OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/01068/PIP Permission in Principle

Proposal: Permission in principle for construction of up to 2no. dwellings

Location: Land At 130 High Street Abbotsley

Applicant: Mr Henry Reynolds

Grid Ref: 523417 256592

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site is as area of land to the south of High Street, Abbotsley.

The site measures approx. 0.13ha extending south from the developed edge of High Street. It is located between Fen End Cottage (130 High Street) to its east and Cambridge Barn (120 High Street) and its associated annexes to the west. Planning history for the site indicates that the land has historically formed part of the curtilage of 130 High Street. The site is not readily visible from the direction of High Street and is bounded at this section with relatively dense trees/hedgerows and a post and rail fence. Hedgerows and trees form the boundaries to the south and west with a close board fence forming the boundary with Fen End Cottage. It is mainly laid to grass.

The site is considered to lie outside of the built-up area of the village (BUA) and is better related to the surrounding countryside. This is expanded upon later in this report.

In terms of constraints, as above, the site lies within Flood Zone 1 as per the most recent Environment Agency Flood Risk Maps and Data, there are no Listed Buildings or trees subject to Preservation Orders in the immediate vicinity. The site is not within the Abbotsley Conservation Area (CA) but the CA boundary does lie to the west.

The current proposal is the first part of a permission in principle application, which only assesses the principal issues namely location, use, and amount of development proposed and establishes whether a site is suitable in principle. Should this application be successful, the applicant will have to submit a Full Technical Details Consent (FULTDC) application covering all other detailed material planning considerations. Permission in Principle is sought for up to 2 dwellings on the site.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

It is noted that pre-application advice is refereed to in the submitted Planning Statement. This is not a matter for public record and represents an informal view of the Local Planning Authority to an applicant relating to the potential for development. Officers have reviewed the advice provided as part of this enquiry but it is not referenced further in this report.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows:

'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 - adopted May 2019

LP1: Amount of Development
LP2: Strategy for Development
LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
LP5: Flood Risk
LP6: Waste Water Management
LP9: Small Settlements
LP10: The Countryside
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP15: Surface Water
LP16: Sustainable Travel
LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
LP25: Housing Mix
LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings
LP37: Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2017)
Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2024)
Annual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply (2024)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
Land Availability Assessments (2024)
The National Design Guide (2021)
Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

1200683FUL - Proposed extension to the rear (Approved)

CONSULTATIONS

Abbotsley Parish Council recommend refusal. Their comments are available to view on HDC's Public Access Site but broadly relate to the following matters:

*Do not agree with the principle of development, site outside the built-up area. Agrees with the concerns of neighbours.

*Important to retain open space on this site which is a valuable part of the character of the village.

*Precedent for further development to take place.

*Concerns about safety given the location at the access to the village and speed of vehicles on this route. No footpath makes the site hazardous for pedestrians.

*Location of dwellings proposed (as per plan) would adversely affect neighbours with the elevated site causing overlooking. If any development supported a single storey dwelling would be preferable.

*Two dwellings would be overdevelopment of the site and out of character with the village.

*Impact on the Conservation Area and access would cause removal of hedgerow.

*General comment regarding the validation process of the application.

Officer comments:

The material planning considerations will be discussed in the proceeding sections of this report. However, it should be noted that each application is considered upon its own merits and so it is not considered that any decision forms a basis for future approvals or the setting of a precedent for development. Comments regarding the validation are noted. It is acknowledged that there was some confusion surrounding the timescales related to the application which are already limited (in relation to other application types) for permission in principle applications.

*CCC Highways - No objections in principle. Improvements required which can be dealt with under FULTDC.

*HDC Environmental Health - No objections to the proposal.

*HDC Landscapes Team - No representations received at the time of determination.

REPRESENTATIONS

Three objections have been received and these are available to view on HDC's Public Access Site. These broadly relate to the following matters:

*Highway safety concerns surrounding access, visibility and speed of vehicles entering the village with no footpath for pedestrian access.

*Overdevelopment of the old orchard/site should be maintained to preserve rural nature of the village.

*Precedent for further development in the setting of heritage assets.

*Site supports various types of wildlife, flora and fauna (biodiversity impacts).

*Concerns surrounding design, scale and layout, especially given suggested level changes.

