OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00806/FUL Full Planning Application

Proposal: Erection of single self build dwelling with car port

Location: The Plough Milk And Water Drove Farcet

Applicant: Mr Colin Harrison

Grid Ref: 523969 293418

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site comprises of a 0.6ha rectangular shaped parcel of land located approximately 3.1km southwest from the built-up area of Farcet. The site comprises a commercial vehicle storage compound and associated portacabin. Planning history on the site indicates the site obtained permission in 2003 for the change of use of land from Pub and Restaurant site with events to the rear to static caravan site with managers office. The Officers site visit noted the former public house had been demolished however, the site was not used as a static caravan site. The site is served by an existing access onto the B1095 (or otherwise known as Milk and Water Drove or Ramsey Road).

The application site is located in the open countryside albeit a small amount of build form is located to the east and south of the site including an aggregate storage and distribution facility. There are no historical or ecological designations within or in proximity to the application site. The site is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3 and therefore at the highest risk from fluvial flooding according to the latest Environment Agency mapping and the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024). The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024) did however find the site to not be susceptible to surface or groundwater flooding.

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a two storey 4-bedroom dwellinghouse with detached car port.

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

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (12th 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 10).'

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.

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

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 - adopted May 2019
o LP1: Amount of Development
o LP2: Strategy for Development
o LP5: Flood Risk
o LP6: Waste Water Management
o LP9: Small Settlements
o LP10: The Countryside
o LP11: Design Context
o LP12: Design Implementation
o LP14: Amenity
o LP15: Surface Water
o LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
o LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:
*Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017)
*Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment SPD (2022)
*Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
*Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)
*Huntingdonshire Tree Guidance Note 3
*Annual Monitoring Report, regarding housing land supply.

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

PLANNING HISTORY
There is extensive planning history on the site, however, below is the most recent and relevant planning history:

23/00036/REFUSL- Change of use to commercial vehicle storage and depot (part retrospective)- Dismissed at appeal.

23/00486/FUL-Change of use to commercial vehicle storage and depot (part retrospective) -refused 01.08.2023

19/02412/FUL - Change of use of land from Pub and Restaurant site with events to the rear to static caravan site with managers office - Refused.

CONSULTATIONS
Detailed consultee comments can be found on the Local Planning Authority (LPA) public access website. The consultations below have been summarised.

Parish Council- No objection. The Parish agreed and recommended approval as the proposal would bringing a derelict site into use.

Environmental Health Officer- No objection. Recommends the imposition of a land contamination condition.

CCC Highways Officer-No objection. It is noted that the application is for a dwelling on the site of the former public house. The dwelling will have onsite parking and turning space for 5 vehicles and will use an existing access. Based on the information submitted, from the perspective of the Local Highway Authority the proposed development is acceptable. Recommends the imposition of conditions in the interests of highways safety should the development be permitted.

Environment Agency-No comment at the time of determination.

Middle Level Commissioners IDB- No comment at the time of determination.

REPRESENTATIONS
No third-party representation received in support or objection to the application at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES
The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- Principle of development
- Flood Risk
- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area
- Highway Safety, Access and Parking Provision
- Residential Amenity
- Biodiversity
- Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings
- Water Efficiency
- Other matters

*Principle of development
The site is located outside of any built-up area of any settlement and is therefore classified as countryside land in accordance with the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. As such, Policy LP10 (The Countryside) of the adopted Local Plan is considered relevant.

Local Plan Policy LP10 states development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan. 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 regard to part a, a site visit confirmed the site comprises a vehicle storage compound and depot. Given the existing use of the site, residential development on the site would not result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land, in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP10 part (a).

With regard to criteria c, Officers acknowledge that despite the unauthorised use of the site for the storage of vehicles at present paraphernalia associated with this use in terms of light and noise already exists on site. The residential use of the site is therefore not considered to be significantly indifferent in terms of the impact to the character of the countryside. The proposal is considered to not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others and would accord with Local Plan Policy LP10 criteria c.

In regard to Local Plan Policy LP 10 criterion (b), the effect of the development proposal on the character of the immediate locality is discussed below and is considered to be unacceptable by Planning Officers. This is discussed in greater detail in later sections of this report.

