their strategy cannot be finalised until the applications on Bishop's Stortford North have been determined and the quantum of on site education provision is known.

The County Council refer to their modelling to calculate the likely primary and secondary education requirements associated with a development of 2,200 dwellings as proposed in this application:-

- Primary: Peak yield of 4.14FE (forms of entry) (over 4FE for 3 years and over 3FE for 10 years) Long term average of 2.34FE.
- Secondary: Peak yield of 4.0FE (over 3FE for 11 years) Long term average 2.1FE.

The County Council have also considered the development of ASR5 (which is being considered as part of LPA reference 3/13/0886/OP) with an additional 450 dwellings (a total therefore of 2650 dwellings):-

- Primary: Peak yield of 5.0FE (over 4FE for 9 years and over 3FE for 14 years) Long term average of 2.8FE.
- Secondary: Peak yield of 4.8FE (over 4FE for 8 years over 3FE for 15 years) Long term average of 2.5FE.

With regards to primary school provision the above work indicates that there will be a need for in excess of 3FE of primary school provision for over 14 years and in excess of 4FE for 9 years. The County Council confirm that existing primary schools are at capacity. As such the County Council seeks provision for two 2FE primary schools.

With regards to secondary school provision the County Council have considered existing provision of the town:- it has been determined that there is no potential to expand the following existing secondary schools:- Hockerill Anglo-European College; St Mary's Catholic School. There is potential to expand Birchwood High Schools by 1FE subject to reduction in standards by 15% and highway mitigation measures. Bishop's Stortford High School and Herts and Essex High School could be expanded subject to the provision of additional playing fields. Leventhorpe School could also be expanded subject to highway mitigation measures.

The County Council comment that planning for secondary schools is challenging; all schools in the Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth education planning area have their own admissions policy and the County Council act in a commissioning role. Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth attract pupils from not only East Herts area but also from Essex, taking into account the closeness of the boundary. Further, St Mary's Catholic is a faith school and serves a much wider area with a significant proportion of pupils travelling into the area specifically for faith education.

Based on the information to date, the combined Bishop's Stortford North development proposal of 2,650 dwellings would result in the need for just under 5 forms of entry at secondary level.

The County Council comment that there are two options to meet this demand:-

Option 1 – expansion of existing schools

The County Council comment that, having regard to their feasibility work, it may be possible to expand the capacity of existing secondary

schools within the area up to a maximum of 7FE. They comment however that such expansion could be challenging and may not be financially viable. Such expansions would also exhaust all potential latent capacity in the town and would not address any potential need for additional temporary capacity to meet peaks in demand and offers poor flexibility for long term future school planning.

Option 2 – provision of a new secondary school

The proposed development comprising of 2,650 new homes will likely generate just under 5FE of secondary aged children. In strategic planning terms, a new secondary school in the development site of Bishop's Stortford North would be well located to serve the needs of the new community, minimising the impact of pupil movement on the existing infrastructure of the town.

Letter dated 03 September 2013 - The County Council reiterate their position in respect of secondary school provision – there is a need for two 2FE primary schools with nursery provision. One of the schools needs to be able to expand to 3FE when required.

The expectation to expand one of the primary schools to 3FE will be to deal with peak pupil numbers over an extended period and should be provided for in the context of a permanent expansion.

The County Council consider that there are nevertheless further layers of complexity which need to be addressed – principally the location and timing of the first phases of the development.

The phasing as currently proposed involves the development of ARSs 1, 2 and 5 with the provision of only one 1FE primary school provided. This will provide insufficient primary school places for the quantum of development and will not provide sufficient capacity during peak demand, as identified in the County Councils modelling.

Furthermore, the sizes of the proposed primary schools fall short of the County Council's adopted standards and make no allowances for abnormals.

With regards to secondary school provision, the County Council reiterate their position that, in total, 5FE of secondary school provision will be required.

The County Council consider that the best approach to address the secondary school issue is the provision of a 5FE secondary school on site. This could be either in the form of a stand alone secondary school or an all through school which would provide the flexibility and stability required in the early years of the development as pupil numbers grow.

The County Council acknowledge their ownership of a parcel of land at Hadham Road which has been identified to meet future growth. The County Council comment that they are unwilling to release this site to the developers of the application site to accommodate education facilities required as a result of their proposals. The release of the Hadham Road site for secondary education would leave the County Council with no fall-back position to address other educational demand.

Letter dated 22 November 2013 – this updates following further review of viability assessment work and HCC indicates that, as a result, it withdraws its in principle objection to the proposals. It emphasises that it has significant remaining concerns in remain to the following issues:

- HCC has yet to consider formal s106 terms;
- That an exchange of land between HCC and the consortium (to enable the location of a secondary school on the application site) needs to be agreed in principle prior to the DM committee;
- The sufficiency of land available for primary education purposes;
- Arrangements for early years/ childcare, adult care, youth, library, waste disposal and fire and rescue;
- The currently unknown provision of funding from the Countryside proposals at ASR5.