*Residential amenity concerns, loss of light and overshadowing. Any development should be limited to 1.5 storey. Concerns regarding odours from suggested location for wheeled bins.

*One house would be preferable than two if any development is to be supported.

Officer comments:

As with the matters raised by the Parish Council these points will be discussed in the proceeding sections of this report. As previously stated, each application is assessed upon its own merits and so it is not considered that any decision represents a precedent for development. The agent has provided a response to the LPA in relation to the points raised which broadly accord with the discussions within this report.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

This application is made pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended) (PIP regulations) that provides opportunity for an applicant to apply as to whether permission in principle is acceptable for a site, having regard to specific legislative requirements and, in accordance with ref. 58-012-20180615 of the NPPG, as to whether the location, land use and amount of development proposed is acceptable. The permission in principle (PIP) consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development.

The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. PIP establishes that a particular scale of housing-led development on a defined site is acceptable. The aim is for a PIP to minimise the upfront and at-risk work of applicants.

The report addresses the principal, important and controversial issues which are in this case:

1. Location
2. Land Use
3. Amount of Development
4. Other Matters

1. Location

NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).

As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test a 5% buffer is required here. The 5-year housing land requirement including a 5% buffer is 5,501 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,430 homes equivalent to 3.94 years' supply.

As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to

applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the titled balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

In assessing this site, whilst Policies LP9 (small settlements) and LP10 (the countryside) are out of date (and so afforded less weight in the determination of this application) they are not to be entirely disregarded.

Abbotsley is defined as a small settlement under Policy LP9 of the Local Plan which states that these settlements can support proposals within the built-up area (BUA) of the settlement subject to tests relating to the sustainability of the settlement (levels of infrastructure, accessing services by sustainable travel methods and so on) as well as the impact on the settlement as a whole. The Local Plan defines a BUA as a distinct group of buildings that include 30 or more homes. It also states that land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the BUA.

The Local Plan goes on to state that the BUA will exclude isolated properties or areas of ribbon or fragmented development which are physically and visually detached from the main built form as well as large curtilages with grounds stretching away from the rest of the BUA in order to prevent sub-division of a plot. It recognises that elements of the grounds which relate closely to the to the buildings such as formal gardens, ancillary parking and tennis courts would be included but not those with a more natural rural character.

In this case, the site does not form part of a distinct group of 30 or more homes and, given the relative separation to the BUA of the village and the surrounding built form would be considered ribbon development. Furthermore, whilst the site appears to have historically formed part of the curtilage of 130 High Street (having regard to the red line under 1200683FUL), this is considered to be better related to the countryside in its character (as opposed to residential) and as such provides a visual buffer between the BUA of the village and surrounding countryside. As such, Officers opine with the views of the Parish Council that the site is within the countryside and Policy LP10 (The Countryside) is the correct policy for assessment.

LP10 seeks to limit development in the countryside unless allowed through other opportunities provided for within the Local Plan. LP10 states that all development in the countryside must:

a. seek to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value:

i. avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible, and

ii. avoiding Grade 1 agricultural land unless there are exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the loss of land;

b. recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and

c. not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

In this case the land is defined as grade 2 agricultural land (and so not land of the highest grading). A large proportion of the BUA of the village is also grade 2 land and it must be recognised that if housing is to be provided within this rural district some loss of agricultural land will be required. On this basis, particularly given the current character of the land (which does not appear to be in use for agricultural purposes) there is no objection to development on this basis.

In terms of part b, a permission in principle application is not required to provide full details of a proposal. These, in the event of an approval shall be dealt with under a later FULTDC application. It is acknowledged that an indicative layout has been provided but this is purely indicative and is not an approved plan. This scheme relates to a development of up to 2 dwellings, there is no guarantee as to the size, scale or layout. Therefore, the matter for consideration here is if the introduction of any built form on this land would be harmful.

The application site lies close to the eastern access to Abbotsley which has the character of a typical rural village. Built form in this location is not non-existent but is sporadic. Where there are examples, these are generally located to the front of sites with the majority (in the wider vicinity) large, detached properties located within generous plots. Given the separation between 130 High Street and built development further west (to the south of the High Street - Cambridge Barn) significant built development commences some 40m west of the site. To the north, High Street is undeveloped and forms open countryside with dense trees and hedgerows forming the boundary with the High Street. Built development on High Street commences with 115 High Street approx. 120m from the application site which is adjacent to the access with Rectory Farm.

