Environment Agency

Jennifer Wallis
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House St. Marys Street
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE29 3TN

Our ref: AC/2025/132942/01-L01
Your ref: 25/00825/FUL

Date: 22 August 2025

Dear Jennifer,

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF VACANT UPPER-FLOOR OFFICE SPACE INTO 4 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS, WITH THE EXISTING GROUND FLOOR RETAIL UNIT TO REMAIN IN ITS CURRENT USE AND UNCHANGED.

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Thank you for your consultation dated 06 August 2025. We have reviewed the documents as submitted and we have no objection to this planning application. Please find information on flood risk and water resources in the sections below.

Please be aware that although we have raised no objection to this planning application on flood risk grounds, this should not be taken to mean that we consider the proposal to have passed the Sequential Test.

Flood Risk

We have reviewed the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and consider this to be acceptable for the scale and nature of the proposed development.

We have no objection to the proposed development, but strongly recommend that the mitigation measures proposed in the submitted FRA *(3500 – FRA – July 2025)* are adhered to. In particular, the FRA recommends that:

- Flood resilient measures will be incorporated into the development up to 600mm above finished floor levels.
- There will be no ground floor sleeping accommodation.

Sequential Test

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 174), development in flood risk areas should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. It is for the Local Planning Authority to determine if the sequential test needs to be applied and whether or not there are other sites available at lower flood risk. Our flood risk standing advice reminds you of this and provides advice on how to apply the test.

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Emergency Planning

We expect local planning authorities to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions. As such, we recommend you refer to 'Flood risk emergency plans for new development' and undertake appropriate consultation with your Emergency Planners to determine whether the proposals are safe, in accordance with paragraph 181 (footnote 63) of the NPPF and the guiding principles of the Planning Practice Guidance.

Advice for the Applicant

Any proposed flood resilient measures should follow current Government Guidance. For more information on flood resilient techniques, please see the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) guidance document "Improving the Flood Performance of New Buildings – Flood Resilient Construction", which can be downloaded from the following website: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flood-resilient-construction-of-new-buildings

Water Resources

The location of this development is in an area of serious water stress (as identified in our report Water stressed areas – 2021 classification) and has the potential to increase abstraction from groundwater sources. We therefore encourage all developments to be as water-efficient as possible. This can be achieved through meeting the higher water efficiency target of 110 litres per head per day. We recommend this as a minimum but strongly support going beyond this level. The Environment Agency and the incumbent water company's water resources management plan (WRMP) also recommend the installation of smart meters and efficient fittings in new developments to assist meeting water efficiency targets.

We trust that this advice is useful.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

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