

Planning Statement

Land South of Blakesley
Hill, Greens Norton

Prepared by Fisher German LLP on behalf of
Richborough Estates



Project Title:

Land South of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton

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Appendix 1 – Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment

01 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Richborough Estates in relation to land south of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton. The planning application seeks outline planning permission for up to 69 dwellings, with associated access, landscaping, open space, and drainage infrastructure.
- 1.2 All matters are reserved, except for access. Details relating to the appearance, layout, amount and scale of development as well as landscaping within the site are to be the subject of subsequent reserved matters approval.
- 1.3 The application follows previous development proposals at the site which incorporated land extending southwards to Bradden Road, approximately double that of the application site which is subject to this planning application. The application seeks to respond to earlier proposals and it is considered that the site, having been significantly reduced from the earlier applications, is of an appropriate scale to the settlement
- 1.4 Greens Norton is one of Council's most sustainable settlements, only behind the towns of Towcester and Brackley and the five Primary Service Villages, thereby forming a significant part of the settlement hierarchy for South Northamptonshire. With additional scoring for restaurant provision in the settlement, the scoring is closer to the Primary Service Villages scores than the Secondary Service Villages (A). Furthermore, with changing working practices and greater remote working taking place, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic, aligned with increased use of online shopping, this has reduced the need for communities and businesses to travel as frequently. Services such as superfast broadband are now a key element of ensuring a settlement's sustainability, and are classified as 'Very Important' within the settlement hierarchy scoring. Greens Norton benefits from superfast broadband, with speeds of up to 80 Mbps, providing the fast and reliable connections required to facilitate effective home working in a rural location. Such home working is only likely to increase in a post COVID-19 world. Greens Norton is more than adequately provided for these changes.

- 1.5 The proposed development will deliver a highly sustainable residential development which will have positive social, economic and environmental benefits, whilst also assisting the Council in boosting the supply of housing. The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) contains a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development, where proposals accord with the Development Plan, with paragraph 11 stating that such development should be "*approved without delay*".
- 1.6 The application is supported by various detailed reports and surveys which have considered the proposed development's impact on the site and its surroundings. All of these reports and surveys conclude that the proposal can be comfortably assimilated into its surroundings without any significant adverse impacts. Furthermore, there are no technical considerations or complications in respect of land ownership which would delay the delivery of the site or undermine its viability.

02 Introduction

- 2.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Richborough Estates in relation to land south of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton. The planning application seeks outline planning permission for up to 69 dwellings, with associated access, landscaping, open space, and drainage infrastructure.
- 2.2 All matters are reserved, except for access. Details relating to the appearance, layout, amount and scale of development as well as landscaping within the site are to be the subject of subsequent reserved matters approval.
- 2.3 The application is supported by the following documentation:
- Site Location Plan
 - Parameters Plan
 - Illustrative Masterplan
 - Topographical Survey
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
 - Ecological Assessment
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment
 - Agricultural Land Classification Assessment
 - Archaeological Geophysical Survey
 - Transport Assessment
 - Travel Plan
 - Flood Risk Assessment
 - Sustainable Drainage Statement
 - Phase I Environmental Risk Assessment
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Rapid Health Impact Assessment
- 2.4 This Planning Statement sets out the background relevant to the determination of application, by describing the site and its general locality, before setting out details of the proposed development. The Statement goes on to provide an overview of the planning policy context against which the

development must be assessed, followed by a detailed consideration of the development proposals against the policy context and all other relevant material considerations.

2.5 The benefits to be delivered by the development will substantially outweigh any minor residual impacts. It is considered that there are compelling grounds to grant planning permission for the proposed development, including:

- Construction of additional housing to significantly boost South Northamptonshire Council's supply of both market and affordable housing, including a mixture of dwelling types and sizes, ranging from bungalows, flats, terraced units, semi-detached and detached family properties across 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms;
- New public open space, for both existing and future residents;
- The protection and enhancement of existing landscape features and biodiversity habitats;
- A high quality development in a landscaped setting;
- Opportunities to enhance existing community facilities and local infrastructure, including contributions to increase the frequency of the existing No.87 bus service to Northampton and Towcester, with free bus taster passes providing three months of unlimited travel across Northampton and surrounding villages for each dwelling; and
- A boost to the local economy through employment and training opportunities during construction, increased spend from local residents in the local economy following completion, together with the delivery of New Homes Bonus.

03 Site and Surrounding Area

The Site

- 3.1 The application site extends to 2.87 hectares (ha), located approximately 400 metres to the west of the centre of Greens Norton.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan

- 3.2 The site comprises subgrade 3b: moderate quality agricultural land immediately east of the site of the built form of Greens Norton. Strong defensible boundaries are present to the north and west by Blakesley Hill and Bury Hill. A mature hedgerow marks the southern boundary. The wider landscape to the north, west and south is largely comprised of pastoral and arable farmland with scattered farmsteads and rural development.
- 3.3 The topography slopes north to south, from approximately 125m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to 113m AOD.
- 3.4 Vehicular access to the site is currently obtained from the north eastern corner of the site from Blakesley Hill. The centre of Greens Norton is located 400m away along Blakesley Hill, on which a

public footpath is located. Bus stops providing services to Northampton, Brackley and Towcester are located within the centre of Greens Norton. Full reference to the site's sustainability is located in the accompanying Travel Plan.

- 3.5 The site is not at risk of flooding, as defined by the Environment Agency's flood maps (Flood Zone 1) and confirmed through the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with this planning application.
- 3.6 Greens Norton benefits from a good range of services and facilities including two pre-schools (Rocking Horse and Hedgehog Hill), primary school, medical centre, post office and village store, independent butchers, the Butchers Arms public house and restaurant, place of worship and a community centre. A wider array of opportunities are available in Northampton, Brackley and Towcester via public transport.

Planning History

- 3.7 An outline planning application for 128 dwellings was refused in July 2015 (Ref: S/2015/0718/MAO) with a re-submission application also refused in October 2016 (Ref: S/2016/1891/MAO). The applications comprised of land which extended further southwards to Bradden Road, which approximately doubled the application site which is subject to this planning application.
- 3.8 Application S/2015/0718/MAO was refused for the following reasons:
1. The proposed development would not accord with the relevant Development Plan for the area, particularly 'saved' policies H6 and EV2 of the adopted South Northamptonshire Local Plan and policies SA, S1, S3, S5 and R1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy which seek to meet identified needs via an urban-focused sustainable form of development. This relates to concentrating development in the rural service centres of Brackley and Towcester, whilst strictly controlling development in the remainder of the rural areas. It is also stated that the proposal would be significantly harmful to the character and appearance of the site;
 2. There was an absence of a signed legal undertaking relating to infrastructure and developer contributions. Therefore, the Council could not be satisfied that the proposal would make a

sufficient contribution to local infrastructure, contrary to Policies RC10 of the adopted South Northamptonshire Local Plan (1997), and Policy H2, INF1 and INF2 of the Joint Core Strategy.

3. The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted with the application did not comply with the requirements set out in paragraph 9 of the Technical Guide to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The submitted FRA does not therefore provide a suitable basis for assessment to be made of the flood risks arising from the proposed development.

3.9 The resubmitted application (S/2016/1891/MAO) was refused for reasons 1 and 2 of the original application.

3.10 The aforementioned reasons for refusal have been reviewed in the new proposal. It is considered that the site, having been significantly reduced from the earlier applications, is of an appropriate scale to the settlement.

04 The Proposed Development

Proposed Development

- 4.1 Outline planning consent is sought for residential development of up to 69 dwellings, with associated access, landscaping, open space, and drainage infrastructure on land south of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton.
- 4.2 Details relating to the appearance, layout, amount and scale of development as well as landscaping within the site are to be the subject of subsequent reserved matters approval. Detailed means of access are to be determined under this application.
- 4.3 The application is also accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which sets out a number of principles to ensure that elements of the illustrative proposal are carried through to the detailed design stage.
- 4.4 The Illustrative Masterplan, submitted with the planning application, demonstrates how the site can accommodate a development of up to 69 dwellings. The Masterplan shows the retention of existing trees and hedgerows and the creation of new open space.
- 4.5 The development will provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes, ranging from bungalows, flats, terraced units, semi-detached and detached family properties across 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms.
- 4.6 The development will include affordable housing in accordance with Development Plan policy (i.e. up to 50%) to contribute towards the need for affordable housing in Greens Norton and the District as a whole. The types and tenures of the affordable housing accord with Development Plan policy, providing a 70:30 tenure split (affordable rent: intermediate) across the 50% provision (up to 35 dwellings).

Consultation

- 4.7 The Richborough Estates Team have engaged with the local community previously, having undertaken a public exhibition on a larger scheme in 2015. Having responded to feedback from

those development proposals, the site has been reduced to only the parcel of land directly south of Blakesley Hill. By reducing the size of the development site, this also reduces the scale of the proposed development by approximately half.

- 4.8 To inform the local community about the new development proposals, a consultation leaflet was distributed in July 2020 to residents within Greens Norton inviting them to submit feedback. A weblink to Richborough Estates' website was also provided where further information regarding the proposals were located. In advance of the consultation, the Parish Council were consulted and notified of the emerging proposals. Matters relating to the consultation and the responses received are fully detailed in the separate Statement of Community Involvement submitted with the planning application.
- 4.9 It has been demonstrated that Richborough Estates has made considerable efforts to engage the community in the formulation of the revised development proposals and that these efforts have helped to shape and influence elements of the scheme in order to address issues and concerns raised by respondents.

05 Planning Policy Context

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan material to this proposal comprises:

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) Local Plan (Part 1) (2014)
- South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2) (2020)

5.2 In addition, national government policy, principally the National Planning Policy Framework published in February 2019 (the Framework), is material to the determination of planning applications.

5.3 Further material considerations include the emerging West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (WNSP), which will replace the WNJCS, covering the period 2019-2040, although the plan period may be extended to 2050. Preparation of the Plan is at an early stage with only an Issues Consultation having been undertaken in October 2019.

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (2014)

5.4 The WNJCS was adopted as the core planning document for the Council, in conjunction with Northampton Borough Council and Daventry District Council, on 15th December 2014.

5.5 A primary justification behind the joint plan is that Northampton Borough Council cannot meet its own housing needs; thus, to meet the objectively assessed needs of the Housing Market Area, as is required by paragraph 73 of the NPPF, it was necessary to plan for development across Local Authority boundaries.

5.6 WNJCS policies relating to the development proposal include the following:

5.7 **Policy SA: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development:** sets out that the LPA will work proactively to ensure planning is not a barrier to new development.

- 5.8 **Policy S1: The Distribution of Development** sets out the overall strategy for the broad distribution of development across West Northamptonshire advising development will be concentrated primarily in and adjoining Northampton, with lesser scale development in and adjoining Daventry, and the development needs of Towcester and Brackley to be provided for.
- 5.9 The policy advises that new development in the rural areas will be limited with an emphasis on enhancing and maintaining character and vitality of rural communities, shortening journeys and facilitating access to jobs and services; strengthening rural enterprise and linkages between settlements.
- 5.10 This allows for development in rural locations, such as Greens Norton. Furthermore, this development is in a sustainable location and can enhance the vitality of Greens Norton's community. In addition, there is excellent access to larger settlements, including by public transport, and the development respects the existing form of the settlement.
- 5.11 **Policy S2: Hierarchy of Centres** defines a network and hierarchy of centres that are resilient to anticipated future economic changes and that meet the needs of their catchment population. Within the West Northamptonshire area there is already a clear hierarchy of centres at the upper tiers with Northampton town centre as the largest, followed by Daventry town centre, and then Towcester and Brackley as smaller town centres. Policy R1 sets out a spatial strategy for the rural areas (such as Greens Norton) where development will be guided by a rural settlement hierarchy with the specific villages in each level of the hierarchy determined in future Local Plans.
- 5.12 **Policy S3: Scale and Distribution of Housing Development** sets a target of 'about 11,020 dwellings' to be provided in South Northamptonshire over the period 2011-2029; including 2,360 specifically within the rural area of South Northamptonshire. The actual residual housing need (2011-2029) for the administrative area of South Northamptonshire as 10,168 dwellings.
- 5.13 The supporting text states that, *"Whilst in general terms the rural housing needs will be set by the requirements set out in Policy S3, it is not the intention of the Plan to prevent additional appropriate development in the rural areas from coming forward."* The proposed development will assist the Council in meeting both of these assessed needs over the Plan period.