In relation to education HCC repeats the education demand and capacity information set out above. It indicates that it is willing to accept the revised funding offer of £14m for primary education. It also indicates that it is willing to accept the land provision for the 1FE primary school on the western element of the site.

In relation to secondary education, HCC sets out that it believes the best approach is the provision of a 5FE school on the site and it is prepared to recognise that, as it owns land at Hadham Road, it does not need to seek land for the school. It is willing to accept the £16m funding provision for the secondary school.

With regard to other service areas, the following funding provision is sought:

Childcare: £556,000

Waste disposal: £301,217

For youth provision and libraries funding is related to the housing mix and size on the site. As that is not determined at this stage it is not possible to specify appropriate funding amounts. For youth services and adult care/ special needs provision community facilities that can be used to provide services should be available at the site.

Fire hydrant provision should be made.

- 2.5 The Environment Agency comment in a letter dated 30 October 2013 that the amended details include the Water Quality Assessment Approach that has an alternative option to discharge surface water should it be found to pose a risk to groundwater quality in the area. The Environment Agency therefore remove an earlier objection, subject to the provision of planning conditions.

Planning conditions recommended by the Environment Agency relate to the provision of additional information in respect of surface water drainage, its management and monitoring; the provision of information relating to foul sewerage treatment; implementation of drainage attenuation ponds; and buffer zones around existing water courses.

- 2.6 Sport England comment that the new development should be required to contribute towards meeting the demand for sport through the provision of on-site facilities and/or providing additional off-site capacity.

The East Herts Council playing pitch strategy (2010) sets out a standard of 1.31Ha of playing pitch provision per 1000 population. Using that standard the proposed development at BSN would require the provision of 19.17Ha of outdoor sports provision.

The development proposes approximately 2.42Ha of formal sports provision which would be located to the north west of the development. This is significantly below the adopted standards of the playing pitch strategy and the development is likely to place pressure on existing facilities in the District.

In that regard, Sport England object to the planning application as the quantitative level of outdoor sports provision would be insufficient for meeting the additional needs of the development.

Sport England set out that, to address the shortfall in provision, additional on-site provision should be made; enhancements to existing outdoor sports facilities in the local area should be considered and artificial grass pitches should be considered.

Sport England provides comments from other Sports National Governing Bodies including the Football Association, Rugby Football Union, England and Wales Cricket Board and England Hockey. Those governing bodies all confirm the comments from Sport England that there is insufficient sports provision which will place pressure on existing facilities.

Sport England have raised concern with the proposed location, siting and layout of the proposed outdoor facilities associated with the proposed development:-

- The location is not easily accessible;
- The shape is an irregular shape unsuitable for formal sports and layout out of pitches;
- Hoggates Park is relatively small for a playing field as it could accommodate only two junior football pitches or one senior football pitch which is undesirable for use by sports teams/clubs who prefer larger multi-pitch sites with facilities;
- No integration with existing sports facilities is possible;
- No provision for other non-grass sports facilities has been proposed.

Sport England comment that further information is required to be submitted in relation to ground conditions to ensure that the playing pitch is sufficient for sports use.

The proposed size of the pavilion as submitted with the planning application is insufficient for the general needs of sports teams and their required facilities. Sport England therefore object on those grounds also.

Sport England also object on the grounds that insufficient provision for indoor sports has been made, contrary to the Councils Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD and the Councils Sports facilities audit.

Sports England note that the primary schools proposed will be designed to allow community access outside school hours but comment that there is insufficient information to determine what facilities would be provided. A planning condition is recommended relating to this.

The management of sports and play provision is required to be considered and that this should be controlled through a planning obligation.

Sport England have provided additional comments in email dated 15 November 2013 and set out that there have been several meetings and discussions about the sports facility related issues with both EHDC and the applicant which have responded positively to the issues that were initially raised.

The main issue initially raised related to the inadequate level of outdoor sports facility provision within the development.

Sport England comment that additional on-site facility provision has not been pursued, but the applicant has revised the design of the proposed Hoggate's Park playing field and the detailed design of this facility is being discussed with the FA and Bishops Stortford Swifts FC. There is

potential for the Football Club to be relocated to this site. This does not address the deficiency in provision but could help address facility issues for both the football club and Bishops Stortford Rugby Club as well as contributing towards meeting the additional needs generated by the development.

To address the deficiency of around 4.2 hectares that was identified in Sport England's original response, the applicant proposes a financial contribution towards the provision or enhancement of existing or new off-site sports facilities. However, the extent of the contribution has not been confirmed and the previous concerns of Sports England would only be addressed if a significant contribution was secured which reflects the extent of the on-site deficiency and accounts for the substantial potential costs associated with providing alternative new or enhanced facility provision off-site in lieu of on-site provision.