As referenced above, the site is well screened from the High Street but glimpses are afforded by gaps in the vegetation. None of which (on the frontage) is afforded formal protection and so this screening cannot be guaranteed longer term. Whilst Officers do consider this site to be better related to the countryside, it cannot be considered a tranquil rural environment that is in an undeveloped location because as established, there are examples of residential development in the vicinity (including to the east and closer to the village entrance). Also, as the site is situated along the main route into the village it experiences some degree of vehicular movements characteristic of a developed location.

Turning attention to part c, some residential development will always give rise to some factors such as noise, light pollution and so on. However, the site is of a sufficient size to ensure a layout which minimises as much as possible the impact of factors such as noise, light pollution etc on neighbouring dwellings and surroundings. Furthermore, the surrounding development and vehicle movements in the vicinity as referenced above means that these are not alien features in an otherwise unspoilt location.

Overall, whilst the concerns raised in the objections regarding the impact upon the character of the area are noted, and having regard to the requirement to apply tilted balance to this decision, matters which the LPA are permitted to consider under a permission in principle application and the assessment above, the LPA cannot demonstrate that the introduction of the quantum of development proposed would result in overdevelopment or significant and demonstrable harm as required by Para. 11d (ii) of the NPPF (2024) and therefore cannot defend a refusal on these grounds given the limited weight that can be afforded to Policy LP10 at this time.

Whilst the site is considered to lie outside of the BUA (and so Policy LP9 need not be applied under normal circumstances), given that tilted balance is engaged, an assessment has been conducted as if the site was within the BUA of the settlement. These tests relate to the sustainability of a location when services within it are considered, opportunities for users to access everyday services and facilities and general impact upon the character.

Abbotsley is a small settlement but is generously sized in the settlement hierarchy and not completely void of services. Officers have given careful regard to previous planning decisions and note that an application for a single dwelling at the western end of the village was approved in January 2025 (reference number 24/01866/FUL) which considered the village to be sustainable in relation to the level of services and infrastructure available within it. The submission for this proposal details that there is a public house (which serves food), a village hall and a church. There is also a bus service offering AM and PM services on weekdays and a reduced service on a Saturday so as to allow access to larger settlements and a wider range of services.

Solely based upon these points it is not considered that the quantum of development proposed would be unsustainable in relation to the village itself. Overarching concern in this case is options for the occupants of the development to be able to access these services in a safe and convenient manner.

Part b of LP9 requires consideration of opportunities for users of a development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. This is echoed within Para. 117 of the NPPF (2024) which references the hierarchy of priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and then facilitating public transport. In this case, the site is not served by a public footpath. There is a grass verge on the southern side of High Street with the first public footpath connection being approx. 115m from the application site, on the opposite side of the road close to the entrance with Rectory Farm. This lies within the 30mph zone of the village but is not served by any street lighting, the 40mph zone begins approx. 60m east of the site on a slight bend. Whilst no objections have been raised by CCC Highways on highways safety grounds (a matter discussed later in this report), Officers have given careful consideration to the points raised in the objections and have made two separate visits to the site (one of which walking the route which occupants of the site would be required to navigate to access the services).

It is acknowledged that the site is within the 30mph limit of the village, however, this is naturally reliant on vehicles obeying this, whilst there is no evidence to the contrary it is reasonable to consider that vehicles may begin to speed up or still be slowing down at this access to the village. There is no footpath and so anyone wishing to access the services would need to navigate the grass verge and then cross the road to access the footpath. Whilst in practice the risk may not be severe this could vary dependent on the time of day or year when factors such as weather, daylight etc could affect conditions. Officers accept that the lack of footpath is not wholly uncharacteristic of the surroundings, the immediately adjacent dwellings face the same issues, however, this does not mean allowing further development whatever its quantum is acceptable. Referring to the 24/01866/FUL application which was in a similar location close to the entrance of the village with no footpath it is noted that there is a footpath directly on the opposite side of the road. Again, it was closer to the 40mph speed change but on a straight section of road with good visibility. As such, the only risk was in a person crossing a straight section of the road to access the footpath as opposed to navigating an unlit section of highway with no footpath available.