- 5.14 **Policy S6: Monitoring and Review** sets out the criteria for monitoring the housing requirement on an annual basis. We consider that the proposed development will assist the Council in meeting housing needs in the early part of the Plan period and thus assist the Council in demonstrating a deliverable supply from the outset of the Plan period.
- 5.15 **Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles** ensures that the economic, social and environmental needs of the area are delivered in a balanced way to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and local environment, protecting valued landscapes, minimising impacts on biodiversity, and enhancing green networks. We consider that the proposed development is a sustainable location by virtue of both its location in Greens Norton and the proximity of larger centres nearby, including Towcester which is accessible by public transport. The applicant is also committed to delivering high quality and energy efficient properties within this development.
- 5.16 **Policy C2: New Developments** relates to highways matters advising that the design, density and location of services within new developments should maximise the opportunity for trips by non-car modes and be able mitigate its effects on the highway network. The accompanying Transport Statement and Travel Plan deals fully with this policy in full and the proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact on the local highways network and will link well to existing public transport provision.
- 5.17 **Policy RC2: Community Needs** seeks the provision of appropriate community facilities and open space alongside residential development. The proposed development will secure a well surveilled area of open space and natural play, the details of which would be agreed at the reserved matters stage, along with further areas of open space along the western and southern site boundaries.
- 5.18 **Policy H1: Housing Density and Mix and Type of Dwellings** seeks to ensure that an appropriate mix of housing is provided. This will not be fully assessable until the reserved matters stage, however, the applicant is committed to providing an appropriate mix of housing on site and the density will be in keeping with adjacent and surrounding developments.

- 5.19 The indicative mix, assuming the maximum capacity of 69 dwellings, for the development proposals is as follows:

Property Type	No. of units
1 bed flat	6
2 bed house	21
2 bed bungalow	4
3 bed house	26
4 bed house	12
Total	69

- 5.20 **Policy H2: Affordable Housing** sets out the requirements for the on-site provision of affordable housing. For the Rural Areas the percentage requirement is 50%. The policy states that the tenure mix of affordable housing should reflect local housing need and viability on individual sites and that the provision should be made on site as an integral part of the development unless in exceptional circumstances where off-site provision, and/or commuted payments are made in lieu of on-site provision.
- 5.21 The Council's latest Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2018/19, acknowledges that conditions for the delivery of affordable housing remain challenging with the gross affordable dwellings number across the HMA falling. In South Northamptonshire, overall permissions granted in the period 2016-19 equate to only 14.39% affordable housing with permissions in Brackley and Towcester delivering 14.7% and in the rural areas 6.9%. In both cases this is well below the targets in Policy H2 of the WNJCS.
- 5.22 The applicant is willing to agree to a policy-compliant level of affordable housing on-site of 50% provision, of up to 35 affordable units, with the overall affordable housing mix and tenure split of: 70% affordable housing for rent and 30% affordable home ownership as per LPP2 policy. This represents a significant positive benefit of the proposed development.
- 5.23 **Policy H4: Sustainable Housing** sets out that residential development must be designed to provide accommodation that meets the requirements of the Lifetime Homes Standard, subject to the assessment of viability on a site by site basis.

- 5.24 **Policy BN1: Green Infrastructure Connections** sets out that measures to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure provision will amongst others, be designed and delivered sustainably, designed of the highest quality and reflect local character.
- 5.25 **Policy BN2: Biodiversity** requires new development must take into account existing biodiversity resources on individual sites and contribute to the links between them.
- 5.26 **Policy BN7a: Water Supply, Quality and Wastewater Infrastructure** requires developments to ensure that adequate and appropriate water supply and wastewater infrastructure is available.
- 5.27 **Policy BN7: Flood Risk** requires developers to prepare a Flood Risk Assessment for all development proposals over 1 hectare in line with national guidance.
- 5.28 **Policies INF1 and INF2** relate to planning obligations and infrastructure contributions. The Applicant is willing to agree to appropriate and justified contributions to ensure that the development does not have an adverse impact on facilities and infrastructure locally.
- 5.29 **Policy R1: Spatial Strategy for the Rural Areas** sets the housing requirement for the rural areas as 2,360 dwellings within South Northamptonshire. The policy states that the distribution of such housing will be subject to Local Plan Part 2, which will also set the rural settlement hierarchy. The Part 2 Plan identifies Greens Norton as a 'Secondary Service Village (A)', the 8th most sustainable settlement within the District, behind only the towns of Towcester and Brackley and the five Primary Service Villages, thereby forming a significant part of the settlement hierarchy for South Northamptonshire.
- 5.30 The policy goes on to state that residential development in rural areas will be required to :
- A) *Provide for an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, including affordable housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community, including the elderly and vulnerable; and*
 - B) *Not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the village; and*
 - C) *Preserve and enhance historic buildings and areas of historic or environmental importance including those identified in conservation area appraisals and village design statements; and*
 - D) *Protect the amenity of existing residents; and*
 - E) *Be of an appropriate scale to the existing settlement; and*

- F) Promote sustainable development that equally addresses economic, social and environmental issues; and*
- G) Be within the existing confines of the village*

5.31 The development proposals are considered to perform well against all of the criteria listed, save for criterion G. However, the policy does not preclude development in the rural areas, going on to state that “*development outside the existing confines will be permitted where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities*” for example.

5.32 The policy provides guidance once the housing requirement for the rural areas has been met, stating that once triggered, further housing development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it:

- i) Would result in environmental improvements on a site including for example the re-use of previously developed land and best practice in design; or*
- ii) Is required to support the retention of or improvement to essential local services that may be under threat (in particular the local primary school or primary health services); and*
- iii) Has been informed by an effective community involvement exercise prior to the submission of a planning application; or*
- iv) Is a rural exceptions site that meets the criteria set out in policy H3; or*
- v) Has been agreed through an adopted neighbourhood plan.*

5.33 The development proposals are assessed against this in further detail in the following chapter, however, in making an important local service provision and having undertaken effective community engagement, it is considered that the development proposals fully comply with criterion ii) of WNJCS Policy R1 and that development should be permitted in principle.

South Northamptonshire (Part 2) Local Plan

5.34 The Inspector’s Report on the South Northamptonshire (Part 2) Local Plan (LPP2) was received on 23 June 2020 with the recommendation being that with the main modifications identified, the LPP2 satisfies the requirements of s20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the Framework. South Northamptonshire Council formally adopted the LPP2 on 22 July 2020. This supercedes all Saved Policies from the now extant Local Plan 1997.

5.35 LPP2 policies relating to the development proposal include the following:

- 5.36 **Policy SS1: The Settlement Hierarchy** splits villages within the Rural Areas into three categories. Greens Norton is identified as a 'Secondary Service Village (A)', the 8th most sustainable settlement within the District, behind only the towns of Towcester and Brackley and the five Primary Service Villages.
- 5.37 Despite Greens Norton being demonstrably one of the most sustainable locations within the District, and thus considered suitable for residential development, neither the WNJCS or Part 2 Local Plan make any residential allocations in the settlement, citing that the Rural Area requirement of 2,360 dwellings has been met. The Part 2 Local Plan does however state that *"this does not mean that it is desirable to impose a moratorium of all future housing development. The rural areas in particular will continue to contribute to the overall supply of housing and generate a housing need, particularly for affordable housing"*.
- 5.38 It should be noted that whilst the Rural Area requirement has been met, the Urban Area - Brackley and Towcester requirements have not. In addition, the NRDA requirement for 3,850 dwellings within South Northamptonshire has also not been achieved which has implications for calculating future housing supply and application of adopted planning policy.
- 5.39 **Policy SS2: General Development and Design Principles** states that planning permission will be granted where the proposed development:
- a. *Maintains the individual identity of towns and villages and their distinct parts, does not result in physical coalescence that would harm this identity and does not result in the unacceptable loss of undeveloped land, open spaces and locally important views of particular significance to the form and character of a settlement; and*
 - b. *Uses a design-led approach to demonstrate compatibility and integration with its surroundings and the distinctive local character of the area in terms of type, scale, massing, siting, form, design, materials and details; and*
 - c. *Is designed to provide an accessible, safe and inclusive environment which maximises opportunities to increase personal safety and security through preventative or mitigation measures; and*
 - d. *Incorporates suitable landscape treatment as an integral part of the planning of the development; and*

- e. *Incorporates sensitive lighting schemes that respect the surrounding area and reduce harmful impacts on wildlife and neighbours; and*
- f. *Will result in a good standard of living for future occupiers and will not unacceptably harm the amenity of occupiers and users of neighbouring properties and the area through noise, odour, vibration, overshadowing or result in loss of privacy, sunlight, daylight or outlook, unless adequate mitigation measures are proposed and secured; and*
- g. *Has appropriate regard to its effect on air quality and the effects of air quality on its future occupiers; and*
- h. *Does not result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land or valued soils; and*
- i. *Contributes towards the creation of a healthy community and, in the case of major development, demonstrates the health and wellbeing implications of the proposed development through a suitable health impact assessment (HIA). All major developments (10 or more dwellings or 1000 or more square metres) will be expected to complete and submit a rapid HIA in order to determine if more substantial HIA is necessary or not, while larger developments above 100 homes will be expected to complete a more substantial HIA to support their application; and*
- j. *Would include a safe and satisfactory means of access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles; and*
- k. *Takes into account existing or planned social and transport infrastructure to ensure development is adequately served by public transport or is in reasonable proximity to a range of local facilities which can be reached without the need for private car journeys; and*
- l. *Is adequately serviced with utility infrastructure appropriate to the development including power, water supply, sewerage, waste management and, telecommunications and provides for satisfactory foul and surface water drainage and incorporates mitigation identified through an assessment of flood risk and the management requirements to address current and future risks incorporating the required climate change allowances and meets the optional higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day; and*
- m. *Will not adversely affect built heritage and sites of nature conservation value or sites of geological, geomorphological or archaeological importance; and*
- n. *It is not on or in proximity to land containing known mineral resources, or if known resources exist, without first considering the need to safeguard these resources; and*
- o. *Would not pose additional risk to users, occupiers and neighbours located in the vicinity of sites that are used for the storage or processing or transporting of hazardous substances; and*

- p. Shows a detailed consideration of ecological impacts, wildlife mitigation and the creation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife corridors to preserve and enhance biodiversity; and*
- q. Ensures an appropriate degree of facility provision and waste and recycling storage. Provision should be made for discreet bin storage, ideally within private rear gardens and service yards where it will not result in visual clutter which can substantially detract from the character and perceived quality of the streetscene.*

5.40 The proposals are considered to meet each of the criterion listed.

5.41 **Policy LH1: Residential Development Inside and Outside Settlement Confines** outlines that:

"3. Development outside of settlement confines is considered to be in the open countryside and will not be acceptable unless it:

- a. Is allocated within a made neighbourhood plan;
- b. Is for starter homes in accordance with policy LH2; or
- c. Meets an exception test as set out in Policy LH3; or
- d. Is for a single dwelling in accordance with Policy LH4; or
- e. Is a self or custom build project in accordance with Policy LH5; or
- f. Is a specialist housing and accommodation needs proposal in accordance with Policy LH6;
- g. Is a residential/nursing care proposal in accordance with Policy LH9;
- h. Is an isolated home in the countryside that meets one of the exceptions set out in the NPPF
- i.
 - i. **is otherwise provided for within Policy R1 criteria i-v of the WNJCS Local Plan (Part 1).**
 - ii. is NRDA-related housing development compliant with Policy S4 of the WNJCS and directly adjoins the NRDA.

5.42 The development proposals are assessed against this policy in further detail in the following chapter, however, in making an important local service provision and having undertaken effective community engagement, it is considered that the development proposals fully comply with criterion ii and iii)) of WNJCS Policy R1, and therefore also in full accordance with LPP2 Policy LH1(3)(i)(i) and that development should be permitted in principle.

5.43 **Policy LH8: Affordable Housing** outlines the affordable housing requirement for proposals that comprise 10 or more dwellings, or on sites of 0.5 hectares or more. The guidance states that

proposals should achieve 50% affordable housing in rural areas and that the Council will seek a tenure split of 70% affordable rent provision and 30% affordable home ownership. The development proposals will be policy compliant, recognising a significant shortfall of affordable housing provision across the District and notably within the rural area.

5.44 **Policy LH10: Housing Mix and Type** states that new residential development should ensure a mixture of types, tenure, size and costs of homes to contribute to the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities, with developments of 20 or more dwellings providing at least 5% bungalows.