If this approach is acceptable, the LPA will need to make provision for a strategy which would identify priorities to inform how the secured contribution could be used and distributed. Such a strategy is necessary to ensure that needs/priorities are objectively identified and agreed in a fair and transparent way and Sport England will expect all outdoor sports which have a need for new/improved facility provision to receive an appropriate share of the available funding and that account will need to be given to the size of the respective sports and their level of facility need to ensure that the share of provision is as commensurate as possible to the role that these sports play in meeting community needs in Bishops Stortford.

In principle therefore, the proposals for securing a potentially significant contribution towards the delivery of off-site outdoor sports offers potential to address the objection on this issue but Sport England support would be subject to an appropriate strategy.

Sport England comment that, through the discussions that have taken place it has been accepted that the location, siting and scale of on-site outdoor sports facility provision proposed at Hoggate's Park is unlikely to be feasible to change. They would not therefore wish to pursue the comments made on these matters. However, positive progress has been made on matters such as the layout of Hoggate's Park and the nature and design of the facilities proposed within it which respond positively to comments made previously.

Through the discussions that have taken place, the solution for addressing indoor sports facility needs would be the same as that set out above for meeting the outdoor sports facility needs that have not been met on-site i.e. a significant financial contribution should be secured. The need for an off-site contribution to cover indoor facilities as well

should be accounted for therefore when determining the scale of a contribution. The need for an associated strategy to guide the use of contributions would also apply to indoor sports.

- 2.7 Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue set out a range of guidance for fire fighting vehicle access and water supplies including the provision of fire hydrants.
- 2.8 Herts Constabulary comment that they have no major concerns with the proposal but would encourage the architects and developers to meet with the Police Design Service to discuss the project in more detail prior to submission of an application for full planning permission. Any large scale rise in housing will lead to a rise in crime and it is therefore essential to mitigate against this by the use of Secured by Design principles.
- 2.9 The Landscape Officer commented on 11 April 2013, they did not make a recommendation for approval or refusal but offered comments based upon the information available.

The indicative layout shows the street pattern and the location of perimeter blocks and the green infrastructure that will be used as a template to guide the detailed design. The indicative street pattern appears to work best in the western neighbourhood and may need more extensive design work at detailed stage for the eastern neighbourhood.

With regards to access, particularly that along Hadham Road at the new roundabout junction, a comprehensive mitigation strategy should be put in place.

The Rye Street access road would be best moved several metres to the east, probably to the point of the existing crossover.

The proposed access points are accessible in site planning and layout terms – however there are significant landscape issues which still need to be addressed.

The Landscape Officer has however provided a recommendation for approval in a consultation response dated 18 October 2013.

The Landscape Officer comments that there is a favourable approach to green infrastructure which has led to an indicative layout which is acceptable. There is sufficient scope for landscape proposals at the Hadham Road junction and the Rye Street Access road has been realigned to allow for the retention of existing trees. The proposed access from the A120 will need a detailed design to take into account level changes and ground modelling.

- 2.10 The Environmental Health Officer advises that any permission which the Planning Authority gives shall include planning conditions relating to a noise assessment, a restriction on construction hours of working, air quality and, soil decontamination.
- 2.11 The Council's Engineers comment that the site is mostly within flood zone 1 and outside of zones 2 and 3, apart from a proportion at the eastern side of the site along Bourne Brook. The site is shown as generally away from overland surface water flows although an area of surface water inundation runs through part of the site from west to east along Hoggate's Wood to Foxdells Farm.

The site is suitable for above ground SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) which has been identified in the application documents and the Flood Risk Assessment including drawing 0210/SK/18 Rev E which shows a range of good quality SuDS for the development which is necessary to be retained and promoted through the site at all stages of the development process. The Council may adopt retention ponds, detention ponds, swales/etc subject to financial contributions.

An underground attenuation tank is proposed for the western half of the site with potential storage capacity to enable water harvesting capabilities. It is understood that topographical restrictions would have made an above ground SuDS feature difficult to achieve.

- 2.12 Natural England comment that the application does not pose any likely or significant risk to features of the natural environment and Natural England do not therefore provide specific comments on the application.

Natural England comment that despite their lack of specific comment, this should not be taken as a statement that there are no impacts on the natural environment but that other bodies and individuals may make comment on such matters.

Natural England have commented in email dated 04 November in respect of amended details and comment that their original comments remain relevant.