Whilst the proposal is considered to accord with Policy LP10, the policy also states that development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan. Opportunities in the countryside are limited under Policies LP19 Rural Economy, LP22 Local Services and Community Facilities, LP23 Tourism and Recreation, LP28 Rural Exceptions Housing, LP33 Rural Buildings and LP38 Water Related Development for which these are not applicable to this application. Therefore, in this case the residential development proposed in the countryside does not accord with Local Plan policies.

It is acknowledged that the site formerly accommodated a public house, which has since been demolished. In accordance with the definition set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), land that has been lawfully developed and was occupied by a permanent structure, including any associated fixed surface infrastructure, qualifies as previously developed land. Given that the application site comprises the remaining hardstanding associated with the former public house, Officers consider the site to meet this definition.

Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that “the use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.” While the principle of reusing previously developed land is supported, it is noted that the application site is located within open countryside and is not physically well-related to the existing settlement of Farcet, as previously outlined.

The site lacks illuminated pedestrian footpath connectivity to either Farcet or Pondersbridge, and the nearest bus stop is situated approximately 2.7km southeast of the site, within the village of Pondersbridge. This limited access to sustainable transport options and active travel routes reduces the overall locational suitability of the proposal. This limited accessibility further reduces the sustainability credentials of the proposal. Accordingly, Officers consider that only moderate weight can be afforded to the reuse of previously developed land in this instance.

It should also be noted that another material planning consideration in the determination of this application is whether the Council can demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply (5YHLS).

A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a 5YHLS. 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.

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 dwellinghouses (referred to as 'the tilted balance').

A balancing exercise is detailed towards the end of this report.

*Flood Risk
National guidance and Policy LP5 of the Local Plan seek to steer new development to areas at lowest risk of flooding and advises this should be done through application of the Sequential Test, and if appropriate the Exceptions Test (as set out in paragraphs 172-180 of the NPPF (2024)). The site is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3 on the Environment Agency Maps for Flooding and on the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2024) maps. The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024) did however find the site to not be susceptible to surface or groundwater flooding.

The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) asserts that a Sequential Test is not required, referencing Paragraph 033 of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which states that the Sequential Test does not apply to applications for a change of use except where the proposal involves a change to a caravan, camping, or mobile/park home site. However, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 classifies caravans, mobile homes, and park homes intended for permanent residential use as 'highly vulnerable' in terms of flood risk. Whilst it is acknowledged that planning permission was granted in 2003 (ref. 0302272FUL) for a change of use to a touring caravan and camping site with ancillary mobile structures, this permission did not extend to permanent residential use.

In addition, it is important to note that applications for a change of use are generally exempt from the Sequential Test where they relate to existing buildings. However, in this instance, although the site formerly comprised a public house, the building has since been demolished, and the proposed change of use now relates to the land itself rather than the existing structure.

As such, the exemption does not apply, and the Sequential Test is required. This is consistent with national guidance, which states that the Sequential Test must be applied where development involves land rather than an existing building, particularly in areas at risk of flooding.

The current use of the site as a vehicle storage depot is considered 'less vulnerable', whereas the proposed erection of a new dwelling constitutes a 'more vulnerable' use under the flood risk vulnerability classification. Given that the proposal involves the construction of a new dwelling rather than the conversion of an existing building, and would result in an increase in vulnerability, officers maintain that the proposal requires the application of the Sequential and Exceptions Tests.

In the absence of sufficient information to demonstrate that the Sequential and Exceptions Tests have been satisfied, the proposal is contrary to the NPPF (2024) and Policy LP5 of the Local Plan. The site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3, where national policy and Local Plan Policy LP5 require the application of the Sequential and, if necessary, the Exceptions Test to steer development to areas of lowest flood risk. The proposed erection of a new dwelling represents a more vulnerable use than the existing vehicle storage depot or former public house use.

*Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area
Local Plan Policies LP 11 and LP 12 also states proposals will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context (LP 11), is well designed and demonstrates that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape (LP 12). In addition, Local Plan Policy LP10 criteria b also states that development in the countryside should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

In terms of the sites context, the land to the east is occupied by a single-storey residential dwelling known as Cosa Mia. To the rear of this property lies an aggregate storage and distribution site. The land to the west comprises open countryside, while to the north lies an unauthorised car storage site. Bedford Barn a single storey/ 1.5 storey residential dwelling is located to the south on the adjacent site of Milk and Water Drove.

Cosa Mia, the nearest residential dwelling, has its principal elevation facing Milk and Water Drove. It is well screened from public view by a mature hedgerow, and the ridge height of the dwelling does not rise above this vegetation, contributing to its limited visual impact from the public realm and the countryside.

The application site is located in the Fen Margin Character Area as detailed in the Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape SPD. The document characterises the area as a gently sloping, low-lying landscape that descends eastwards toward the Fens. The Fen Margin features a mix of land uses including arable farmland, pasture, orchards, woodland, and settlements and the landscape is generally well vegetated, with deciduous woodland, hedgerow trees, and orchards. The SPD recommends development proposals within the Fen Margin Maintain existing hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands and create soft edges to built developments which have a visual relationship with the surrounding landscape.

The site is bounded to the north and east by well-established vegetation, providing a strong degree of natural screening. Along the southern boundary, there is some vegetation interspersed with Heras fencing, which currently allows views into the site from the public highway. To the west, a private drive runs adjacent to the site, providing access to an area used for vehicle storage to the north. Beyond this drive lies another well-established hedgerow, further contributing to the site's enclosure.

While the site is currently visible from the public highway through the Heras fencing, the submitted proposed site plan indicates that the western boundary would be infilled with additional vegetation, which would enhance screening and reduce visual impact on the surrounding countryside. The vegetation and fencing along the southern boundary would be replaced with low level planting. Hard and soft landscaping details could be secured by condition, should the development be permitted.

The dwelling proposed would be 17.5m in length, 8.3m in width, 5.3m to the eves and 9.4m to the ridge and is of a contemporary barn style design. The proposed car port comprising of 4 bays would be 11.5m in length and 5.6m in width, 2.5m to the eves and 5.3m to the ridge. The front entrance of the dwelling would be orientated north-south rather than towards the public highway.

Officers consider that the proposed dwelling and car port would sit comfortably within the application site and would not result in an overdeveloped or cramped form of development. While some concern is raised regarding the overall height of the proposed dwelling, the scale and massing are considered acceptable when assessed against the footprint of the former public house (as shown on the submitted proposed site layout plan PL01), the overall size of the application site and the buildings on the adjacent aggregate storage and distribution site.

The proposed contemporary barn-style dwelling is considered to be broadly in keeping with the rural character of the area. However, concerns are raised regarding the southern elevation, which lacks fenestration. As a result, users of Milk and Water Drove would be presented with a blank 9.4m-high gable end, softened only by low-level planting. This design approach is considered contrary to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (page 68), which advises that building fronts should face the street to create activity and avoid long, blank elevations.

Additionally, while it is acknowledged that the proposed car port does not include garage doors, its overall length and number of bays are considered excessive and urban in character. This conflicts with the Design Guide's recommendation to avoid long runs of garage doors or similar features that detract from the rural street scene. It is also noted that the proposed car port, at 11.5m in length, would be only marginally shorter than the main dwelling. This limited difference in scale suggests that the car port would not appear subservient to the dwelling, thereby diminishing the visual hierarchy typically expected in the street scene.

The proposal submitted in its current state, by virtue of its orientation, blank façade, height and length of proposed car port is not considered to be out of keeping with the immediate context of the site. The proposal is considered contrary to Policies LP 10 part (b), LP11, LP12 and section 3.4 of the HDC Design Guide.

*Residential Amenity
Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

Amenity of neighbouring properties
The closest neighbouring residential properties to the proposal are Cosa Mia and Bedford Barn and are most likely to be impacted as a result of the proposed development.

With regard to Bedford Barn, located to the south of the application site on the adjacent side of Milk and Water Drove, the proposal is not considered to result in any significantly detrimental overbearing, overshadowing, or overlooking impacts due to the generous 47-metre separation distance.