5.45 50% of developments of 10 or more market or affordable dwellings should be constructed to meet the optional accessibility standards set out in Part M of the Building Regulations. In terms of affordable housing, 10% of the 50% requirement should be constructed to meet the Building Regulations M4(3) standard for wheelchair user dwellings, with the remaining 40% constructed to meet the M4(2) standard for accessible and adaptable dwellings.

5.46 The development will provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes, ranging from bungalows, flats, terraced units, semi-detached and detached family properties across 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms. The proposals will provide 6% of the dwellings as bungalows and will comply with the Part M requirements as set out. The proposed mix, assuming the maximum capacity of 69 dwellings, is outlined below:

Property Type	No. of units
1 bed flat	6
2 bed house	21
2 bed bungalow	4
3 bed house	26
4 bed house	12
Total	69

5.47 **Policy SDP3: Health Facilities and Wellbeing** outlines the health and wellbeing of communities will be maintained and improved by requiring developments to contribute to creating a healthy and equitable living environment through locating development in sustainable locations with a mixture of housing types and tenures. The development is sustainably located in a Secondary Service

Village (A) and will provide a mixture of housing types, tenures and sizes, including bungalow provision.

5.48 **Policy INF1: Infrastructure Delivery and Funding** requires new developments to provide for the necessary infrastructure requirements and affordable housing arising from the proposal. The development will make provision for, where necessary, the following:

- **Affordable Housing:** To make provision for a scheme of Affordable Housing in agreement with the Council.
- **Open Space:** To provide on-site open space together with maintenance and management arrangements.
- **Sports Provision:** To provide off-site sports provision contributions together with maintenance arrangements.
- **Strategic Leisure:** To provide off-site strategic leisure contributions for the wider community.
- **Recycling Bin Provision:** To enable provision of recycling bins for each dwelling.
- **Education Contribution:** The school catchment comprises Greens Norton Primary School which is operating under capacity. It is unsure at this stage whether contributions will be required for this or other education tiers.
- **Public Transport:** To enable an increase in frequency of the local bus service and provision of bus passes
- **Fire and Rescue:** To address community needs associated with development.
- **SUDS maintenance:** To provide contributions towards maintenance arrangements.
- **Council's Monitoring Costs:** To enable the Council to monitor and manage the monies associated with the S106.
- **Other:** Other contributions may be identified through the planning consultation process, and subject to meeting the appropriate tests of relevance, necessity and reasonableness, consideration will be given to their inclusion.

5.49 **Policy INF3: Education Facilities** ensures that the provision of primary and secondary education facilities, along with early years and lifelong learning, are provided throughout the District to accommodate population growth.

5.50 **Policy INF4: Electric Vehicle Charging Points** requires residential developments to make provision for electric vehicle charging.

- 5.51 **Policy GS1: Open Space, Sport and Recreation** ensures that necessary provision is made in development schemes including contributions on developments of 11 or more homes.
- 5.52 **Policy HE2: Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeology** outlines development that would harm locally important archaeological remains or their settings will only be permitted where the public benefits of development are significant and can be demonstrated to outweigh the harm to the archaeological interest of the asset and its setting. It further outlines that when considering proposals that may affect sites that potentially have remains of archaeological importance, they will not be assessed until an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field assessment has been undertaken. A Geophysical Survey of the site was undertaken which identified few features of potential archaeological interest. Ridge and furrow is evident across the survey area and a few linear anomalies may relate to a former field system. In light of the negative results of the geophysical survey, and the low/negligible potential for significant evidence of all periods, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required to safeguard the heritage interest of the site.
- 5.53 **Policy NE2: Special Landscape Areas and Policy NE3: Green Infrastructure Corridors** sets out that developments within these designations should avoid harmful impacts to the character and appearance of the area. The application site, nor the settlement of Greens Norton, has either of these designations.
- 5.54 **Policy NE4: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows** outlines that developments should seek to integrate existing vegetation and where loss of existing trees, woodland or hedgerows is unavoidable, suitable replacement planting will be required.
- 5.55 **Policy NE5: Biodiversity and Geodiversity** outlines how development proposals should conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity in order to provide measurable net gains. Development proposals will be expected to incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity within or around a development site, and to contribute to the consolidation and development of local ecological networks, including beyond the district's boundary. Measures should be appropriate and compatible with existing biodiversity, ecosystems and designated wildlife sites.

Emerging West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan 2019-2040

- 5.56 The WNJCS will be replaced by the emerging West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (WNSP), covering the period 2019-2040, although this may be extended to 2050. Preparation of the Plan is at an early stage with only an Issues Consultation having been undertaken in October 2019.
- 5.57 Whilst at this early stage, it is very apparent however that significant housing growth will need to be distributed across the three Councils to the order of a minimum 61,700 dwellings to 2041, arguably closer to 87,000 dwellings when extended to 2050 and with an Arc-related growth uplift. This could increase the average annual requirement from the current 2,324 dpa up to 2,805 dpa or 3,955 dpa respectively across the three Councils. In 2019, delivery across the three Councils was 2,336 dwellings. A stepped-change will be necessary to deliver the emerging growth requirements. This will need to utilise a number of spatial options to deliver the growth, but crucially must include greather disbursement down the spatial hierarchy, and as a minimum to settlements categorised as Secondary Service Villages (A) like Greens Norton.
- 5.58 The site is being promoted through the emerging WNSP and would assist in the delivery of the new housing requirements.

National Planning Policy Framework

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 5.59 The NPPF sets that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 5.60 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The first objective, an economic objective, seeks to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth. Secondly, the social objective supports strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations. Thirdly, the environmental objective is to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

5.61 At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Framework in paragraph 11 states *“plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”*.

5.62 As paragraph 11 goes on to state, for decision-taking this means:

- c) *“approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) *where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - i. *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”*.

Decision-Making

5.63 Paragraph 38 of the Framework states that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

5.64 At paragraph 47, the NPPF also emphasises that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Additionally, decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

5.65 With regards to planning conditions and obligations, the Framework at paragraph 54 is clear that *“Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition”*. Also, planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

5.66 Paragraph 56 states that planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
- b) directly related to the development; and*
- c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development”.*

Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

5.67 Paragraph 59 emphasises that it is the Government’s objective to significantly boost the supply of homes. Consequently, “it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay”.

5.68 Paragraph 73 states that “Local Planning Authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old”.

5.69 The paragraph continues by explaining that the supply of deliverable sites should include a buffer (moved forward from the plan period) of:

- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or*
- b) 10% where the local planning authority wishes to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites through an annual position statement or recently adopted plan, to account for any fluctuations in the market during that year; or*
- c) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply”.*

5.70 To maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Paragraph 75 states that where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below 95% of the local planning authority’s housing requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan in line with national planning guidance.

Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

- 5.71 This section of the Framework sets out a number of principles to ensure that planning policies and decisions aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 5.72 The Framework states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals. In considering development proposals, paragraph 108 states that it should be ensured that:
- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;*
 - b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and*
 - c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree”.*
- 5.73 Paragraph 109 states that “Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”.

Achieving well-designed places

- 5.74 The Framework notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development because it *“creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*. Paragraph 127 states that policies and decisions should ensure developments will meet several criteria, including that they function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive, are sympathetic to local character and history including surrounding built environment and landscape, establish a strong sense of place and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development.

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

- 5.75 This section of the NPPF sets out ways in which planning can support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It also highlights that planning should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse

of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

5.76 Paragraph 170 of the Framework sets out a number of ways in which planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

5.77 When determining applications, paragraph 175 states that local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- "a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity".*

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

5.78 The Framework requires applications which affect heritage assets to describe the significance of any assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Implementation

- 5.79 Annex 1 of the NPPF confirms that the policies within it are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication. It also notes that *"Plans may also need to be revised to reflect policy changes which this replacement Framework has made"*.
- 5.80 Paragraph 213 states that existing policies in Local Plans should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 5.81 This online Guidance was launched in March 2014. The PPG is not intended to make any changes to the Framework but seeks to bring together planning practice guidance for England, previously published only in separate documents, in an accessible and usable way. The PPG is a live document and is updated regularly.

Planning Obligations

- 5.82 Paragraph 002 of the Guidance relating to Planning Obligations sets out that planning obligations assist in *"mitigating the impact of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms"*. Additionally, it states that, *"planning obligations may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission if they meet the tests that they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind"*.

06 Planning Assessment

6.1 The description of development for which outline planning consent is sought is:

"Outline planning application for residential development, all matters are reserved except for access".

6.2 The grant of planning permission for future development of the site will deliver benefits for the wider local community and future investment in the immediate area, which include:

- Construction of additional housing to significantly boost South Northamptonshire Council's supply of both market and affordable housing, including a mixture of dwelling types and sizes, ranging from bungalows, flats, terraced units, semi-detached and detached family properties across 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms;
- New public open space, for both existing and future residents;
- The protection and enhancement of existing landscape features and biodiversity habitats;
- A high quality development in a landscaped setting;
- Opportunities to enhance existing community facilities and local infrastructure, including contributions to increase the frequency of the existing No.87 bus service to Northampton and Towcester, with free bus taster passes providing three months of unlimited travel across Northampton and surrounding villages for each dwelling; and
- A boost to the local economy through employment and training opportunities during construction, increased spend from local residents in the local economy following completion, together with the delivery of New Homes Bonus.

6.3 The application is supported by various detailed reports and surveys which have scoped and considered the proposed development's impact upon the site and its surroundings. All of these reports and surveys conclude that the proposal can be comfortably assimilated into its surroundings, without any significant adverse impacts. Furthermore, there are no technical considerations or complications in respect of land ownership which would delay the delivery of the site or undermine its viability.

6.4 An assessment of the proposed development has been made against the relevant planning policy framework for the site, and other material considerations in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. The assessment considers the following matters:

- Principle of Development
- Scheme Benefits
- Technical, including:
 - Landscape
 - Ecology
 - Trees
 - Agricultural Land Classification
 - Archaeology
 - Highways and Access
 - Flooding and Drainage
 - Utilities
 - Ground Conditions
 - Infrastructure Requirements
 - Layout and Design

Principle of Development

6.5 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of the act, the Development Plan for South Northamptonshire is the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) Local Plan (Part 1) (2014) and the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (2020). The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

6.6 In respect of the local context for this planning application, the application site is located within the countryside, outside of but adjacent to the settlement confines for Greens Norton. The site is not subject to any specific designations which would warrant protection under footnote 6 of paragraph 11 (d) i) of the NPPF.

- 6.7 Policy R1 of the Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) indicates how the housing growth directed towards the rural areas (outside of the NRDA, Daventry, Brackley and Towcester) would be delivered. The policy outlines that the rural requirement for both Daventry and South Northamptonshire are both 2,360 dwellings and that the distribution of the rural housing requirement according to the local need of each village and their role within a rural settlement hierarchy is to be determined and set out in the Part 2 Local Plan. The policy indicates however, that once these rural requirement has been met that residential development would be restricted, save for a small number of criterion where residential development may still be permissible, including where it can be demonstrated that it:
- vi) Is required to support the retention of or improvement to essential local services that may be under threat (in particular the local primary school or primary health services); and*
 - vii) has been informed by an effective community involvement exercise prior to the submission of a planning application; or*
- 6.8 Greens Norton is served by the No.87 bus service between Northampton and Towcester, however the service has reduced over the years due to a lack of County Council funding. There is no budget within Northamptonshire County Council for subsidising the bus service any longer than the current financial year, ending March 2021. This has resulted in the Parish Council already making financial contributions (some £4,500 in 2019/2020 and £3,500 in 2020/2021) to ensure its retention through the village.
- 6.9 The village bus service is highly valued by the local community and petitions have been made by villagers regarding its impending loss. Many residents feel they are becoming cut off from the surrounding villages and larger towns of Towcester and Northampton and are extremely concerned that funds for the vital transport link will be ceased in their entirety.
- 6.10 Preliminary discussions have been held with Northamptonshire Highways regarding a financial contribution towards public transport; at this stage, it has been agreed with the local authority that a contribution of £1,000 per dwelling towards enhancements to the existing No.87 service will be made (via Section 106 agreement). The contribution will be pooled with other development contributions along the route of the No.87 service and used to deliver enhancements to the daytime service, Monday to Saturday, between Northampton and Towcester.