- 2.13 The Herts Biological Records Centre provide comments in respect of the impact on ecology having regard to the information submitted with the planning application:-

- Great Crested Newt were found in two ponds however these are outside of the development site boundary;
- No Riparian Mammals or Dormice were found;

- Bat roosts were found within some buildings on the site;
- A 'good' population of slow-worms were found;
- 54 species of breeding birds were recorded and 42 species of winter birds;
- 387 species of invertebrates were recorded.

The proposed development will result in a significant loss and/or disturbance to a range of habitats and will result in impact on protected species, including Great Crested Newts, Bats, Slow Worms, birds and invertebrates.

HBRC comment that the Badger Report has not been submitted with the application and it is not possible to determine the impact on that protected species.

Proposed mitigation measures are set out within the Environmental Statement which provides a summary by topic feature of the 'likely significant effect' and brief detail of mitigation measures. The outline proposals seek to address effects which will accrue as a result of the development itself and do not therefore represent any subsequent ecological resource enhancement. Whilst they do serve to reset the balance as far as possible resulting from direct impacts, they do not sufficiently consider the continuing impacts associated with the impact of major development of this nature. The applicant has not therefore provided sufficient ecological management visions for the area that would enhance the ecology as compensation for overall impacts.

HBRC consider that adequate surveys have been taken to assess ecology on the site. The mitigation measures in relation to the impact on protected species are broadly acceptable in reducing the impact of the proposed development. Although HBRC are unable to advise in respect of the impact on bats.

However, the loss of farmland habitat itself or the subsequent impact on surviving habitats has not been compensated for. HBRC consider that this should be addressed by improving the remaining ecology and delivering appropriate management that this will require.

2.14 Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) comment that sufficient survey information has been submitted in relation to the impact on protected species and other ecological features.

The proposed development retains most of the habitats of ecological value on the site and the potential impact on protected species will be avoided. There is potential to improve the overall biodiversity value of

the retained habitats through management, habitat restorations and enhancement with native planting.

Mitigation and enhancement measures have been put forward as part of the development which satisfy HMWT.

Potential adverse impacts on the Local Wildlife Sites, other habitats of interest and notable species within the site may result from increased disturbance, public access and recreation and other factors. These pressures and risks should be managed through the life of the development. Whilst some measures have been put forward, these should be addressed at the early design and planning stage and secured through condition and/or legal agreement.

HMWT are satisfied that the measures set out within the application will mitigate and compensate for harm to ecological interests and, subject to long term positive management and enhancements of habitats the development may achieve a net biodiversity gain.

2.15 The County Council's Environmental Operations and Resource Planning Unit have commented that ASRs 1-4 and ASR5 have shared physical and environmental characteristics and there is an opportunity for integrated solutions in respect of flood and water management and green infrastructure.

The County Council raise concerns with the approach to SuDS for the following reasons:-

- There should be a joined up approach to surface water drainage between ASR's 1-4 and ASR5;
- The provision of two separate schemes creates risk of unsatisfactory and unsustainable management of surface water drainage;
- Insufficient information has been submitted in relation to implementation and maintenance of SuDS;
- The provision of underwater storage tanks is not considered to be sustainable.

The County Council comment that the majority of allocated Green Infrastructure consists of retention of existing assets including woodland, hedgerows and watercourses. The applicant does not set out any substantial detail showing how Green Infrastructure will be protected nor how such infrastructure will be enhanced as a result of the development. The applicant's submissions in relation to the provision of Green Infrastructure are therefore questioned.

The County Council considers that there is an opportunity to improve Green Infrastructure along the River Stort Valley, which forms a significant part of the Green Infrastructure Network. Measures could be implemented to protect and enhance the natural environment along the valley whilst improving the extent and quality of access to the River and associated amenity.

- 2.16 The County Council's Minerals and Waste Policy Team comment that, should the Council permit the application a number of detailed matters should be taken into account. The County Council seeks to promote sustainable management of waste in the County and encourages the Council to have regard to the potential for minimising waste generated by development.

There will be a need for new or enhanced waste management facilities in close proximity to new waste arising and the new housing development should have regard to the overall infrastructure required to support it including waste management facilities.

A site waste management plan is required and the aims to reduce the waste removed from the site should be contained within any such plan, including types of waste and where that waste is being taken to.

The application site abuts the sand and gravel belt in Hertfordshire. The sand and gravel reserves are located in the south of the County and extend up to the roundabout of the A120 and Hadham Road. There are no mineral resource blocks identified outside of the sand and gravel belt – as a result there are unlikely to be significant sand and gravel deposits within the area in question. However, once the development has been implemented and sand and gravel deposits are revealed, potential for extraction should be considered.

- 2.17 The County Council's Historic Environment Unit has provided comments in respect of the impact on historic assets of archaeological interest.

Several areas of the site have been identified by the archaeological evaluation carried out in 2012 as having archaeological potential and the applicant suggests that the major foci of previous activity within the site have now been identified and the effect of construction activities upon the archaeological resource can be adequately mitigated by open area excavation of the 'six main foci of activity'.

