East of England Ambulance Service
NHS Trust

Email Only
Hollie Renney
Planning Services
Huntingdonshire District Council

East of England Ambulance Service
NHS Trust
Hammond Road
Bedford
MK41 0RG

Date 23 May 2025

Our Ref 25/00715/COA/ZM

Planning Application: 25/00715/COA
Location: Land At Little Barford Barford Road Little Barford Bedfordshire

Proposal: Request for Scoping Opinion in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 in respect of the development of up to 4400 dwellings including a proportion of age restricted homes, assisted living homes, extra care facilities, care homes, sheltered housing and/or care villages; Up to 30% affordable homes; Publicly available open space and recreation including a community park, and productive landscapes; Outdoor sports pitches; Primary schools to meet locally generated need; Secondary school to meet locally generated need; Integrated bus link to the surrounding area; 4ha of employment space; Commercial floorspace, including retail, cafes, restaurants and bars; Improved pedestrian/cycle links; and provision of at least 10% biodiversity net gain.

Dear Ms Renney

Thank you for consulting East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) on the above planning application. This letter outlines the impact on emergency ambulance healthcare infrastructure arising from the above scoping opinion and is in addition to any comments from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough ICS for primary care, acute, mental health and community services.

This development will affect St Neots ambulance station and the Huntingdon Ambulance Hub which respond to emergency incidents within the local area as

well as impact on our regional call centres.

Travel times in rush hour traffic from St Neots Ambulance Station to the development location are circa 10-15 minutes, from the Huntingdon Ambulance Hub being around 30 minutes (Reference ShapeAtlas) (NB this is a standard reference point and does not mean ambulances come from these locations in order to respond to calls nor does it consider the ambulance will be travelling under blue light conditions).

This application for 4,400 dwelling development could generate another 9,680 residents and will based on EEAST's average incident rate of 0.23 incidents per person per annum, would create an anticipated additional 512 calls per annum on already constrained ambulance services. Existing activity in postcode areas PE196 indicates 1,028 incidents per annum – an increase of nearly 50% in activity in this location between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025. For the same time period across Huntingdonshire there were 25,678 incidents requiring emergency ambulance services – an increase of 2%

Ambulance stations supporting residents in this development area are deemed aged and capacity constrained Huntingdon Hub was built in 1980 with has 668m2 GIA, well below the standard for a modern Ambulance Hub. St Neots was built in 1965 and with 176m2 GIA. Full Make Ready Services as defined under the Lord Carter Report (2018) and mandated by Quality Care Commission (CQC) should be delivered from a Hub (Stansted) which requires updates to enable EV charging ready for electric ambulances. A new Ambulance Hub requires circa 1 ha and office space of 2,200m2 GIA which can support up to 34 ambulances and rapid response vehicles. EEAST requires an additional ambulance for every 10,000 residents.

CIL contributions allocated for health from this development should be used to support the relocation and expansion of existing Huntingdon Ambulance Hub and possibly also an additional Ambulance Response Post closer to the development location to meet the increased local demand arising from this housing development.

Comments on Development Proposal

EEAST would also request the developer considers the following Health & Wellbeing and Scheme Design Measures as they support physical, mental health and wellbeing and help develop community cohesion:

Health and Wellbeing Scheme Design Measures

- Provide sufficient room size and layout to facilitate at least one person working from home in a suitable environment as this supports both physical and mental health and well-being. Access to fresh air is also recommended.

- Developers' inclusion of community gardens, allotments, orchards, meadow flower and woodland planting areas. Balconies, roof gardens and terraces also provide green space opportunities in apartment buildings. Consideration of all senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste) should be addressed by the developer in the planting plan and use of local flora and fauna and wildlife corridor connection.

- In central open space developers should establish of seating in open spaces and along walkways to provide the opportunity for residents to meet and supports those who have limited mobility to rest and enjoy the surrounding green space.

- The Health Impact Assessment should include all healthcare services: primary, acute, mental health, community and emergency ambulance services.

Ideally EEAST recommends Passivhaus/BRREAM Excellent standard is used for all housing and where appropriate, commercial buildings. This would also support the council in delivering their sustainability/green plans. As a minimum EEAST recommends the proposed 40% affordable/social housing are built to Passivhaus or BREEARM Excellent standards, as this would provide significantly long-term environmental savings for residents who are more likely to be from the most deprived backgrounds or have limited disposable income.

Care Homes (including Extra Care and other Older People's accommodation)

Care homes should not be built in Flood Zone 2 or 3 areas unless effective flood proofing and evacuation plans which do not rely on emergency services are in place.

Flood Assessments

Flooding significantly affects residents physical and mental health in both the short and long term. Developers to utilise the catchment of clean/grey water to

include underground storage tanks or multiple water butts (ie garage and house) to help reduce the risk of localised flooding post development. There is the potential for residents to reuse water for gardens, car washing and in community gardens instead of entering main sewers.

The use of sustainable urban drainage through permeable paving in driveways and parking areas to accommodate surface water run-off is welcomed and should be suitable for use by wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs.

In Flood Zones 2 and 3 EEAST request the appropriate the use of swales and other drainage measures to absorb any flood waters and would urge developers ensure measures are taken to minimise the risk of flooding in surrounding areas as well as flood proofing homes, garages and other infrastructure.

Flood Zones 2 and 3 – care homes should not be built in Flood Zone 2 or 3 areas unless effective flood proofing and evacuation plans which do not involve emergency services are in place.

Transport, Design and Access

Cycle parking should allow for different types of cycles (eg trike, electric bike or mobility scooter) to be stored, covered, secure and well lit.

Blue light emergency services would request developers support the Vision Zero/Safe System approach to design out road accidents for vehicle occupants, motorcyclists, bicyclists and pedestrians by utilising clear lines of sight, use of appropriate street/road lighting, use the of village gateways on approach to the junctions/roundabout and other opportunities to support speed reduction. Clear lines of sight are retained close to properties and walkways to support the reduction and fear of crime whilst also minimising the impact of artificial light.
We hope the Council and developer find the information included in this letter of value.

Sincerely