- 6.11 The significant contributions to be made as part of the development proposals will help to support the retention of, and improve, the existing bus service for many years. Without sufficient contributions arising through developments such as this scheme, this essential community service will cease to operate. In making this important local service provision, it is considered that the development proposals fully comply with criterion ii) of WNJCS Policy R1 and that development should be permitted in principle.
- 6.12 In meeting criteria ii), development proposals should also meet criterion iii). The development has been informed by effective community engagement. The Richborough team have responded to feedback from earlier planning applications and have reduced the size of the site to only the parcel of land directly south of Blakesley Hill. By reducing the size of the development site this also reduces the scale of the proposed development by around a half. As a result, the amended site could accommodate up to 69 homes, including 35 affordable homes, enhanced landscaping, public open space, and drainage infrastructure.
- 6.13 The Richborough Estates Team have engaged with the local community previously, having undertaken a public exhibition on a larger scheme. Having responded to feedback from those development proposals, the site has been reduced to only the parcel of land directly south of Blakesley Hill. By reducing the size of the development site this also reduces the scale of the proposed development by approximately half.
- 6.14 The revised development proposals have been subject to a further community engagement exercise, including local residents and the Parish Council. To inform the local community about the new proposals, a consultation leaflet was distributed to residents within Greens Norton inviting them to submit feedback between 1st - 15th July 2020. The consultation was also advertised on the Richborough Estates website.
- 6.15 A total of 57 consultation responses were received from the 715 residential addresses in Greens Norton, representing approximately 8% of the village.
- 6.16 Whilst a number of respondents considered no housing to be suitable, over a quarter of respondents were supportive of bungalow/retirement homes, larger family homes and much

needed social/starter/affordable homes. The proposals seek to deliver a range of homes, including bungalows, providing housing options for some of the elderly population who may wish to downsize as well as much needed social/affordable housing in Greens Norton.

- 6.17 In terms of the Illustrative Masterplan, respondents' main concerns seemed to relate to site access, parking and development density. The proposed vehicular access provides a safe and suitable access off Blakesley Hill with the existing 30mph speed limit proposed for relocation beyond the western boundary of the site. The Local Highway Authority found the previous proposals acceptable in terms of a Blakesley Hill access, at a stage when up to 128 dwellings were proposed. It is considered that the smaller scheme will be more than adequately served by the proposed access.
- 6.18 Parking provision is in accordance with design guidance and is fully integrated into the layout to mitigate the impact parking has on the character of the proposal and to reduce impacts of poorly managed on-street parking and associated congestion. With regards to density, the development will be in keeping with adjacent and surrounding developments.
- 6.19 In terms of general responses, a number of concerns were raised in respect of local highway capacity, however the highway capacity surveys undertaken demonstrate that the site access and the High Street/Towcester Road junctions will operate well within capacity under existing conditions and will continue to do so in the 2030 design year. Furthermore, the Local Highway Authority found the earlier proposals, which were for a significantly larger scheme, acceptable in terms of highway capacity. Overall, the analysis demonstrates that the development will have negligible impact on the local highway network through Greens Norton.
- 6.20 With regards to potential impact of local services, census data has demonstrated a reduction of school and pre-school aged children between 2001-2011. The development provides the opportunity to bring more families and children into the village, helping to sustain the Primary School and the services and villages the village current benefits from. Furthermore, despite a rise in the number of households from 2001-2011, as overall population has decreased, and if this trend continues it could result in less pressure on services such as the GP practice.

- 6.21 The development will also make financial contributions to increase the frequency of the No.87 bus service, also providing three months of unlimited free travel across Northampton and surrounding villages for each dwelling, thereby significantly improving local services for the community.
- 6.22 It has been demonstrated that Richborough Estates has made considerable efforts to engage the community in the formulation of the revised development proposals; and that these efforts have helped to shape and influence elements of the scheme in order to address issues and concerns raised by respondents. It is therefore considered that the development proposals fully comply with criterion iii) of WNJCS Policy R1 and that development should be permitted in principle.
- 6.23 As the development proposals have been assessed against WNJCS Policy R1 and considered to fully comply with its requirements, the proposals are therefore also considered to fully accord with LPP2 Policy LH1(3)(i)(i) which allows development outside of settlement confines in compliance with WNJCS Policy R1.
- 6.24 Delivery in the rural areas is essential for ensuring the continued vitality of settlements. The CLA report *Strong Foundations: Meeting Rural Needs*¹ outlines the significant issues for rural communities when described as unsustainable by development plan documents, unduly restricting their growth. The lack of affordable or entry level housing means younger people are often unable to find local accommodation, forcing them to move away from their homes to find suitable accommodation. Moreover, the lack of new development including bungalows or other dwellings suitable for downsizing means many older people who wish to remain in their home villages will have no suitable options to downsize and as such will instead remain over occupying larger family homes.
- 6.25 A lack of development in rural areas has led to a decline in public transport with much of the rural area now inadequately served by public transport. Without sufficient new growth directed to sustainable settlements within the rural area, such as Greens Norton, it is considered highly likely that there will be further decline of rural bus services, having negative consequences on the social inclusion and wellbeing of those in rural areas reliant on public transport. Further decline in rural

¹ <https://www.cla.org.uk/strongfoundations>

services could lead to social isolation and impact on the ability of many people to access services and facilities.

6.26 Considering Greens Norton itself, South Northamptonshire's adopted evidence² assesses the village as the highest ranked Secondary Service Village (A) within the District, scoring 69 points. This makes it the 8th most sustainable settlement within the District, only behind the towns of Towcester and Brackley and the five Primary Service Villages.

6.27 As Table 1 below illustrates (figures extracted for Greens Norton from the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper January 2018), Greens Norton is extremely well served, with ten of the eleven 'Most Important', 'Very Important' and 'Important' services available (scoring 57 out of a possible 67) with only secondary school provision not accounted for – however provision is located in neighbouring Towcester.

	Most Important			Very Important						Important		Less Important			Other Considerations				
Service / Facility	Secondary School	GP Surgery	Primary School	General Store	Post Office	Broadband	Recreational Facilities	Pre-School / Nursery	Community Facilities	Public House	Local Employment	Restaurants / Takeaways	Allotments	Social Club	Distance to urban areas	Distance to rural service centre	Distance to most important service or facility	Distance to rail station	Total
Greens Norton	0	10	10	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	4	0	2	2	2	6	0	0	69

Table 1: Settlement Hierarchy Scoring

6.28 In contrast, Kings Sutton, a Primary Service Village, only scores 52 points across the 'Most Important' - 'Important' services bracket, though owing to its proximity to the urban area (Banbury) and railway station, is categorised as more sustainable. Greens Norton has better services within the village itself, including a GP surgery with daily services, and although Greens Norton does not score points under the 'Less Important' restaurant category, the village pub 'The Butcher's Arms' is open daily for lunch and dinner services in its dedicated restaurant and function rooms – and

² South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper (January 2018)

should be awarded two additional points for this provision, resulting in a total score of 71 points, just three points behind Kings Sutton in the Hierarchy – though with better in-village services.

- 6.29 With changing working practices and greater remote working taking place, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic, aligned with increased use of online shopping, this has reduced the need for communities and businesses to travel as frequently. Services such as superfast broadband are now a key element of ensuring a settlement's sustainability, and are classified as 'Very Important' within the settlement hierarchy scoring. Greens Norton benefits from superfast broadband, with speeds of up to 80 Mbps, providing the fast and reliable connections required to facilitate effective home working in a rural location. Such home working is only likely to increase in a post COVID-19 world. Greens Norton is more than adequately provided for these changes.
- 6.30 It is further noted that the average score of Primary Service Villages is 76, while the average score of Secondary Service Villages (A) is 59.5 points. As such, Greens Norton's score of 69 points (arguably should be 71 points with restaurant provision) is actually closer to the average score of Primary Service Villages (7 points difference, 5 with the restaurant provision), rather than the Secondary Service Villages (A) (9.5 points difference, 11.5 with restaurant provision), and 14 points higher than settlements in the same category (Charlton and Newbottle, Kislingbury and Yardley Gobion).
- 6.31 Clearly therefore, by South Northamptonshire Council's own adopted evidence, Greens Norton is demonstrably one of the most sustainable locations within the District and thus suitable for residential development. The fact that the rural requirement has been met across the District should not take away the requirement to distribute growth in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, proactively planning for development in sustainable locations such as Greens Norton.
- 6.32 By enabling growth in the rural areas, this will contribute towards sustaining and increasing the vitality and viability of the local services and facilities, thus contributing towards creating and maintaining a sustainable and balanced community and promoting a strong local economy. This approach is considered to be sound and will enable growth to come forward in tandem with the slow moving major infrastructure sites within South Northamptonshire and the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA).

- 6.33 Delivery within the NRDA has been a significant challenge, with the most recent housing land supply statement³ confirming that within the first eight years of the plan, there was a shortfall of some 3,535 dwellings (10,122 dwelling requirement against 6,587 dwelling supply); up from a shortfall of 2,175 dwellings in the April 2018 Assessment; and demonstrating just a 2.75 years land supply. This also takes into account the stepped housing trajectory at the beginning of the Plan period to account for delays in delivery, averaging a 1,266 dwelling requirement per annum in the first eight years. Future years of the Plan all exceed a 2,000 dwelling need in the NRDA, requiring a significant increase on current delivery (average just 823 dwellings per annum in the first eight years).
- 6.34 This compares to an overprovision of some 1,178 dwellings⁴ in South Northamptonshire and 146 dwellings⁵ in Daventry (both excluding the NRDA) - almost entirely because of delivery within the rural areas, which the WNJCS and LPP2 now seeks to restrict. This growth has gone a significant way to mitigate the lack of delivery on the strategic sites and without which would have meant higher shortfalls from assessed targets in the WNJCS. Over the joint Plan area, there is a current and rising shortfall of 2,211 dwellings (up from 1,230 dwellings in 2018).
- 6.35 The above demonstrates a persistent record of non-delivery and under delivery on strategic sites. Considering the above, it is clear that the strategy of directing such a significant majority of development to the NRDA has failed. Moreover, whilst not as profound, there have been failings in delivery in other SUE's outside of the NRDA also, including Towcester South (outline permission for 2,750 dwellings secured in April 2015), having only delivered 368 units to March 2020.
- 6.36 It is essential that this significant reliance on SUE's is readdressed, enabling the delivery of smaller, more sustainable forms of development, alongside strategic sites, to assist in significantly boosting the supply of homes in accordance with the NPPF.
- 6.37 The supply of available and deliverable sites for housing is a material consideration in the determination of this planning application and indeed the weight which can be attributed to

³ Northampton Related Development Area Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment (April 2019)

⁴ South Northamptonshire Five Year Housing Land Availability Study (April 2020)

⁵ Daventry District Housing Land Availability (April 2020)

relevant policies of the Development Plan. Whilst the Council consider that they are able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, there are a number of recent appeal decisions which demonstrate that a five year housing land supply should not be considered as a 'maximum' figure for housing delivery.

6.38 Indeed, a recent Secretary of State (SoS) Decision (Ref: APP/M1005/W/17/3188009 - 29 July 2020) for 118 dwellings in Belper, Derbyshire, the SoS allowed the appeal, despite uncertainty over the five year supply. Paragraph 43 of the SoS's decision states: "While the Secretary of State's calculations show that the Council may be able to demonstrate a five year supply of housing, he has taken into account that boosting the supply of housing is a key Government objective". Adding at paragraph 56 that: "The proposal would provide 118 homes, with 30% affordable. The Secretary of State considers that the economic and social benefits of this housing, especially given the uncertainty as to whether the Council could provide a five year supply of housing land, carry significant weight in favour of the proposal"

6.39 Indeed there is now a clear body of evidence which supports the view that planning permission should be granted for residential development proposals which meet the NPPF requirements of sustainable development, even where a planning authority can demonstrate a five year supply of housing.

6.40 As noted, the Council consider that they are able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, however paragraph 11(d) and Footnote 7 of the NPPF are clear that in situations where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (including the appropriate buffer), then the policies relevant to the supply of housing are considered to be out-of-date.

6.41 In the latest South Northamptonshire 'Five Year Housing Land Availability Study 2020' (Dated April 2020), the Council have calculated supply on the basis of the housing requirement for South Northamptonshire (excluding the NRDA) and including a reprofiled oversupply which equates to a supply of 8.26 years. This was calculated against the 2014 Objectively Assessed Need Target set out in the WNJCS of 6,318 dwellings (over 18 years), equating to an average 351 dwellings per annum (dpa).