In terms of the amenity of the occupants of Cosa Mia, the proposed dwelling would be set approximately 16 metres from the common boundary, while Cosa Mia itself is located around 17.5 metres from the shared boundary. This results in a total separation distance of 33.5 metres between the two dwellings at their closest point. No first-floor habitable room windows are proposed on the

eastern elevation of the new dwelling that would directly overlook the rear amenity space of Cosa Mia. The proposed first-floor windows on this elevation serve a bathroom and ensuite and can be secured as obscure glazed by condition, in the interest of protecting privacy.

Furthermore, the separation distance between the dwellings is considered sufficient to mitigate any significantly detrimental overbearing or overshadowing impacts. The retention of the existing Leylandii hedging along the boundary would also help maintain privacy between the two properties.

Amenity for future occupiers
It is considered the proposed development would provide a high standard of amenity for future occupants of the dwelling as it meets the nationally described space standard for a 4-bedroom 8-person dwelling, provides adequate outdoor amenity space and would be screened with retained and proposed hedging to offer privacy. All habitable rooms of the proposed dwelling are serviced with windows which offers appropriate levels of daylight.

Taking the above factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

*Highway Safety, Access and Parking Provision
Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.

Highways Safety
The applicants seek to use the established access off the B1095 (otherwise known as Milk and Water Drove or Ramsey Rd) to service the proposed dwellinghouse. Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority was consulted as part of the application. The Highways Officer raised no concerns with the proposed access arrangement given the application proposes a new dwelling on the site of the former public house, with provision for on-site parking and turning for five vehicles, utilising an existing access. Based on the submitted details, the Local Highway Authority considers the development acceptable in principle. However, should planning permission be granted, conditions are recommended in the interests of highway safety.

Taking the above into consideration, the proposal is therefore considered to provide a safe and acceptable access arrangement in accordance with highways safety and Policy LP 17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

Parking Provision
The proposed car port, comprising four bays, along with the parking area to the front of the property, is considered sufficient to serve a four-bedroom dwelling. Notwithstanding this, as outlined above, Officers have raised concerns regarding the design and scale of the car port, particularly its length, and the resulting impact on the character of the area.

Should the development be permitted, a condition can be imposed to secure the provision of secure cycle storage, sized to accommodate one cycle per bedroom, in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP17.

*Biodiversity
Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan dovetails this and requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible.

The ecological value of the application site is considered to be low, as it primarily comprises gravel hardstanding used for vehicle storage, with some boundary vegetation. The application is supported by a completed Biodiversity Checklist, which confirms that the proposal falls below the threshold requiring a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, in accordance with the Council's validation requirements.

The proposal seeks to retain the eastern and northern boundary hedgerows, while removing a 15-metre section of established hedging along the southern boundary. New planting is proposed along the western and southern boundaries of the site. Whilst the development would result in the partial loss of existing vegetation, it is considered that the proposed planting would enhance the site's currently low ecological value. A landscaping condition can be imposed on any planning consent to ensure that a native hedgerow is planted along the western boundary, thereby supporting biodiversity and contributing positively to the site's integration with the surrounding landscape.

As of 2 April 2024, a mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement was introduced for small sites. The accompanying application form confirms that the proposal qualifies for the self-build exemption, with supporting evidence demonstrating that the applicants have had primary input into the design and layout of the dwelling and intend to occupy it themselves. Officers are satisfied that the proposal meets the criteria for an exemption from mandatory BNG. However, as this exemption forms the sole basis for not securing BNG, a planning condition will be imposed to ensure the dwelling is delivered as a self-build project, should permission be granted.

Overall, given that the site currently comprises gravel hardstanding with boundary vegetation, Officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in harm to protected species. The application has demonstrated that potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been appropriately considered and that the development would deliver biodiversity enhancements. Subject to the imposition of relevant conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with Local Plan Policy LP30.

*Accessible and Adaptable Homes
Policy LP25 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals that include housing to meet the optional Building Regulation requirement M4(2)" Accessible and adaptable dwellings" unless it can be demonstrated that site specific factors make this unachievable. A condition could be imposed upon any consent to ensure that the development is built in accordance with these standards and maintained for the life of the development.