The County Archaeologist disagrees with these conclusions. The County Archaeologist considers that the combination of geophysical survey and the evaluation of trial trenches of a small proportion (less than 0.1% of the site) is not sufficient to assert that all of the major foci have been identified. It is highly likely that further foci and many more

archaeological features are present within the site and the archaeological evaluation as presently undertaken does not adequately mitigate the archaeological impact of the development. Should planning permission be approved, further archaeological evaluation will be required.

The County Archaeologist has considered the amended plans and responds in email dated 23 October that n specific comments are made in respect of the amendments.

- 2.18 English Heritage initially commented in their letter dated 27 February 2013. They comment that there are two grade II Listed Buildings within the site (Foxdells Farm and Barn) with a number of other Grade II listed buildings nearby, together with the north western edge of the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area.

English Heritage determine that the proposals will result in harm to the significance of Foxdells Farm. Whilst the limited information submitted with the applications means that it is difficult to determine the full extent of the harm, English Heritage acknowledge that the land has been identified for development through the Local Plan process and therefore the harm may be outweighed by wider public benefits. However, on the basis of the information submitted, it is not possible to fully assess the harm and further work is required concerning this element of the application before permission is granted.

English Heritage has responded to additional information submitted in a letter dated 10 September 2013. They comment that the new information is helpful although the outline nature of the application means that the full impact cannot be assessed. There will therefore be a degree of harm to the significance of Foxdells farm but the extent of harm would be constrained and any residual harm would need to be weighed against the wider public benefits of the development.

English Heritage recommend that appropriate conditions are included to protect the setting Foxdells farm.

- 2.19 Thames Water comment that they have no objection with regards to sewerage infrastructure. Thames Water have no concerns regarding the ability of Bishop's Stortford STW and the pumping station at Hallingbury Road to accept the flows from this development. There are capacity issues within the local sewerage network but there are locations identified to which the wastewater from the development could connect and have a minimal impact on the existing network downstream.

Thames Water comment that it is the applicants responsibility to ensure proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or a suitable sewer. It is recommended that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off site storage. Connections are not permitted for the removal of ground water and, where the applicant proposes to discharge to a public sewer, consent from Thames Water will be required.

3.0 Other consultation responses, local interest groups and societies

- 3.1 CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) object to the planning application. They comment that the proposal is contrary to policies BIS1 and BIS8 of the Local Plan which seek to serve land designated as Special Countryside Area until the land included in land allocations as part of a review of the Local Plan. The Council is undertaking such a review and any decision to grant planning permission would be premature to the determination of the Local Plan Review.

CPRE do not consider that the revoked East of England Plan provides the basis for determining new housing requirements and the provision of 2200 houses would be disproportionate to any small short term deficit in available housing to meet the NPPF five year housing supply.

CPRE consider that there is a high degree of consistency between the policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF and the Council should determine the application on the basis of the Local Plan.

CPRE note the amendments to earlier draft master plan proposals that would reduce the adverse environmental and social impact of the overall pack of proposals – however such amendments do not outweigh the harm associated with a lack of strategic planning to meet future development needs in the District.

- 3.2 The British Horse Society comment that they do not object to the principle of residential development but object to access roads going across existing public bridleways which would be a hazard for horse riders. The British Horse Society request planning conditions to protect horse riders and improvements to the local bridleway network.
- 3.3 Herts and Middlesex Badger Group comment that there is an active badger sett at Foxdells Farm. Any development should have regard to the badger sett in terms of spacing around the sett, construction working and routes to foraging areas.

The Group have provided additional correspondence received 04 November 2013 raising concern with the impact on the Badger set during and after implementation of the development.

- 3.4 Bishop's Stortford Rugby Club comment that they have a thriving Club with 120 senior members and 600 junior members. The Club has a deficiency of space for sport provision and the proposed development of 2200 homes will place added pressure on demand for sport provision at Bishop's Stortford Rugby Club site.
- 3.5 Bishop's Stortford Community Football Club request funding in order to continue to provide and development football facilities in the town. The Club have outgrown their current capacity and request funding to expand their existing pitch quota and a clubhouse for the Club.
- 3.6 Bishop's Stortford and District Footpaths Association comment that footpaths BR8, FP1 and FP2 will be affected by the proposed development. These paths are widely used and offer excellent views of the open countryside and offer direct access from the town centre to the open countryside. Users of the footpaths will be severely impacted by the proposed development in terms of amenity value and safety during the construction phase and on completion.

The Footpath Society respond to the amended documents in email dated 04 November. They do not consider that the amended information addresses their previous concerns.