- 6.42 It is worth pointing out that in relation to the most recently published Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results (2019), that whilst each of the three authorities in West Northamptonshire exceeded its targets, the HDT results are an assessment of past delivery, and not necessarily an indication of future delivery. They are also measured on the administrative boundaries of each authority, with no separate measurement for the NRDA. It is considered that supply should be calculated on the same basis, with the residual housing need (2011-2029) for the administrative area of South Northamptonshire as 10,168 dwellings, and not 6,320 dwellings which excludes the NRDA.
- 6.43 An appeal decision at a site in Rothersthorpe (ref: APP/Z2830/W/18/3206346) issued in May 2019, was determined on this basis. Firstly, it was considered inappropriate for the Local Authority to assess their housing land supply by excluding the areas of South Northamptonshire within the designated NRDA. Secondly, that the Council's calculation of five-year supply, deducting previous overprovision from future needs, is incorrect. Additional issues were noted including that the Council could not declare a number of sites deliverable having regard for the updated definition of deliverability within the Framework and that the Council has taken an optimistic approach to delivery of strategic sites, committed sites and windfalls. The combination of the above factors led to the Inspector to conclude that actual supply was likely to be in the region of only 2.5-3.8 years.
- 6.44 At paragraph 20 of the appeal decision the Inspector opined that. *"In either case there is a clear and significant shortfall on the requirement to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable sites. It is notable that if the delivery figure set out in the JCS is adopted, including delivery for the NRDA, the Council accepts that there is no 5 year supply. In accordance with the NPPF this must mean that the 'tilted balance' set out in paragraph 11 is engaged."*
- 6.45 In addition to the Council's calculations on the basis of the housing requirement for South Northamptonshire (excluding the NRDA) and including a reprofiled oversupply which equates to a supply of 8.26 years, the Council have calculated the supply figure for a non-oversupply scenario, resulting in just a 5.18 year supply. This still excludes the NRDA however, which is not the accepted approach to measuring HDT, nor the accepted approach taken by the Rothersthorpe Inspector in calculating future supply.

6.46 In order to fully understand the housing delivery position in South Northamptonshire, five year housing land supply assessments have been undertaken in the following scenarios:

- Excluding the NRDA
- Including the NRDA

Five Year Land Supply (Excluding NRDA)

6.47 Having undertaken a review of the Council's housing land requirements and supply (Appendix 1), it is considered that the five year deliverable supply of housing for South Northamptonshire Council (excluding the NRDA) is reduced from 1,908 dwellings to 1,829 dwellings (or 1,759 dwellings) at best, against a five year requirement of 1,843 dwellings. This is a result of the major urban sites delivery being reduced from 1,296 to 1,226 dwellings (or 1,156 dwellings) and the minor urban sites being reduced from 70 dwellings to 61 dwellings.

6.48 In addition to the above, the COVID-19 pandemic has already had serious implications for the housebuilding industry in terms of delivery. Most developers temporarily closed their construction sites to protect employee and customer welfare, and whilst some have now re-opened, construction is slow due to social distancing measures and fewer tradesmen allowed on each plot. The consequential effect of this will be fewer completions in 2020/2021, perhaps even beyond, compounding the already significant shortfalls across the District and NRDA.

6.49 The result of the above reduces the Council's deliverable supply to an 'at best' **4.77-4.96 year supply of housing** with no reduction for previous oversupply. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to significantly reduce this significantly further.

6.50 The demonstrated absence of a five year supply of land for housing is important. It means that policies, existing and proposed, cannot be considered to be up to date. Paragraph 73 of the NPPF makes it clear that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing sites.

6.51 Should the proposed development be approved this would provide the planning authority with up to an additional 69 units that could be delivered within the five year period, increasing the demonstrable supply of housing to 4.96-5.15 years. These figures are based on SNC's

methodology for calculating supply with the exclusion of the NRDA. If the NRDA is included, the lack of requisite supply is further demonstrated, as discussed below.

Five Year Land Supply (Including NRDA)

6.52 The NRDA includes SUE's that are partially located within South Northamptonshire:

- Policy N4 – Northampton West SUE
- Policy N6 - Northampton south of Brackmills SUE
- Policy N9 - Northampton Upton Park SUE
- Policy N9a - Northampton Norwood Farm/ Upton Lodge SUE

6.53 Having undertaken a review of housing delivery and supply (Appendix 1), within the South Northamptonshire NRDA boundary and utilising the plan period housing requirement from the SNC (NEED) figure (10,168 dwellings), it is considered that the five year deliverable supply of housing for South Northamptonshire Council (including the NRDA) is reduced from 2,095 dwellings to 2,016 dwellings (or 1.946 dwellings) at best, against a five year requirement of 3,575 dwellings, resulting in just an 'at best' **2.71-2.82 year supply of housing** with no reduction for previous oversupply. As stated above, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on housing delivery is likely to significantly reduce this further.

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

6.54 The NPPF is unequivocal in circumstances where the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged, that planning applications for residential development must be determined in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, that applications for sustainable development must be approved unless:

- i) *The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed;*
- ii) *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*

6.55 Footnote 6 of the NPPF sets out that the protected areas referred in paragraph 11d (ii) include "*habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a*

National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change." It is evident that none of the designations are applicable to the application site.

- 6.56 It is therefore incumbent on the Council to consider the second criterion of Paragraph 11 of the NPPF and whether any adverse impacts in approving the application would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The benefits of the proposal are outlined below.

Scheme Benefits

- 6.57 We consider that the site and proposals are in accordance with the NPPF's aim of sustainable growth and significantly boosting the supply of homes. The following clear, Economic, Social and Environmental benefits will be derived from the proposed residential development in Greens Norton.

Economic Benefits

- 6.58 The economic benefits of the proposed development would be considerable. The development of up to 69 dwellings will make a contribution towards meeting local housing need and demand but will also make a valuable contribution to the local viability and vitality of Greens Norton as a sustainable and balanced community.
- 6.59 Each phase of the development will deliver economic benefits as summarised below:
- **A Boost to the Local Economy** - The construction activities associated with the development will represent an investment in the local area and will create jobs in the short term for the duration of the construction activities. Once occupied, the development will house economically active residents who will contribute towards annual household, retail, leisure and services expenditure in the locality.
 - **New Homes Bonus** – The new dwellings will also provide Council Tax receipts to South Northamptonshire Council, along with New Homes Bonus which provides a much-needed source of funding for the Council to spend as it sees fit on the delivery of its services.

- **Buying and Selling New Homes** – There is an economic benefit through the buying and selling of new homes. There are parties involved in all stages of the process which involves financial transactions e.g. sales agents, solicitors, banks. This in itself increases economic activity. In addition, new residents would be purchasing furniture and white goods which assists the local economy.
- **Financial Contributions for Associated Infrastructure** – The development will deliver specific funding towards additional facilities in line with the WNJCS and LPP2. Contributions would be made towards local education provision commensurate with the scale of the proposed development and local capacity; provision and maintenance of public open space, off-site sports pitch contributions, strategic leisure contributions, highways improvements, and contributions towards libraries and fire and rescue services.
- **Other** – Other contributions may be identified through the planning consultation process, and subject to meeting the appropriate tests of relevance, necessity and reasonableness, consideration will be given to their inclusion.

6.60 These benefits of the proposed development contribute to the economic role of sustainable development defined within the NPPF, contributing to a strong, responsive and competitive economy. These are a further significant benefit to the proposed development.

Social Benefits

6.61 The social benefits associated with the proposed development are multiple-faceted and include:

- **Location** – The site adjoins the settlement of Greens Norton which provides a range of services and facilities including two pre-schools, primary school, medical centre, post office and village store, independent butchers, the Butchers Arms public house and restaurant, place of worship and a community centre. The centre of the site is within 620 m of bus stops providing links to Towcester and Northampton which has a variety of employment opportunities and larger retail facilities. The new residents will support and help sustain local services and facilities, contributing to the creation of sustainable communities. In addition the location of the proposed development, immediately adjacent to an established residential area, will ensure the creation of an integrated community.
- **Open Space** – Open space will be provided on site for the benefit of new and existing residents. Approximately 0.77 ha is shown on the Illustrative Masterplan as being dedicated

to open space, attenuation ponds and footpaths along the southern and western edges. The site is located within walking distance of facilities within the village, further supporting active lifestyles and encouraging an alternative to the car.

- **Sustainable Transport** – Enhancement of the existing at risk No.87 bus service to Northampton and Towcester. Financial contributions will be pooled with other development contributions along the route of the service and used to deliver enhancements to the daytime service, Monday to Saturday, between Northampton and Towcester. Additional free bus taster passes providing three months of unlimited travel across Northampton and surrounding villages for each dwelling. These represent significant additional social benefits, not just to new occupiers of the development, but to those in the locality as well.
- **Supply of Market Housing** – The proposed development will make a positive contribution to the supply and delivery of market housing. The site is available and deliverable and makes a short term contribution to housing supply. The development will provide additional housing in the most sustainable Secondary Service Village (A); in an established residential area, providing a mix of high quality homes and increasing the range and types of dwellings available in the locality. The delivery of houses in this location will enable the younger generation of Greens Norton to have the opportunity to remain in their local rural community with quality sustainable and affordable homes located within a sensitively designed setting. The delivery of market housing in a sustainable location is a significant benefit. It is a government policy imperative to boost the supply of housing, as set out at paragraph 59 of the NPPF; this benefit should be afforded significant weight.
- **Delivery of Affordable Housing** – The development will deliver 50% affordable housing to support local affordable needs, in accordance with local policy. There is a recognised shortfall of affordable homes within South Northamptonshire, and more critically within the rural area, having only achieved 6.9% affordable provision during 2016-2019. The provision of up to 35 affordable units at the site represents a significant positive benefit of the proposed development. This is a tangible benefit and merits significant weight.
- **Education** – Financial contributions may be required by the Local Education Authority towards the Greens Norton Primary School if expansion is required to accommodate the additional children generated directly by this scheme. Similarly if contributions are required towards secondary school provision, this will be made commensurate with the pupils likely to be generated by the proposed development.

Environmental Benefits

6.62 This planning statement and the supporting technical documents which accompany the application explain how environmental factors have been taken into account to ensure sustainable development. Mitigation has been included within the scheme to ensure conservation and enhancement of key features:

- **High Quality Sustainable Design** – The proposed development represents a high quality sustainable development that responds positively to its built and natural setting. The development will provide an accommodation and tenure mix to meet the needs of the community including bungalow provision.
- **Protection and Enhancement of Existing Landscape Features** – The proposed development will retain the majority of the existing tree and hedgerows onsite. A small length of hedgerow removal will be required to facilitate access to the site. Retained hedgerows will be enhanced by filling gaps. The pockets of informal open space within the site will be planted with a variety of trees (of native species), helping to create an attractive environment with clear biodiversity benefits.
- **Flood Risk and Drainage** – A full flood risk assessment has been undertaken demonstrating no increased risk of flooding will arise from the development. A Sustainable Urban Drainage System, including an attenuation pond and swale, is proposed as part of the comprehensive drainage strategy to the south and western part of the site.
- **Protection and Enhancement of Existing Biodiversity Habitats** – The ecology survey has demonstrated that there would be no unacceptable harm to protected species or habitats. It is recognised that the site represents previously undeveloped land and that the development of the site will involve change in relation to the loss of a field currently used for agricultural purposes. The green space within the site will be planted with a variety of trees (of native species), helping to create an attractive environment with clear biodiversity benefits
- **Mitigate Climate Change** – The proposed development will seek to mitigate climate change through reducing CO2 emissions by building new homes in a sustainable and accessible location, thus reducing the reliance to travel by private car. In terms of resilience to climate change impacts, the scheme has been designed to take this into account, notably through the provision of a drainage strategy as described above and detailed within the Flood Risk Assessment.

- 6.63 In summary, the benefits of the scheme are significant and include the sustainable delivery of open market and affordable housing in a high quality development; investment creation, new open space and support for local services and facilities, including significant improvements to sustainable transport connectivity which should be given significant weight.
- 6.64 Adverse impacts of the scheme are negligible and mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that any impact can be ameliorated. The illustrative masterplan demonstrates how a high-quality residential development can be delivered on the site, having regard to the site constraints and opportunities. This is discussed in greater detail below.

Technical Assessments

- 6.65 A number of detailed technical assessments, surveys and reports have been commissioned to inform the proposed development, as listed in Section 2 of this Statement. The outputs of these reports, including any required mitigation measures, have been summarised below. For further information on any of these topics, please refer to the full reports directly.