*Water Efficiency
Policy LP12 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals that include housing to comply with the optional building regulation for water efficiency, as set out in Approved Document G of the Building Regulations. A condition could be imposed upon any consent to ensure that the development is built in accordance with these standards and that they are maintained for the life of the development.

*Other Matters
Developer Contributions
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
The development will 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.

Wheeled Bins
Part H of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2011) requires a payment towards refuse bins for new residential development. A Unilateral Undertaking to secure the provision of wheeled bins does not accompany the application. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Policy LP4 of the Local Plan and the Developer Contributions SPD (2011).

Conclusion and Planning Balance:

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. 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.

As identified above, the Council are unable to proceed to the second stage of the tilted balance assessment as outlined in paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), because the proposed development is located in an area at high risk from fluvial flooding (Flood Zone 2 and 3) and the application has failed to demonstrate that the Sequential and Exceptions Tests have been satisfied in accordance with footnote 7 of the NPPF. Accordingly, this forms a clear reason for refusal and in this case the 'tilted balance' does not apply.

As detailed above, Officers consider the proposal to conflict with Local Plan Policy LP10 given the policy restricts new residential development in the countryside to limited and specific opportunities detailed in the local plan. Notwithstanding this, policies concerned with the supply and location of housing are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications. The aspects of this policy that restrict development in the countryside is to be given reduced weight. Limited harm is afforded to this.

Occupants of the proposed dwelling would over-rely on the private motor vehicle given the application site is separated from sustainable settlements, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 109. Moderate harm is afforded to this.

While the proposal would reuse previously developed land associated with the former public house, the site is located in open countryside with limited access to sustainable transport. As such, Officers consider that only moderate weight can be given to the reuse of previously developed land in this case.

The site is located in Flood Zones 2 and 3 and at highest risk from fluvial flooding. Significant and demonstrable harm is afforded to this.

The proposed layout, scale and appearance is considered unacceptable and would negatively impact the character and appearance of the immediate locality and countryside. Moderate harm is afforded to this.

The proposal would result in the delivery of one dwelling towards the housing supply. Limited weight is afforded to this.

In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposal would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation - during the construction phase and in the longer term through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. Limited weight is afforded to this.

When taking all the positives and negatives of the proposal into account, the harm identified would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Therefore having regard to all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be refused for the following reasoning:

1. The proposed residential development is located in the countryside, where new residential development is restricted to limited and specific opportunities as set out in other policies of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The proposal does not fall within any of the exceptions provided under other policies of the Local Plan and as such, the development is contrary to policy LP 10 and the overarching spatial strategy as set out in policy LP2 of Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and the principles of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

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 site's separation from essential services and infrastructure, with no safe pedestrian footpath/cycle connections would lead to an unsustainable reliance on private vehicles, contrary to the NPPF. It is therefore considered the benefits would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm.

2. In the absence of sufficient information to demonstrate that the Sequential and Exceptions Tests would be passed, the proposal is contrary to chapter 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF (2024) and Policy LP5 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The site lies within Flood Zones 3 and 2 and at highest risk from fluvial flooding, where national policy and Local Plan Policy LP5 require the application of the Sequential and, if necessary, the Exceptions Test to steer development to areas of lowest flood risk. The proposed erection of a new dwelling, a more vulnerable use, and a higher vulnerability classification to the previous and existing vehicle storage depot, is considered unacceptable in these flood zones unless the sequential and exception test can be passed. This also forms a clear reason for refusal in accordance with footnote 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The proposed development, by reason of its orientation, blank southern elevation, overall height, and the scale and design of the car port, fails to respond positively to the immediate context of the site and character of the surrounding landscape. The blank 9.4m-high gable end facing Milk and Water Drove and the excessive length and number of bays of the car port are considered to be urban in character and visually intrusive, contrary to the principles set out in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (Section 3.4, page 68). As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policies LP10(b), LP11, and LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the area and the countryside.

4. In the absence of a completed Unilateral Undertaking to secure the necessary financial contribution towards the provision of refuse bins, the proposal fails to comply with the requirements of Part H of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011) and Policy LP4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate

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