- 3.7 The Ramblers Society comment that Bishop's Stortford 1, 2 and 8 are popular and regularly used public rights of way which can be used in total safety. This will not be the case as a result of the development proposal. The proposal includes estate roads which will cut across existing rights of way and road traffic must give way to users of the right of way and appropriate road infrastructure should be provided to ensure this.

The provision of a 'green corridor' around existing public rights of way as proposed by the applicant is welcomed. However, the proposal to make the public right of way accessible to cyclists is unacceptable as this will degrade the use for walkers and has safety implications.

The Ramblers Society comment in email dated 03 November in respect of the amended details and specifically in relation to the provision of a secondary school on the development site. They consider that any such school will be located on the public right of way to the detriment of users enjoyment of that public access.

- 3.8 East Herts Footpath Society comment that they are concerned with the detrimental effect that the proposed development will have on existing public rights of way in the area, particularly footpaths FP1, FP2 and BR8. The footpaths offer a popular, safe and traffic free route across the development site. Users' enjoyment of this space will be severely impacted by the development due to the destruction of the natural environment and the curtailment of open views over the countryside.
- 3.9 The Animal Rescue Charity (ARC) who currently occupy the Foxdells Farm, comment that any development which adversely affects their function should be resisted. The ARC comment that the development as proposed would adversely affect their operation. The ARC have a potential alternative location, subject to planning permission and would need funding from the development to realise this. The ARC comment that their inclusion within any S106 agreement would secure their future.
- 3.10 Bishop's Stortford and District Natural History Society object to the planning application. The proposed development will result in the loss of countryside, woods and small lanes and the connection of Bishop's Stortford with the Rural Area. The proposed development will result in harm to the River Stort through increased demand for water. The Society make reference to a number of natural/man made features of interest which should be retained including, Hoggates Wood, Dane O'Coys Lane, the old allotment site, Bourne Brook, a badger set at Foxdells Farm, the green corridor between Bourne Brook and Farnham, stretches of hedgerow.
- 3.11 Bishop's Stortford Museum request S106 contributions towards the Museum, specifically the housing of any archaeology found through the proposed development.
- 3.12 East Herts Geology Club comment that within the site is a rare geological formation known as 'Hertfordshire Puddingstone'. The Society request that the specimen be cleaned up and displayed if the area is to development.

4.0 Local resident groups/associations and campaign groups

- 4.1 Bishop's Stortford Grove Residents Action Group (BSGRAG) have commented on the application in emails dated 01 September 2013 based upon the following areas:-

1. Public engagement;
2. Transport data;
3. Smarter Choices and Sustainability.

1. Public engagement:

There has been a lack of public engagement for residents with significant volumes of data and technical information to digest, consider and analyse within an insufficient timescale. The determination of this application should therefore be deferred to allow local residents to engage further with the developer.

Concern is raised with the Transport Infrastructure, Transport Data Modelling, Public Engagement and Sustainability.

2 Transport data:

The data being used to model the effect on traffic flows in Bishop's Stortford is inconsistent, ambiguous and unreliable. The determination of the application should therefore be deferred to allow the data gathering exercise to be validated by independent experts. The proposed development has the potential to create traffic chaos across Bishop's Stortford road network.

Traffic flows freely on the Hadham Road past Hadham Grove with approximately 5 million cars per annum.

According to the 1991 consensus there were approximately 28k people living in the town with approximately 10.6k cars. In 2019 after the implementation of BSN, there will be approximately 42k people with 16k cars.

There will be an increase by 50% in potential traffic flows but with no comparable upgrade to the town's arterial roads. Existing roads are severely congested, as is evidenced in publications.

The provision of a roundabout on Hadham Road will not benefit existing residents and is purely to access the development site. The roundabout will significantly increase traffic congestion, given the level of use of that road which will increase with the development of BSN. The data provided by the applicant to justify the development is unreliable.

BSGRAG comment that a western site access from the A120 ring road is a viable alternative, with 'nil detriment' and brings significant benefits for Bishops Stortford over the current BSNC proposal. Precedents have been set for accesses on the ring road (A1184). There are special circumstances for the provision of a western access off the A120 and the Highways Authority should be required to consider this.

3 Smarter Choices and Sustainability:

Appropriate infrastructure should be put in place to support the development and the validity of claims for benefits should be tested

independently, with key performance indicators, agreed targets and assurances and penalties to cover the costs of meeting any claimed benefits shortfall.

4.2 The Silver Leys Trust object to the application and comment that the additional residents associated with the development will result in pressure on the recreation and parking facilities at the Trust site. The Trust request financial contributions to improve sporting provision at the site.

4.3 Rye Streets Residents Association (RSRA) object to the proposed development. They raise concern with regards to the impact of the development on highway safety and capacity along Rye Street. RSRA also comment that there is no provision for a park and ride facility to the east of the site which fails to address the Eastern Herts Transport Plan 2007.