Landscape

- 6.66 The Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) has identified that the site is located within the Tove Catchment Landscape Character Area (LCA). The site does not contain any rare or notable landscape features and is not designated as a valued landscape.
- 6.67 The site lies within a settled landscape and shares some characteristics with the published LCA, with hedgerow boundaries and arable land use.
- 6.68 The extent of views are limited and localised. Where there are views of the site from within the wider landscape, these are seen in the context of the wider landscape and are influenced by the existing adjacent settlement edge.
- 6.69 The development proposals have responded to the landscape character and visual amenity through the following:
- Retention of existing boundary planting to filter views with enhancements to boundary planting which is characteristic of the published LCA;

- Proposed additional tree planting along the southern and western edges of the site to filter views and soften built form;
- Provision of a landscape buffer and development offset at the western and southern boundaries
- Additional characteristic planting proposed to the western and southern boundaries to provide a more beneficial development edge and transition to the wider landscape
- Proposed internal planting, characteristic of the LCA to soften built form

6.70 It has been established that whilst the site occupies open arable farmland beyond the current settlement boundary, a sensitive design response, with legible Green Infrastructure connections and a commitment to the provision of an area of the development offset incorporating new soft landscaping and public open space, can be accommodated within this Medium sensitivity landscape without undue detrimental effects on the wider LCA.

6.71 Some localised adverse effects on visual amenity will arise and adjoining residents will experience a change in visual context, however, the proposed development approach provides proposed mitigation and as set out on the Illustrative Masterplan and Landscape Masterplan which demonstrate how the development can address both policy and SPD objectives without harming the wider character area.

Ecology

6.72 In order to understand the potential impacts of the development on any protected species or habitats, a number of Ecological Surveys have been undertaken. The Ecological Assessment sets out that the site is dominated by arable habitat, of negligible ecological importance, whilst the grassland margins are considered to be of site ecological importance, due to the presence of species that are common and widespread within the surrounding habitats.

6.73 The site is bounded by native hedgerows forming linear wildlife corridors, however given the relatively low species diversity and intensive management, they are considered to be of site ecological importance. Semi-mature trees associated with the hedgerows are considered to be of site ecological importance.

- 6.74 The local record centre returned no records of Great Crested Newts (GCN) for the study area from the last 20 years. There are six waterbodies within 500m of the site. Of the six waterbodies identified, the nearest (P1) lies 20m to the north of the site. An eDNA survey of P1 in 2019 confirmed presence of GCN. Given the distances involved and size and nature of the habitats present, surveys of the other waterbodies (all >250m from the site) was not considered necessary.
- 6.75 The hedgerows and field margins provide some suitable habitat for GCN, however given the abundance of similar habitat within the area, it is unlikely that any population would be solely reliant upon the resources within the site. Moreover, the majority of the site consisting arable field is considered unsuitable for GCN with little reason for newts to move from the northern section of the site to the southern section or vice versa. There are no clear migration pathways across the site, with no ponds located to the south of the site which GCN might traverse towards.
- 6.76 Features of highest value to GCN, i.e. the hedgerows and field margins, are to be retained, protected and enhanced with with only a small discrete area to be lost. Works to safeguard individual GCN would be applied through adoption of a precautionary method of working during the removal of the hedgerow to facilitate site access including appropriate timing of works, hand searches and habitat clearance under ecological watching brief by a GCN licenced ecologist.
- 6.77 Proposals for the site include the creation of approximately 2.3ha of high quality terrestrial habitat to include rough grassland, native scrub, tree planting and a wetland/attenuation pond which will provide enhanced opportunities for GCN in their terrestrial phase. On balance therefore, it is considered that the development will lead to an overall enhancement of opportunities for GCN allowing the population to persist and increase. It is considered that the proposals therefore provide greater benefits and opportunities to the local GCN population, than complete exclusion and/or relocation of the population from the site.
- 6.78 Evidence of badger foraging was observed during the surveys however the site supports minimal habitats that may be used for sett creation and may be used to move through the landscape and low levels of foraging along the hedgerows and field margins. No setts are present. Opportunities for badgers will be retained and enhanced through the retained and enhanced ecological networks proposed around the boundaries of the site.

- 6.79 Levels of bat activity across the site are considered to be low, with three trees identified as having low roosting potential and a single tree with moderate roosting potential. Features of most importance to bats (boundary hedgerows and trees) are to be retained as far as possible. The creation of new hedgerows and open space, as well as SUDS/wetlands will offer new and enhanced opportunities for foraging as well as maintaining current conditions through the site and to offsite habitats.
- 6.80 The site offers minimal habitat for breeding birds, limited to the boundary hedgerow features and trees. Given the nature and scale of the site and considering the habitats in the wider area and species returned from the records search, any assemblage of birds using the site is not anticipated to be of more than site ecological importance. The habitat creation and enhancements, including the SUDS/wetland areas, will provide enhanced forage and potentially nesting habitat for birds. This would be enhanced further through the provision of general bird boxes on trees within the site and in the form of species specific nest boxes.
- 6.81 Whilst the loss of the habitats present on site would cause a temporary impact to any assemblage of invertebrates present, it is expected that this would be reversed once the new planting and re-seeding have established. As such, no specific mitigation or compensation is required.
- 6.82 Although reptiles are unlikely to be present in significant numbers, the retention and protection of the boundary features and enhancements would ensure retention of opportunities for common reptiles that may be present in the wider landscape.
- 6.83 The development has been designed to ensure there are no significant adverse effects on protected and priority species including badgers, bats, breeding birds and great crested newts and to retain features of highest ecological importance (namely the boundary hedgerows) where possible. All hedgerows will be retained with suitable buffers, with the exception of a small section to facilitate the new access road. The proposed new planting in areas of public open space will more than compensate for this small habitat loss.
- 6.84 Retained hedgerows will be enhanced with native and ecologically beneficial species to increase diversity. Additional planting will comprise of rough grassland and native scrub patches to

strengthen the existing green infrastructure and bolster ecological networks through the site. Together with the incorporation of biodiverse SUDs further enhancements would be delivered, through the provision of damp habitats not currently well represented within the site.

Trees

- 6.85 The Tree Survey identified 25 individual trees, 1 tree group and 2 hedgerows during the tree survey of the site and its immediate vicinity.
- 6.86 The majority of trees are semi to early mature, which have been planted at fairly even spacing across the northern and western hedgerows. Dominant species includes horse chestnut, with fewer lime, ash and field maple. A prevailing wind from the south-west has impacted canopy development in many trees, particularly the horse chestnut which appeared stunted compared to a normal growth scenario. Most of the ash trees surveyed exhibited sparse crowns which is likely to be early development of ash die-back. The hedgerows are well-established, cohesive, and have been previously maintained by a flail cutter.
- 6.87 While some trees offer a degree of maturity to the setting, none are considered to be of high arboricultural value (Category A) or of notable visual amenity. Several moderate value (Category B) trees are present among lower value (Category C) trees.
- 6.88 All trees are located around the perimeter of the site thereby reducing the constraints that they place upon the site. The likely extent of tree removal to accommodate the development will include the removal of one moderate value tree (T3) and a 10m section of hedgerow (H1) which will be negligible in terms of arboricultural impact, and compensation can be provided through new planting. The site's remaining tree cover will be retained through suitable development buffers across the boundaries.
- 6.89 The Illustrative Masterplan identifies the likely extent of new tree planting across the development. This includes new trees across open spaces to the north, south and west, together with street trees established internally. The limited extent of tree loss to facilitate the scheme and the extent of new planting suggests that a substantial net-gain in tree canopy cover could be achieved through the development.

Agricultural Land Classification

- 6.90 An Agricultural Land Classification report has established that there are two area of grading on the site. The vast majority of the site is located within Subgrade 3b. This grade is represented by slowly permeable soils (Wetness Class III). Topsoil textures are dominantly heavy clay loam but below the soil texture is mostly clay. Wetness imposes a limitation on the workability of the land in this area and it classified as Subgrade 3b. Grade 2 land occurs predominantly in the south-west of the site, on permeable loamy material (Wetness Class I) on low-lying ground. The loss of this quantity of “best and most versatile agricultural land” is not considered “significant” in planning policy terms

Archaeology

- 6.91 A Geophysical Survey of the site was undertaken which identified few features of potential archaeological interest. Ridge and furrow is evident across the survey area and a few linear anomalies may relate to a former field system.
- 6.92 The County Archaeologist agreed a full desk-based assessment would not be required. In light of the negative results of the geophysical survey, and the low/negligible potential for significant evidence of all periods, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required to safeguard the heritage interest of the site.
- 6.93 No impacts are predicted on the setting of any surrounding designated heritage assets, as the proposed development site is not visible from any of the heritage assets within the village.
- 6.94 Overall, it is concluded that there would be no unacceptable detrimental impact on heritage assets.

Highways and Access

- 6.95 A Transport Assessment has been prepared by Hub Transport Planning Ltd. This considers the potential transport and highways impacts of the proposals including the impact of the development generated traffic on the surrounding road network, and also the implications for travel by non-car modes.
- 6.96 The site is well located in terms of accessibility to local facilities, within c.550m of the village centre where amenities such as the Post Office/Village Store, Butchers and Public House are located,

whilst the nearest medical practice is just over 900m from the site. All key services for residents of the proposed development site are within a comfortable walking distance.

- 6.97 There are no formal cycle routes surrounding the site or local to Greens Norton, thus cycling trips will be undertaken on-road across the village.
- 6.98 Blakesley Hill is subject to a 30mph speed limit eastbound from the site, with the national speed limit of 60mph westbound out of the village; therefore, is considered suitable for use by cyclists to travel into the village along Blakesley Hill and onto High Street. The remainder of Greens Norton is all within the 30mph speed limit.
- 6.99 The village services and facilities are well within the recommended 5km cycle distance. In addition, the town of Towcester is within the 5km distance so would be a realistic option for Greens Norton residents to commute by bicycle for accessing the significant employment, leisure and shopping facilities in the centre of Towcester.
- 6.100 The closest bus stops are located on High Street in the centre of Greens Norton, approximately 550m from the site. This bus stop is served by the no.87 service between Towcester and Northampton. The Northampton service is suitable for those residents commuting to work in Northampton with the earliest no.87 bus service departing Greens Norton at 07:10 and latest return journey departing Northampton at 18:00. In addition, Northampton provides rail links further afield to London, Birmingham and Liverpool.
- 6.101 Whilst there is no commuter bus service to Towcester, there are buses during the day that would be available for shopping and leisure trips.
- 6.102 In respect of the site access, the assessment states that access to the site can be provided via the construction of a new priority T-junction off Blakesley Hill..
- 6.103 As part of the access design, it is proposed that the existing 30mph speed limit is relocated further west, to a point just beyond the junction with Bury Hill; the 30mph speed limit will also be reinforced/supported with a new gateway entry feature and appropriate road markings to assist

with traffic speed reduction on entry into the village, including white lining at the edge of the carriageway to (visually) narrow the width to 5.5m (from 5.9m).

6.104 In addition, it is proposed that the existing Vehicle Activated Sign is relocated west and sited between the new gateway entry into the village and the site access junction, as the proposed development will extend the urban edge up to Bury Hill.

6.105 In terms of pedestrian access, existing provision is located along the southern side of Blakesley Hill. This will be widened from the current c.1.6m to a width of 2.0m, resurfaced and will connect to the new provision along both sides of the site access road. To the east of the site, the upgraded footway will tie into the existing provision at the junction of Benham Road with Blakesley Hill.

6.106 The Transport Assessment states that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the operation of the local highway network. Capacity assessments have been undertaken at the site access junction and two further off-site junctions to determine the impact the development has in these locations. Traffic counts were undertaken in 2020 and assessments have been undertaken at a survey year of 2020, future base year of 2030 “without development” and 2030 “with development” flows.

6.107 The proposed site access junction has been modelled for the 2030 Base + Development scenario only. The results demonstrate that the site access junction will operate well within capacity and will have negligible impact on through traffic movements along Blakesley Hill.

6.108 An assessment has been undertaken at the following off-site junctions.

- High Street/Towcester Road Priority T-Junction
- High Street/ Bradden Road Priority T-Junction

6.109 The results of the capacity assessments show that both junctions operate within capacity at a future year of 2030 with and without the proposed development flows and therefore the impact of the development on the above junctions are negligible.

