



Planning Statement

Prepared on behalf of
Luke Mulvenna and Joseph Rooney
For

DRAFT

Land north of Sackville Cottage, The Drive, Riseley, Bedfordshire, MK44 1BS

January 2026



Contents

1	Introduction and Site Background	1
2	Site Location and Description	2
3	Planning History	5
4	Planning Policy Overview	6
	<i>National Planning Policy</i>	6
	<i>Local Planning Policy</i>	9
	<i>Neighbourhood Plan</i>	13
5	Key Planning Considerations	15
	<i>Principle of the Development</i>	15
	<i>Housing Mix</i>	25
	<i>Design Considerations</i>	26
	<i>Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Surrounding Area (including heritage)</i>	27
	<i>Access and Parking</i>	27
	<i>Flood Risk and Drainage</i>	29
	<i>Biodiversity, Ecology and Landscaping</i>	30
	<i>Biodiversity Net Gain</i>	31
	<i>Preliminary Ecological Appraisal</i>	33
	<i>Energy Efficiency</i>	33
	<i>Refuse Collections</i>	34
7	Conclusions	35



1 Introduction and Site Background

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany the Planning Application in respect of the land to the north of Sackville cottage, Riseley MK44 1BS. This Statement has been prepared to aid the understanding of the Site and support the Planning Application as submitted.

1.2 This Application has been prepared for the erection of 7no. dwellings including 5no. bungalows on land situated north of the village of Riseley in a small enclave of existing development at the former agricultural complex and aerodrome at Sackville Farm.

1.3 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the following plans and supporting documents:

Drawing/Document	Prepared by	Drawing/Document no
Site Location Plan	Campbell Ark	K1870-01
Site as Proposed	Campbell Ark	K1870-02
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report	Environmental Design UK	EDUK-RISE-BNG-001
Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Calculations (Excel)	Environmental Design UK	EDUK-RISE-BNG-002-Metric
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	Environmental Design UK	EDUK-RISE-PEA-001
Planning Statement	Westbrook Planning	WP1870PS

2 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The Site comprises land located on to the north of Sackville Cottage in the north-eastern end of Riseley. The Site is former paddock land and extends to approximately 0.7ha, as shown edged red below.



- 2.3 The Site is edged red and the land within the blue line is within the ownership of the applicant and is to be retained as paddock land, which could be associated with one or more of the dwellings (subject to separate planning consent).
- 2.4 The Site previously was used as paddock land, as evidenced by Google Street View from May 2023 which shows the land being used for grazing of horses and the previous owner installed a static caravan on the site, which is subject to a separate planning consent. The intention is that should planning permission for the dwellings be granted, then the caravan would be removed from the site to facilitate this development.
- 2.5 The Site is to be accessed from the south-eastern corner where there is access via the private drive that links the site to the High Street. The Site is bounded by a post and wire fence that

demarcates the boundary, and this is to be retained, save for the access, with a native species hedge row consisting of appropriate hedgerow for this locality planted behind the fence. The strip of grass along the existing access is to be retained to allow for agricultural traffic that overhangs the roadway to continue to pass unfettered. The Site is entirely laid to maintained grass and the boundaries to the east and north feature a number of trees and unkept hedgerows which will all be retained and are unaffected by the proposals.



Aerial Photo of the Site

- 2.6 The Site is surrounded on two sides by existing residential properties, former agricultural buildings that now host a number of commercial activities, including veterinary services, storage and small commercial units, along with the remaining agricultural functions associated with Sackville Farm as well as Sackville Farm Aerodrome. There are also a number of equestrian facilities including paddocks, stables, menages etc within the existing complex. The existing properties range from being located within close proximity to the highway, to being set back and accessed via driveways, often with garages or other outbuildings located forward of the principal elevations.

- 2.7 The Site is not located within a Conservation Area and there are no heritage assets that would be affected by the proposals.



2.8 The proposed development has the following schedule of accommodation:

Unit No.	No. of Bedrooms
1	2
2	2
3	3
4	5
5	5
6	3
7	2
Total:	
3 x 2-bedroom bungalows	
2 x 3-bedroom bungalows	
2 x 4-bedroom houses	

DRAFT



3 Planning History

- 3.1 There is no known planning history for the Site.