The proposed development removes existing open space without adequate links for the existing residents of Rye Street and for the future occupants of the development. The proposed cycle and footway between the development and the town is insufficient in encouraging non-vehicular traffic.

The proposed development will result in road noise and pollution from queuing cars for residents of Rye Street with limited noise attenuation proposed and the accuracy of information submitted with the application in respect of noise is questioned.

The siting of the proposed development will result in loss of amenity to neighbouring properties within Rye Street and Foxdells Road and any structural landscape buffer will need to be implemented prior to occupation of the development.

Insufficient information has been submitted to assess education provision, medical services, the need for additional burial space and allotments, the impact upon leisure and community services.

The proposed development will impact on archaeological features within the site and ecology.

4.4 Chantry Community Association comment in a letter dated 31 March 2013 that the proposal is massive and unsuitable for the town. The proposed development will disproportionately alter the size of the town and result in harm to existing infrastructure.

The proposed development will result in congestion in the town and surroundings and insufficient mitigation in terms of contributions have

been put forward to offset the impact. The information as submitted is insufficient to properly consider the impact and no new access on Rye Street should be permitted nor should access off the A120 be allowed in terms of round-a-bouts.

Insufficient parking provision is made and the proposed development does not provide appropriate access between the town centre and the development.

There is insufficient provision for education, particularly secondary within adjacent areas and within the vicinity of the development. Existing schools are currently overprescribed.

The proposed development will result in the loss of valuable agricultural land and impact on wildlife and ecology and there is insufficient provision for medical care.

5.0 Third party representations

5.2 Neighbouring properties adjoining and within the vicinity of the application site were notified in writing of the planning application. As set out in section 1.1 above, the application has also been the subject of newspaper advertisement and site notice.

5.2 293 letters of representation were received to the planning application in objection to the proposal. 75 standard letters composed by Save Our Stortford have been received.

5.3 For petitions have been received:-

- Save our Stortford with 1817 signatures;
- iPetition (no addresses or signatures) with 1392 names and;
- 292 signed petition from Rye Street Residents;
- A petition with 1162 signatures against the provision of a new roundabout junction at Hadham Grove.

5.4 The following provides a summary of the main points of objection from third parties:-

Highways – general comments

- New residents are likely to remain heavily car dependent. There is a lack of adequate highway infrastructure to support this increase in traffic and as a result roads will become more congested increasing noise and pollution and at rush-hour will be gridlocked;
- There is already a lack of car parking in the town centre. An increase in population will result in additional demand and town centre parking

becoming less accessible and less affordable. This will deter visitors away to other regional centres, resulting in the decline of Bishop's Stortford town centre;

- Insufficient traffic analysis has been provided and the modelling of local traffic impacts put too great emphasis on mitigation on the A120 and M11 junction;
- SMART choices benefits are greatly exaggerated and the sustainability benefits are not quantified and measureable for the wider Bishops Stortford. The proposals are not supported by enough funding and previous examples of smarter choices developments have resulted in too few parking spaces and there is potential for the development to turn into a parking lot;
- No research into the impact on commuter train lines into London and Bishop's Stortford train station car park is currently operating at full capacity and would have a significant detrimental impact to commuter journeys;
- Bus services provided are erratic and expensive and unlikely to be used by new residents. They can not be controlled by developers in the long term;
- Proposed bus routes are not suitable for London commuters and there are objections to the bus route along Cricketfield Lane;
- Narrow pavements are currently congested with pedestrians – this will become worse with the new development;
- The Rights of Way footpaths that are to be sacrificed or broken up is unacceptable;
- No mention of topography considerations shown in respect of encouraging people to cycle and walk into town;
- Cycle paths that stop at development boundaries are unacceptable;
- Increased traffic will slow down emergency response vehicles;
- On street parking at Dane O Coys, Barrells Down Road Lindsey Road, Whitehall Road, Cricketfield Road and Foxdells Lane leaves limited width for cars and makes crossing very unsafe. Increased traffic will make it even more unsafe;
- Existing residential roads will be used as a cut through and are not designed to support high levels of traffic;
- No indication of when road improvements would be put into place;
- Construction traffic will disrupt arterial routes for many years;
- The proposed development site is located outside walking distance to the railway station and housing is too low density which will result in an intolerable increase in car journeys.

Highways – Hadham Road

- Increased traffic on Hadham road and proposed roundabout is not an adequate traffic calming measure;
- Proposed access from Hadham Road is dangerous;

- Hadham road is already too dangerous for cyclists; an increase in population will only worsen the problem;
- Development will increase congestion on the A120 through Little Haddam traffic lights junction and increase difficulty in pulling out on the A120 at Cradle End;
- A new roundabout on Hadham Road would cause congestion and not provide a traffic calming measure;
- Hadham Road pinch-points currently fail to control speed, increased traffic will make the road more dangerous;
- The Western site access roundabout on the Hadham Road is in the wrong place;
- Placement of roundabout in Hadham road is undesirable as it adversely affects the visual amenity of the road with a tree lined avenue appearance.