- 6.110 A range of aims and objectives are also included in the submission as part of the accompanying Travel Plan document which also intends to encourage sustainable travel choices and reduce the reliance on the private car; this effectively requires identifying and implementing a set of interconnected measures and initiatives which will reduce the environmental impact of the travel associated with a development, particularly through the use of public transport, walking and cycling.
- 6.111 Preliminary discussions have been held with Northamptonshire Highways regarding a financial contribution towards public transport; at this stage, it has been agreed with the local authority that a contribution of £1,000 per dwelling towards enhancements to the existing No.87 service will be made (via Section 106 agreement). The contribution will be pooled with other development contributions along the route of the No.87 service and used to deliver enhancements to the daytime service, Monday to Saturday, between Northampton and Towcester.
- 6.112 Further to the above, the proposed development will also provide free bus 'taster' passes for each dwelling, which will provide three months of unlimited travel across Northampton and the surrounding villages; each 4-week 'Megarider Plus' ticket costs £89.
- 6.113 Overall the Transport Statement and Travel Plan demonstrates that the proposed development would not have a material adverse impact on the safety or operation of the adjacent highway network. It further concludes that the development is in full accordance with the transport policy tests for new development as set out in NPPF. The proposal is considered to meet the objectives of sustainable transport in the NPPF, and Policy C2 of the Joint Core Strategy.

Flooding and Drainage

- 6.114 Flood risk and drainage issues associated with the site have been fully considered within the Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Statement submitted with this application.
- 6.115 The Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development is not at significant flood risk, subject to the recommended flood mitigation strategy being implemented. The site is located wholly within Flood Zone 1, land considered to be at low probability of flooding from fluvial and tidal sources.

6.116 A Sustainable Drainage Statement has been produced alongside the Flood Risk Assessment detailing how surface and foul water from the proposed development will be drained. It is proposed that surface water runoff from the site is restricted to a rate lower than the equivalent greenfield runoff rate, with attenuated storage provided on site up to the 100-year plus 40% climate change event.

6.117 In compliance with the requirements of NPPF, and subject to the mitigation measures proposed, the development could proceed without being subject to significant flood risk. Moreover, the development will not increase flood risk to the wider catchment area as a result of suitable management of surface water runoff discharging from the site.

6.118 It is proposed that foul flows are directed to the local Anglian Water sewer network. Subject to confirmation of the network capacity, it is proposed that a new connection is sought into the pipe within Benham Road. It is envisaged that a new sewer will be laid along Blakesley Hill, which will ultimately connect into this sewer run. This will avoid crossing private, third-party land. A new connection at this location will be subject to a pumped solution, due to the topography of the area. Provision for a foul water pumping station is provided within the illustrative masterplan .

Utilities

6.119 The site and its surrounds are well served by high voltage electricity, gas, water, telecoms and public sewer infrastructure. Initial enquiries to the relevant statutory undertakers have identified that the provision of strategic services to the site are readily available for all service supplies.

6.120 In terms of the telecommunocations, superfast broadband services are available in Greens Norton. With changing working practices and greater remote working taking place, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic, the availability of superfast broadband, with speeds up to 80 Mbps, is considered even more of a vital service in locations such as Greens Norton, further reducing the need for communities and businesses to travel as frequently.

Ground Conditions

6.121 The Geotechnical Desk Study Report identified that the potential risk of contamination to the identified receptors is considered to be low to negligible. Any residual risk is likely to be mitigated

by the use of physical barriers including cover layers and contaminant resistant water supply infrastructure. The potential risk from hazardous ground gas is considered to be low to moderate locally. It is considered that any risk may be mitigated by the use of physical barriers comprising gas resistant membranes.

Infrastructure Requirements

6.122 The development will provide for the necessary infrastructure requirements and affordable housing arising from the proposasl. The development will make provision for, where necessary, for the following:

- **Affordable Housing:** To make provision for a scheme of Affordable Housing in agreement with the Council.
- **Open Space:** To provide on-site open space together with maintenance and management arrangements.
- **Sports Provision:** To provide off-site sports provision contributions together with maintenance arrangements.
- **Strategic Leisure:** To provide off-site strategic leisure contributions for the wider community.
- **Recycling Bin Provision:** To enable provision of recycling bins for each dwelling.
- **Education Contribution:** The school catchment comprises Greens Norton Primary School which is operating under capacity. It is unsure at this stage whether contributions will be required for this or other education tiers.
- **Public Transport:** To enable an increase in frequency of the local bus service and provision of bus passes
- **Fire and Rescue:** To address community needs associated with development.
- **SUDS maintenance:** To provide contributions towards maintenance arrangements.
- **Council's Monitoring Costs:** To enable the Council to monitor and manage the monies associated with the S106.
- **Other:** Other contributions may be identified through the planning consultation process, and subject to meeting the appropriate tests of relevance, necessity and reasonableness, consideration will be given to their inclusion.

Layout and Design

- 6.123 The proposed development has been designed to ensure that it will successfully integrate into its surroundings, both in terms of the existing important features of the site and how the development will integrate into the wider area.
- 6.124 The Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the Illustrative Masterplan is founded on a number of key design principles identified in the South Northamptonshire Design Guide in order to achieve a high quality, sustainable residential development.
- 6.125 The proposals have adopted a landscape driven approach and will include significant levels of high quality public open space, This will include a new equipped play area with further natural play areas, amenity space and attenuation ponds, embracing the site's ecological assets as a setting for new family homes.
- 6.126 The scheme has emerged through a thorough process of design development and through a comprehensive public and stakeholder consultation process. This has been discussed in detail within the Design and Access Statement, which accompanies the planning application.

07 Conclusion

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an outline planning application for a residential development of up to 69 dwellings, on land south of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton.
- 7.2 It is considered that the development proposals comply with Policy R1 of the WNJCS, and Policy LH1 of the LPP2, as the proposals will help to support the retention of, and improve, the existing bus service for many years. Without sufficient contributions arising through developments such as this scheme, this essential community service will cease to operate. By enhancing this important local service provision, the sustainable transport options available for the village residents, and those surrounding villages along the bus route, will be increased.
- 7.3 In addition, the development has been informed by effective community engagement in accordance with Policy R1 of the WNJCS, and Policy LH1 of the LPP2,. It has been demonstrated that Richborough Estates has made considerable efforts to engage the community in the formulation of the proposed development; and that these efforts have helped to shape and influence elements of the scheme in order to address issues and concerns raised by respondents.
- 7.4 Whilst the Council consider that they are able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, there are a number of recent appeal decisions which demonstrate that a five year housing land supply should not be considered as a 'maximum' figure for housing delivery. Indeed there is now a clear body of evidence which supports the view that planning permission should be granted for residential development proposals which meet the NPPF requirements of sustainable development, even where a planning authority can demonstrate a five year supply of housing, with the Secretary of State increasingly giving significant weight to the Government's key objective of boosting the supply of housing, irrespective of the five year position..
- 7.5 By South Northamptonshire Council's own adopted evidence, Greens Norton is demonstrably one of the most sustainable locations within the District, behind only the towns of Towcester and Brackley and the five Primary Service Villages, and thus is suitable and capable of accommodating sustainable development.

- 7.6 The benefits of the scheme are considerable and by approving the development proposals at Blakesley Hill, this will contribute towards sustaining and increasing the vitality and viability of the local services and facilities, thus contributing towards creating and maintaining a sustainable and balanced community and promoting a strong local economy. This approach is considered to be sound and will enable growth to come forward in tandem with the slow moving major infrastructure sites within South Northamptonshire and the NRDA.
- 7.7 Whilst acknowledging the Council's stance on housing supply, we consider that the requisite five year supply, both excluding or including the NRDA, is not demonstrable and that the policies relevant to the delivery of housing are out of date. The policies relevant to the delivery of housing should therefore be afforded limited weight and the presumption in favour of sustainable development should therefore be engaged.
- 7.8 When assessed against the policies in the NPPF (taken as a whole), the adverse impacts of granting planning permission for the proposed development will not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the significant benefits which will be delivered as a result of the new housing proposed. The proposals are therefore considered to constitute sustainable development and should be approved without delay in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions and a S106 obligation.

APPENDIX 1

Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment

Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment

Land South of Blakesley
Hill, Greens Norton

Prepared by Fisher German LLP on behalf of
Richborough Estates



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01 Introduction

1.1 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) (2014) sets out the housing requirement for South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) (Appendix 3).

- Table A sets out the SNC (NEED) as 10,168 dwellings over the period 2011-2029 by District Boundary.
- Table B sets out the SNC – excluding the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA) (NEED) as 6,318 dwellings over the period 2011-2029.

1.2 The methodology SNC use to calculate five year housing land supply is based on the needs identified in Table B and excludes the NRDA.

1.3 In order to fully understand the housing delivery position in South Northamptonshire, five year housing land supply assessments have been undertaken in the following scenarios:

- Excluding the NRDA (as per the SNC methodology)
- Including the NRDA

02 Five Year Land Supply (Excluding NRDA)

- 2.1 As extracted from the WNJCS, Table 3.1 of the Housing Land Availability Study (HLAS) 2020 sets out the housing requirement for South Northamptonshire (excluding the NRDA) as follows:

Table 3.1: OAN Housing Requirement for South Northamptonshire (excluding NRDA) 2011/12 – 2028/29				
Delivery Period	2011/12 - 2019/20	2020/21 - 2024/25	2024/25 - 2028/29	TOTAL
OAN	3,159	1,755	1,404	6,318

- 2.2 Between 2011 and 2020 the WNJCS anticipated a total of 3,159 dwellings were to be completed, with an additional 1,755 dwellings to be delivered over the next five years between 2020 and 2025.
- 2.3 Between 2011 – 2020, 4,337 dwellings were actually completed; an oversupply of 1,178 dwellings against the need requirement. Table 3.2 of the 2020 HLAS sets this out on an annual basis.

Table 3.2: Comparison of Delivery against Completions 2011/12 - 2019/20			
	Target Completions (Appendix 3 of WNJCS)	Actual Completions	Under (-) / over supply (+)
2011/2012	304	304	0
2012/2013	226	226	0
2013/2014	385	333	-52
2014/2015	385	343	-42
2015/2016	385	465	+80
2016/2017	386	589	+203
2017/2018	386	832	+446
2018/2019	351	786	+435
2019/2020	351	459	+108
Totals	3,159	4,337	+1,178

- 2.4 As the Council does not show a record of persistent under-delivery, a 5% buffer is appropriate for the purpose of calculating housing land supply. As such the Five Year requirement + 5% buffer = 1,755 + 88 dwellings = **1,843 dwellings**, excluding oversupply.
- 2.5 SNC have also calculated a further scenario of the housing requirement by subtracting the oversupply from the future supply, resulting in a requirement of 1,155 dwellings, including 5% buffer. This method is not considered appropriate for reasons discussed in the Planning Statement.
- 2.6 The Housing Trajectory has been revised to reflect the 5% buffer as follows, with the updated five year targets highlighted:

Table 3.3: Housing Trajectory 2020/21 – 2028/29				
	Excluding Oversupply		Including Oversupply	
Year	Trajectory Target	Trajectory target with 5% buffer alteration	Trajectory Target	Trajectory Target with 5% buffer alteration
2011/12 - 2019/20 (oversupply)	-	-	1178	1178
Subtotal	-	-	1178	1178
2020/21	351	368	220	231
2021/22	351	368	220	231
2022/23	351	369	220	231
2023/24	351	369	220	231
2024/25	351	369	220	231
Subtotal	1755	1843	1100	1155
2025/26	351	329	220	206
2026/27	351	329	220	207
2027/28	351	329	220	206
2028/29	351	329	221	207
Subtotal	1404	1316	881	826
Totals	3,159	3,159	3,159	3,159

- 2.7 In calculating its current supply figure the Council sets out in the 2020 HLAS that the deliverable supply is as follows:

20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
480	528	540	408	326	2282

- Major sites with planning permission and Allocated/Emerging Sites: 1,782 dwellings
- Minor sites with planning permission: 291 dwellings
- Windfall allowance: 225
- Lapse Rate: 16
- **Total: 2,282 dwellings**

2.8 Based on the revised requirements as set out above, (excluding the NRDA) the Council has identified a **8.26 year supply of housing** against its delivery (inclusion of oversupply scenario) and **5.18 years** (exclusion of oversupply scenario). However, the presence or absence of a five year supply of housing in South Northamptonshire has been under scrutiny for some time now, and notably the method of its calculation.

2.9 It is acknowledged that housing delivery (HLAS 2020 Table 3.2) has increased since 2012/2013, plateauing in 2017/2018, and falling again in recent years. Average delivery over the past seven years equates to 482 dwellings.