On this basis, it is concluded that the scheme would fail to accord with part b of LP9(b), M2 of the National Design Guide (2021) and the provisions of Para. 117 of the NPPF (2024).

In terms of part c, this has already been discussed in the preceding sections of the report. It is acknowledged that there would be some alteration to the character of the area but, given the reduced weight that can be afforded to these policies demonstrating significant and demonstrable harm would be challenging.

Overall, whilst as required by titled balance reduced weight has been applied to Policies LP9 and LP10 of the Local Plan to 2036 it is considered that the site by virtue of its location outside of the BUA and lack of safe and convenient access to the services and facilities within the village would present a hazard to future occupants of the development regardless of the quantum of development proposed. Whilst the social, economic and environmental aspects of the proposal with the obvious being contributing to the 5YHLS, as well as minor expansion of a rural village thus supporting local business and contributing to other trades such as builders and suppliers etc have been considered it is not considered that this would outweigh the significant and demonstrable harm identified as set out above. The proposal would be contrary to Policy LP9(b) of the Local Plan to 2036, M2 of the National Design Guide (2021) and the provisions of Para.117 of the NPPF (2024) and should therefore be refused.

It should also be acknowledged that as detailed in the submitted Planning Statement the site lies within the South-East Claylands Landscape Character Area where development proposals should:

*Promote increased planting and soft landscaping around the edges of the towns to screen visually intrusive development, particularly through planting of tree and woodland belts.

*Avoid ribbon development to conserve the form of historic villages.

*Ensure preservation and interpretation of historic features remaining within the landscape.

*Carefully consider the siting and scale of new farm buildings to minimise their impact on the countryside.

*Protect tall hedgerows and hedgerow trees as these are a distinctive feature of the central area.

As can be seen, not all aspects of the above would apply. However, in the event of a successful appeal and submission of an application for FULTDC any relevant points should be considered as part of the design and layout.

Further to the above, the site lies adjacent to the Abbotsley Conservation Area and there are some Grade II Listed Buildings in the (not immediate) vicinity. At this stage, there are very limited details to consider as to if there will be any impact on the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset. Such matters shall be thoroughly assessed at the technical details stage. It is however not considered that the introduction of some development will result in substantial harm to the Conservation Area or be contrary to Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036.

2. Land use

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 as per the most recent Environment Agency Flood Risk Maps and Data. However, the 2024 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment does not identify any other sources of flooding within the site. Development of this nature is acceptable in flood zone 1 and it is not considered that there would be an increased risk of flooding to the occupants or those of adjacent dwellings and land.
No details have been provided as to how surface water and sewerage will be managed (and these will form part of an application for FULTDC in the event of a successful appeal). However, it is not considered that the quantum of development proposed would place undue pressure on waste water disposal.

Policy LP14 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of a proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

The Huntingdonshire Design Guide 2017 states when considering residential development there are three key issues that need to be addressed which are loss of privacy, reducing the level of daylight and being overbearing in size and layout.

Officers need to be satisfied at this stage that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of development proposed without having a detrimental impact on neighbour's amenity and the amenity of the proposed occupiers.

HDC's Environmental Health Team have been consulted and raise no objections in terms of noise, odour or contaminated land.

Officers note the concerns regarding residential amenity impacts and levels etc. In the event of a successful appeal, levels detail would be secured as part of the FULTDC. As advised, the layout and design presented is purely indicative and any future FULTDC would need to ensure that any residential amenity impacts are eliminated or mitigated. However, for the purposes of this assessment it is considered that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of

development proposed and could be arranged (including outside storage) such to limit negative impacts on occupants of adjacent dwellings and land and future occupants of the proposed dwellings. It may be that the development put forward (in the event of a successful appeal) may be single storey and a single dwelling (given the description of 1-2) but there is no way of understanding this at this stage.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways Team have been consulted as part of this process and raise no objections in principle but do note that they would require details of visibility splays and access geometry as part of any future application They are satisfied that this could be dealt with under a FULTDC application in the event of a successful appeal.

