

CONTEXT FOR ALL SITES:

The Great Gransden NDP was made on 29th March 2023.

The Vision for Great Gransden is:

“Great Gransden will continue to thrive as a vibrant rural village, with a diverse population and a highly engaged community. The village will develop in a sustainable, evolutionary manner, such that the parish’s rural nature and character are maintained and enhanced.”

The Key Issues identified in the Neighbourhood Development Plan were:

- KI 1 Sustainable development and growth of the housing stock in Great Gransden
- KI 2 Protection and enhancement of the rural character
- KI 3 Access to open space and enjoyment of the countryside
- KI 4 Road safety and traffic
- KI 5 Education and health services
- KI 6 Community facilities and infrastructure
- KI 7 Uncertainties of major infrastructure decisions

In addition to specific comments on the four sites identified in the Call for Sites, we would emphasise the following in consideration for all sites in Great Gransden, based on the Key Issues and Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- Great Gransden is a rural village, identified in the current plan as a Small Settlement.
- Housing starts and planned development since April 2011 have been 93 to Nov 2024, representing an increase of housing stock of 23.25% over the period.
- The NDP established a Built-Up Area Boundary within which the principle of development is accepted (subject to other constraints) and outside of which development is resisted.
- Great Gransden has limited infrastructure to support significant further development.
- The primary school can accommodate 150 pupils. Currently there are 5 pupil vacancies across all age groups. Significant increase in numbers of children would impact availability of places for residents of Great Gransden and also other villages in the catchment area - Little Gransden, Abbotsley and Waresley.
- Great Gransden has limited opportunity for employment in the village. Most people either commute or work from home.
- Great Gransden has very limited public transport, only two buses per day. Most journeys are made by car, including to the commuter station at St Neots. Increasing the number of houses will inevitably lead directly to an increase in road traffic in and around the village. This would lead to significant increased road safety concerns as the village has limited pavements and no designated cycle paths.
- While Great Gransden has a rural setting, the network of footpaths for countryside access and dog walking is very limited. A significant increase in population would inevitably put pressure on the existing footpaths. In recent years Gransden and Waresley Wood have been closed to public access for extended periods due to overuse and damage to this SSSI.

Great Gransden 5: Highbury Fields Business Park, Great Gransden

We agree with HDC findings from the LAA and SA that indicate that this site is inappropriate for development.

These comments are based on the policies of the Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Great Gransden which was made in March 2023

It is our view that significant harm would be caused to the character of the village, its setting and the countryside. (as explained below).

Key points in the Neighbourhood Plan which conflict with this submission to the Call for additional sites 1 August 2024 – 31 January 2025 are:

Policy G1 It is our view that the proposed development outside the Built-Up Area Boundary in the submitted NP cannot be supported as the circumstances are not exceptional in this case. i.e. “the site promoter does not intend the scheme to be a rural exception scheme”

Policy G3 This site is adjoined by an industrial site, albeit with permission for housing, but prior development of this site would not contribute in a positive way to the quality of the built environment in the parish.

Policy G6 At this stage there is no evidence that the development will provide net gains in biodiversity by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats for the benefit of species. Measures to deliver net gains will be proportionate to the size of the development being proposed and the question that Great Gransden Parish Council poses is how will the proposed development provide such net gains?

Policy G10 Public transport. Gransden has a very poor bus service meaning the population is heavily dependent on the private car. The proposed development could bring up to 100 more cars in conflict with Policy G10 which attempts to reduce village car use. Additionally there is no pedestrian or cycle access from the site to allow a safe and direct route to the village centre to access services.

Policy G13 Development proposals do not demonstrate that necessary infrastructure is in place or will be provided to serve the development; especially in the case of the village school, which currently only has capacity for 5 more children.

Conclusion: This application would cause significant adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area as it affects the local character; heritage and biodiversity

Great Gransden 6: Land adjacent to Meadow Road and Hall Farm Road, Great Gransden

These comments are based on the policies of the Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Great Gransden which was made in March 2023

We consider that this site is not appropriate for development. It is our view that significant harm would be caused to the character of the village, its setting and the countryside. (as explained below).