2.10 The recent slow down in delivery to April 2020 will be further impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has already had serious implications for the housebuilding industry in terms of delivery. Most developers temporarily closed their construction sites to protect employee and customer welfare, and whilst some have now re-opened, construction is slow due to social distancing measures and fewer tradesman allowed on each plot. The consequential effect of this will be fewer completions in 2020/2021, perhaps even beyond, compounding the already significant shortfalls across the District and NRDA.

2.11 This will inevitably have a significant impact on 2020/2021 housing delivery. Whilst incentives such as temporary stamp duty cuts have been introduced to aid housing transactions, building new properties in the current social distancing climate is challenging and will remain so for some time.

2.12 Despite the above, the Council's projected completions for the next five years is 2,282 dwellings, though acknowledge that 374 dwellings are to be discounted in calculating the five year supply to accommodate the amended definition of 'deliverable'. Having reviewed the identified supply, it is

considered that at least 453 dwellings should be discounted, arising from two sites discussed below.

Turweston Road South

2.13 Outline planning permission for 350 dwellings was approved in February 2014 (S/2011/0141/MAO). In the 2014 HLAS the Council projected initial delivery onsite in 2015/16 of 20 units, with 45 units each year thereafter, totalling some 155 units in the five year period. Reserved matters approval was secured in February 2017 and a number of conditions have subsequently been discharged. However, a number of non-material amended applications have been made, with a pending application having only been lodged in June 2020 seeking to amend the masterplan, boundary treatments and landscaping.

2.14 Already five years after originally projected to commence completions onsite, the 2020 HLAS amends the trajectory, now anticipating completions in 2020/2021 (52 units) and 70 units per annum for the remaining four year period (a total of 332 dwellings in the five year period).

2.15 With awaited consent for the amendments sought to the proposed development, and the necessary infrastructure works still required, it is unrealistic to assume 52 dwellings will be ready for occupation by 2020/2021, this year. At best I would consider there is a 12 month delay (though could be more likely to be 24 months) producing **262 dwellings within the five year period, (or 192 dwellings in the 24 month delay)** instead of the anticipated 332 units.

The Butts, Turweston Road

2.16 Outline planning permission for 9 dwellings was approved in April 2017 (S/2017/0421/OUT). The consent has now lapsed (April 2020) and can no longer be considered as deliverable in the context of calculating five year supply.

Summary

2.17 When applying the above assumptions, it is considered that the five year deliverable supply of housing for South Northamptonshire Council (excluding the NRDA) is reduced from 1,908 dwellings to 1,829 dwellings (or 1,759 dwellings). This is a result of the major urban sites delivery being reduced from 1,296 to 1,226 dwellings (or 1,156 dwellings) and the minor urban sites being reduced from 70 dwellings to 61 dwellings.

2.18 The result of the above reduces the Council's deliverable supply surplus from 65 dwellings to a **14-84 dwelling shortfall**.

Adjusted Five Year Supply

2.19 Based on the suggested amendments to the trajectory, as described above, Table 5.1 of the HLAS 2020 has been amended as follows:

Table 5.1: Five Year Supply of Deliverable Housing Land		Dwellings (OAN - with calculated reduction for previous years oversupply) LPA Figures	Dwellings (OAN - with NO calculated reduction for previous oversupply) LPA Figures	Dwellings (OAN) - with NO calculated reduction for previous oversupply) Applicant Figures
A	Total Housing requirement (OAN = 2011/12-2028/29)	6,318	6,318	6,318
B	Housing Requirement (OAN = 2011/12-2019/20)	3,159	3,159	3,159
C	Completions (OAN= 2011/12-2019/20)	4,337	-	-
D	Surplus of Completions (B-C)	1,178	-	-
E	Surplus of Completions Reprofiled (2020/21-2024/25)	655	-	-
F	Basic 5 year housing requirement (2020/21-2024/25)	1,755	1,755	1,755
G	5 year housing requirement minus surplus of completions to be reprofiled over next 5 years (2020/21 - 2024/25) (F-E)	1,100	-	
H	5% buffer	55	88	88
I	Housing Supply Required 2020/21-2024/25	1,155	1,843	1,843
J	Major Urban Site (Total Supply)	1,608	1,608	1,608

K	Reduction to accommodate amended definition of 'Deliverable' (updated 22 July 2019)	312	312	382 (452)
L	Major Urban Sites - 'Deliverable' Supply (J-K)	1,296	1,296	1,226 (1,156)
M	Major Rural Sites (Total Supply)	174	174	174
N	Reduction to accommodate amended definition of 'Deliverable' (updated 22 July 2019)	62	62	62
O	Major Rural Sites - 'Deliverable' Supply (M-N)	112	112	112
P	Minor urban sites with planning permission deliverable within next 5 years	70	70	61
Q	Minor rural sites with planning permission deliverable within next 5 years	221	221	221
R	Supply based on windfall allowance	225	225	225
S	Lapse Rate	16	16	16
T	Deliverable Supply (L + O + P + Q + R - S)	1,908	1908	1,829 (1,759)
U	Number of Years Supply (LPA) OAN = 1,908/(1,155/5) (LPA) OAN = 1,908 (1,843/5) (Applicant) OAN = 1,829/(1,843/5) (Applicant) OAN = 1,759/(1,843/5)	8.26	5.18	4.96 (4.77)

2.20 The above adjusted table indicates that the Council are only able to demonstrate a **4.77 - 4.96 year supply of housing** with no reduction for previous oversupply.

2.21 Should the proposed development be approved this would provide the planning authority with up to an additional 69 units that could be delivered within the five year period. This would result in a 4.96 - 5.15 years deliverable supply of housing. These figures are based on SNC's methodology for calculating supply with the exclusion of the NRDA. If the NRDA is included, the lack of requisite supply is further demonstrated.

03 Five Year Land Supply (Including NRDA)

- 3.1 The Northampton Related Development Area includes for SUE's that are partially located within South Northamptonshire:

NRDA Site	District
Policy N4 – Northampton West SUE	Daventry / South Northamptonshire
Policy N6 - Northampton south of Brackmills SUE	Northampton / South Northamptonshire
Policy N9 - Northampton Upton Park SUE	Northampton (landscape mitigation in South Northamptonshire)
Policy N9a - Northampton Norwood Farm/ Upton Lodge SUE	Northampton / South Northamptonshire

- 3.2 In terms of **N9 – Upton Park SUE** and **N9A – Norwood Farm SUE**, none of the planning applications/consents relate to dwellings within South Northamptonshire. As such, no contribution can be applied to South Northamptonshire.
- 3.3 **N4 – Northampton West SUE** is split across Daventry District and South Northamptonshire and has an outline application for 1,750 dwellings pending (DA/2017/0889). The outline application has a resolution to grant consent but is still undetermined due to protracted S106 discussions. A further permission for 52 units (DA/206/0840) exists within Daventry District, of which 21 units have been completed, with a realistic prospect of the remaining 31 units being achieved within the five year period.
- 3.4 Of the total 1,750 dwelling site capacity, 421 dwellings are considered to be deliverable within the next five year period as set out within the Northampton Related Development Area Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment (April 2019) (including the 31 dwellings referred to above). However, given the outline consent is still pending, the Council would need to provide “clear evidence” for the site to be considered deliverable. At this stage, there is no evidence to support

the inclusion of this site in the deliverable supply for South Northamptonshire and should not be included.

- 3.5 In terms of **N6 – Northampton South of Brackmills SUE**, there is an outline permission for 1,000 units (N/2013/0338), with Reserved Matters approval for 385 units (N/2019/0048) within Northampton Borough. There is an additional outline application split across Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire for 525 dwellings (N/2017/1369), 410 dwellings of which would be within South Northamptonshire. The outline application has a resolution to grant consent but is still undetermined due to protracted S106 discussions.
- 3.6 Of the total 1,525 dwelling site capacity, 599 are considered to be deliverable within the next five year period as set out within the Northampton Related Development Area Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment (April 2019). Given the outline approval and reserved matters approval within Northampton Borough it is considered that all 599 dwellings will relate to land within Northampton Borough. As there is currently no consent on the site within South Northamptonshire, the Council would need to provide “clear evidence” for the site to be considered deliverable. At this stage, there is no evidence to support the inclusion of this site in the deliverable supply for South Northamptonshire and should not be included.

Wootton Fields

- 3.7 Also included in the Northampton Related Development Area Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment (April 2019) is land adjacent to Wootton Fields, within the South Northamptonshire NRDA boundary. 187 units are considered to be deliverable across two adjoining sites within the five year period. As construction has started on one of the sites it is reasonable to assume the remainder can be delivered within this period and should be counted in the supply.

Supply Summary

- 3.8 Based on the suggested amendments as described above, the following table provides a summary of the housing supply within the South Northamptonshire NRDA.

NRDA Site	LPA Figures			Appellant Figures	Completions in SNC NRDA Boundary
	NBC	DDC	SNC	SNC	
Policy N4 – Northampton West SUE		211	210	0	0
Policy N6 – Northampton south of Brackmills SUE	599		0	0	0
Policy N9 – Northampton Upton Park SUE	581		0	0	0
Policy N9a – Northampton Norwood Farm/ Upton Lodge SUE	226		0	0	0
Wootton Fields			187	187	78
Total	1,202	211	397	187	78

Adjusted Five Year Supply

- 3.9 The above supply assumptions and housing requirement amendment from the SNC – Excluding NRDA (NEED) figures to the SNC (NEED) figure have been applied to Table 5.1 of the HLAS as follows:

Table 5.1: Five Year Supply of Deliverable Housing Land		Dwellings (OAN - with calculated reduction for previous years oversupply) LPA Figures	Dwellings (OAN - with NO calculated reduction for previous oversupply) LPA Figures	Dwellings (OAN) - with NO calculated reduction for previous oversupply) Applicant Figures
A	Total Housing Requirement (SNC NEED WNJCS) (OAN = 2011/12-2028/29)	10,168	10,168	10,168
B	Housing Requirement (OAN = 2011/12-2019/20)	3,159	3,159	3,159

C	Completions (OAN= 2011/12-2019/20)	4,337 + 78	4,337 +78	4,337 +78
D	Surplus of Completions (B-C)	1,256	1,256	1,256
E	Surplus of Completions Reprofiled (2020/21-2024/25)	698	-	-
F	Five Year Housing Requirement (OAN = 2020/21-2024/25) 2020/21 = 651 2021/22 = 651 2022/23 = 676 2023/24 = 701 2024/25 = 726	3,405	3,405	3,405
G	5 year housing requirement minus surplus of completions to be reprofiled over next 5 years (2020/21 - 2024/25) (F-E)	2,707	-	-
H	5% buffer	135	170	170
I	Housing Supply Required 2020/21-2024/25	2,842	3,575	3,575
J	Deliverable Supply (excluding NRDA)	1,908	1908	1,829 (1,759)
K	Deliverable Supply (SNC NRDA)	187	187	187
L	Total Deliverable Supply within SNC Boundary	2,095	2,095	2,016 (1,946)
M	Number of Years Supply (LPA) OAN = 2,095/(2,842/5) (LPA) OAN = 2,095/(3,575/5) (Applicant) OAN = 2,016/(3,575/5) (Applicant) OAN = 1,946/(3,575/5)	3.69	2.93	2.82 (2.71)

3.10 Following the review of the NRDA sites, the above table indicates that the Council would only be able to demonstrate a **2.71 – 2.82 year supply of housing**.

04 Summary

4.1 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) (2014) sets out the housing requirement for South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) (Appendix 3).

- Table A sets out the SNC (NEED) as 10,168 dwellings over the period 2011-2029 by District Boundary
- Table B sets out the SNC – excluding the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA) (NEED) as 6,318 dwellings over the period 2011-2029

4.2 In order to fully understand the housing delivery position in South Northamptonshire, five year housing land supply assessments have been undertaken in the following scenarios:

- Excluding the NRDA (as per SNC methodology)
- Including the NRDA

4.3 In the SNC (NEED) excluding the NRDA scenario (as per SNC methodology), the Council are only able to demonstrate a **4.77 - 4.96 year supply of housing** with no reduction for previous oversupply.

4.4 In the SNC (NEED) including the NRDA scenario, the Council are only able to demonstrate a **2.71 – 2.82 year supply of housing**.

4.5 The demonstrated absence of a 5 year supply of land for housing is important. It means that policies, existing and proposed, cannot be considered to be up to date. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF makes it clear that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing sites.