Overall, whilst concerns surrounding the highway safety and speeds are noted, given the details provided alongside the quantum of development proposed and lack of objection from CCC Highways as specialists, it is not considered that there would be severe harm having regard to the provisions of Para. 116 of the NPPF (such to justify a refusal). This is a separate issue to the pedestrian safety issues (which are considered significant and demonstrable) in terms of the sustainability of the site.

Overall, it is considered that the scheme could be realised in accordance with Policies LP5, LP15, LP14, LP17 and LP37 of the Local Plan to 2036.

3. Amount of Development

Local Policy LP12 states new development will be expected to be well designed based upon a thorough understanding of the constraints and appraisal of the site's context, delivering attractive, usable and long-lasting buildings and spaces. A proposal will be supported where it can demonstrate that it contributes positively to the areas character and identity, successfully integrates with adjoining buildings, the routes and spaces between buildings, topography and landscape.

In this case, the LPA are satisfied that the density of development can be accommodated on the site and matters of scale, design and massing are not matters for consideration at permission in principle stage. It is not considered that introduction of built development on this land would significantly or demonstrably harm the character or the area and could (subject to details at FULTDC stage in the event of a successful appeal) be realised in compliance with Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Local Plan to 2036.

4. Other Matters

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that the scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development as assessed above. In the event of a successful appeal the applicant would need to also receive a grant of technical details consent before the development can proceed.

*Ecology

Policy LP30 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be required to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and that a proposal will ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type and location of development.

Further to the above (and separate from the requirements of LP30) the development will be subject to Biodiversity Net Gain legislation pursuant to the Environment Act 2021. This means that a 10% statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) would be required with any FULTDC application, following the hierarchy of onsite provision; mixture of on-site and off-site provision; and the last resort of

statutory biodiversity credits unless it can be demonstrated that the development would be exempt. The Planning Statement indicates that the development will be self-build and may therefore be exempt. This would need to be demonstrated at FULTDC stage in the event of a successful appeal.

Concerns have been raised regarding impacts on wildlife and potential loss of hedgerows (though the submitted statement indicates that these will be retained. Nevertheless, the presence of grassland, trees and hedging within, surrounding, and immediately adjacent to the site means that a preliminary ecological survey and any additional species-specific surveys would be required as part of any FULTDC application to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and appropriate mitigated.

*Impact on Trees

There are a number of mature trees surrounding the site, some of which may be afforded formal protection given their siting within the Conservation Area. These make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Given that as detailed in the preceding sections of this report there are currently no details as to layout or density of development the impact on trees/hedgerows cannot be fully assessed. These should however form an integral part of the consideration under an application for FULTDC in order to comply with Policy LP31 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Water Efficiency

Any future application for technical details consent would need to confirm compliance with the optional Building Regulation requirement for water efficiency in Approved Document G, as set out in criteria j. of Policy LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. This is referenced in the submitted Planning Statement.

*Accessible and Adaptable Homes

Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 requires all new dwellings to comply with optional Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable homes', unless it can be demonstrated that site specific factors make this impractical or unviable. Any future application for technical details consent would need to confirm compliance with this policy. This is referenced in the submitted Planning Statement.

*Developer Contributions

Any subsequent Technical Details application should be accompanied by a signed Unilateral Undertaking for the provision of wheeled bins in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD (2011).

*Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

As the proposed development is for new residential dwellings, the development would be CIL liable in accordance with the Council's adopted charging schedule; CIL payments will cover footpaths and access, health, community facilities, libraries and lifelong learning and education.

*Conclusion
Section 38(6) TCPA 2004 states that "if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".
The proposed development is contrary to the development plan being residential development in the countryside in the rural policy area outside the built-up area of Abbotsley which does not meet any development plan policy exceptions.

Whilst reduced weight has been given to the relevant policies given the situation with the Council's five-year housing land supply and application of tilted balance, the proposal represents an unacceptable development when consideration of the provision of safe and convenient access to the site is taken into account. Users of the development would be required to navigate an unlit section of the highway with no footpath for a distance of approx. 115m in order to be able to cross the road to reach a footpath in order to access the services within the village centre and public transport links into the larger settlements. The location is therefore considered to be unsustainable in relation to these constraints.

It is therefore considered the benefits would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm and the development would be contrary to Policy LP9(b) of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, part M2 of the National Desing Guide (2021) and the provisions of Para. 117 of the NPPF 2024.

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388424 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Kevin Simpson**