Highways – Rye Street

- Impact on residents of Rye Street in terms of vehicular access from driveways onto Rye Street because of increased traffic;
- Impact on Rye Street residents being able to cross the road safely because of increased traffic, in particular the impact on children walking to school ;
- The junction of Barrells Down Road, Elm Road and Rye Street will be particularly dangerous if traffic from proposed development is allowed access onto Barrells Down Road;
- The proposed Rye Street access doesn't take into account the potential addition of 1264 work related cars using the access spine road from the Eastern BSN Development nor are there any predictive numbers of cars exiting the A120 at its roundabout and following the new road to Rye Street in order to access the town;
- The T-junction proposed to Rye Street will be wholly inadequate for the projected traffic volumes;
- The proposed new road access serving 211 and 219 Rye Street with the proposed new road is too close to the junction with Rye street resulting in traffic turning left from Rye Street will not be visible to cars exiting the proposed new access road, potentially causing accident. Traffic wishing to exit the proposed new access road would be faced with queues of traffic on the proposed new roads;
- Traffic mitigation is focussed on M11 and A120 but the most serious locations of congestion will be on Rye Street and Hadham Road and no mitigation is planned for these sites. Rye Street is already a dangerous Road and has seen fatal accidents.

Health

- Primary care in the town is at saturation point. GP waiting lists are currently at 2 weeks; this will increase further with an increased population;

- To much reliance placed on the presumption that Silver Leys Health Centre will be granted planning permission;
- Silver Leys Health centre is not proposed until Phase 2 of construction – this is too late;
- Silver Leys Health centre proposal does not include adequate parking for staff and patients;
- Increase in demand for inpatient care and AandE services have not been fully addressed in the planning applications;
- Local hospitals in their current state would be unable to cope with the volume of people that will need to use the health services provided.

Education

- A proposal for a four form entry primary school needs to be supported by increase in secondary school provision. There is currently not enough secondary school provision in Bishop's Stortford and children are going to Essex schools;
- The reliability of projected educational needs for the development is questioned;
- Lack of sports facilities to cope with increased number of School aged children;
- Negative impact on Northgate School.

Environmental

- Inadequate environmental surveys have been submitted and there is presence of Great Crested Newts, Badger Setts and Slow Worms;
- Concerns the development will increase flood risk to existing properties and cause major flood risks to new development.
- Noise from new development will have a negative impact on local wildlife;
- Bishop's Stortford is one of the driest areas in the country with regular hose pipe bans. The environmental damage incurred by further water extraction is unacceptable.

Amenity

- Loss of local amenity land (for dog walkers, joggers, families) has been undervalued;
- Land South of Dane O'Coys is a 'pressured' recreational space and will become over used and lose its natural character;
- Land South of Dane O'Coys should remain as a green lung;
- Need for a crematorium and graveyard has not been addressed;
- Grange Paddocks facilities will become overused;
- Need to link the Sustrans cycle route from Cambridge to Bishop's Stortford;

- The proximity of new housing in the Eastern development to existing housing is unacceptable and results in loss of light.

Other

- Bishop's Stortford has reached optimum size and evidence that there is a local need for new home in Bishop's Stortford is unfounded;
- Bishop's Stortford has unfairly carried the burden in East Herts of new housing developments over the past 20 years. There is no need for the town to provide anymore houses;
- The size of development is disproportionate to the needs of the town and will dilute the essence and character of a market town;
- The proposed centres of employment within the proposed development are too small and will result in increased traffic to the train station to commute to London and increased use of the A120, A1184, B1004 and M11;
- Eight years construction timetable will create ongoing traffic, inconvenience and noise and no parking provision provided for construction workers;
- Councillors negotiating in pre-app discussion with developers is undemocratic;
- "No local people are in favour of this application' does the localism bill hold no weight?"
- Public engagement for such a large scale planning application, with 2650 new home covering 156ha of prime landscape has not worked and residents have not been able to digest 800+ documents;
- No coherent town plan – need to wait until one is produced;
- The ASR's was set out for extra housing for staff at Stansted airport and this has not happened;
- The land was given to the 'people of Stortford' by the Gilbey family. This attempt to over-rule this wonderful gift is an assault against the democratic right of use of free space;
- Proposed buffer between residential development and existing dwellings is inadequate. This should be widened to provide a wildlife or quiet area.
- The road link between ASR1,2 and ASR3,4 to the north of Hoggates Wood represents unacceptable development in the green belt. This should be removed from the proposals and, as a result, all transport modelling should be reassessed.