Key points in the Neighbourhood Plan which conflict with this submission to the Call for additional sites 1 August 2024 – 31 January 2025 are:

Policy G1 It is our view that the proposed development outside the Built-Up Area Boundary in the submitted NP cannot be supported as the circumstances are not exceptional in this case.

Policy G3 Development proposals are on wholly greenfield land, not on brownfield land.

Policy G4 This development would have an adverse impact on the landscape character adjacent to the Park Riddy (a public right of way), which are rich in biodiversity.

Policy G5 Heritage of the Village: The land, which represents a non-designated heritage asset and also contributes to the agricultural setting of the village and its conservation area. The site has the Conservation Area touching two sides of it.

Policy G6 At this stage there is no evidence that the development will provide net gains in biodiversity by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats for the benefit of species. Measures to deliver net gains will be proportionate to the size of the development being proposed and the question that Great Gransden Parish Council poses is how will the proposed development provide such net gains when the natural habitat of foxes, badgers and bats may well be lost forever with this loss of green space?

Policy G9 The Riddy public right of way runs on the Eastern edge of the land in question which is seen through gaps in the hedgerows, thereby affording visual amenity and a sense of tranquillity to travellers along the Riddy public right of way.

Policy G10 Public transport. Gransden has a very poor bus service meaning the population is heavily dependent on the private car. The proposed development could bring over 60-70 more cars in conflict with Policy G10 which attempts to reduce village car use. In addition there are no pedestrian or cycle routes to provide safe and direct access from the site to access services in the centre of the village.

Policy G13 Development proposals do not demonstrate that necessary infrastructure is in place or will be provided to serve the development; especially in the case of the village school, which currently only has capacity for 5 more children.

Conclusion: This application is not well connected to the village services, with no footpath or easy vehicular access and would cause significant adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area, its heritage and biodiversity.

Great Gransden 7: Land North of Meadow Road, Great Gransden

We agree with HDC findings from the LAA and SA that indicate that this site is inappropriate for development.

These comments are based on the policies of the Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Great Gransden which was made in March 2023

It is our view that significant harm would be caused to the character of the village by residential development, its setting and the countryside. (as explained below).

Key points in the Neighbourhood Plan which conflict with this submission to the Call for additional sites 1 August 2024 – 31 January 2025 are:

Policy G1 It is our view that any proposed residential development outside the Built-Up Area Boundary in the submitted NP cannot be supported as the circumstances are not exceptional in this case. It has low potential to integrate built development into the existing community so has low sustainability as a site.

Policy G3 Development proposals are on wholly greenfield land, not on brownfield land.

Policy G4 This proposed development is prominent in the local landscape and likely to give rise to significant landscape impact.

Policy G6 At this stage there is no evidence that a development in this area will provide net gains in biodiversity by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats for the benefit of species. This area of greenfield land is a valuable natural green space with mature trees and hedgerows.

Policy G10 A walkable village and reducing village car use: Gransden has a very poor bus service meaning the population is heavily dependent on the private car. The development would have limited footpath provision connecting the site to the heart of the village as Meadow Road does not have such a footpath. This puts it in conflict with Policy G10 which attempts to reduce village car use.

Conclusion: This application would cause significant adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area as it affects a green space with possible harm to biodiversity; is not connected to the village Built-Up Area.

Great Gransden 8: Leycourt Farm, Eltisley Road

We agree with HDC findings from the LAA and SA that indicate that this site is inappropriate for development.

These comments are based on the policies of the Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Great Gransden which was made in March 2023

It is our view that significant harm would be caused to the character of the village by residential development, its setting and the countryside. (as explained below).

Key points in the Neighbourhood Plan which conflict with this submission to the Call for additional sites 1 August 2024 – 31 January 2025 are:

Policy G1 It is our view that any built development outside the Built-Up Area Boundary in the submitted NP cannot be supported as the circumstances are not exceptional in this case. It has low potential to integrate built development into the existing community so has low sustainability as a site.

Policy G3 Development proposals are on wholly greenfield land, not on brownfield land.

Policy G10 The site is 1.6km north of the village and there are no footpaths to the village. This puts it in conflict with Policy G10 which attempts to reduce village car use.

Conclusion: This application would cause significant adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area as it is not in any way connected to the village Built-Up Area.