- 3.2 A variety of adjacent uses have been consented over the years, including various residential dwellings (including conversions from agricultural units to residential units, B8 open storage and siting of static caravans, in addition to long-established other uses in this location.

DRAFT

4 Planning Policy Overview

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that *'If regard is to be made 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'*.
- 4.2 For the purpose of this application the Development Plan comprises the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 and saved policies of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan (2013). Riseley has a Neighbourhood Plan that was made on the 2nd April 2024 and therefore is a material consideration.
- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was originally published on the 27th March 2012, with the latest update taking place in December 2024. The NPPF sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system with the key aim of protecting the environment and promoting sustainable growth. The NPPF, together with the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), are material planning considerations. The adopted Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is also of relevance.
- National Planning Policy*
- 4.4 According to the NPPF, there is a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development and policies in Local Plans should follow this presumption, so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay. All Plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies guiding how the presumption should be applied locally. Plan-making should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change.
- 4.5 The three key dimensions of sustainable development listed in the NPPF clearly relate to the social, economic and environmental roles played in planning.

- 4.6 The economic role is seen as contributing towards building 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 and innovation and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.
- 4.7 The social role should act to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.
- 4.8 The environmental role contributes to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and as part of this, helps to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution and mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.9 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and that for decision-taking, this means that developments that accord with an up-to-date plan should be approved without delay, and that, where there are no relevant development plan policies, permission should be granted, unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 4.10 According to Paragraph 38 of the Framework, 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, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'*.
- 4.11 At the heart of the NPPF lies the Government's clear objective to significantly boost the supply of homes by ensuring that a sufficient amount and variety of land comes forward where needed. This is furthered by Paragraph 70 which confirms that small and medium-sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirements, particularly as they can be built out relatively quickly. Authorities are directed to support the development of windfall sites through policies and decisions.

- 4.12 Section 9 refers to the promotion of sustainable transport and advises that proposals should seek opportunities to promote walking, cycling and modes of public transport. Paragraph 114 requires that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users, and Paragraph 115 confirms that developments should only be refused on highway grounds *'if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.'*
- 4.13 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work, as well as helping to make development acceptable to communities (Paragraph 131). Plans should set out a clear design vision and expectations, which should reflect local aspirations whilst being grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics.
- 4.14 Paragraph 135 advises that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 - d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
 - e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
 - f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.'*

4.15 Planning for flood risk is covered by Section 14 of the NPPF, where, Paragraph 165 confirms the requirement for developments to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere and sets out the criteria to minimise flood risk to the development itself, including: utilising appropriate flood resilience and resistance measures; incorporating sustainable drainage systems; and, ensuring safe access and escape routes.

4.16 Section 15 of the NPPF deals specifically with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Within this section, Paragraph 180 sets out that planning decisions should contribute to the natural and local environment through protecting and enhancing valued landscapes; recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity; and preventing new development from contributing to, being put at risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of pollution of land instability.

Local Planning Policy

4.17 Policy 6 (Development in Small Settlements) states that *“within the built form of Small Settlements development will be supported where the proposal contributes positively to the character of the settlement and is appropriate to the structure, form, character and size of the settlement as a whole.”*

4.18 Paragraph 6.21 states that places with a scattered development form, comprising no reasonably substantial definable core are considered to form part of the countryside. Nevertheless, it is important that overly restrictive policies do not prevent the borough’s rural businesses and smaller communities from thriving. A balance therefore needs to be struck between supporting a thriving rural economy and providing opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations, whilst protecting and where appropriate enhancing the natural and historic environment, the character and appearance of existing settlements and the surrounding countryside.

4.19 Policy 7S (Development in the Countryside) confirms that development in the countryside beyond the defined limits of Settlement Policy Areas and the built form of Small Settlements, will be permitted if it is appropriate in terms of the re-use of rural buildings; comprises the replacement or extension of dwellings; is affordable housing to meet local needs; is

accommodation for rural workers; or, is brought forward through a 'made' neighbourhood plan.

In addition, exceptionally development proposals will be supported on sites that are well related to a defined Settlement Policy Area, Small Settlements or the built form of other settlements where it can be demonstrated that:

- vi. It responds to an identified community need; and
- vii. There is identifiable community support and it is made or supported by the parish council or, where there is no parish council, another properly constituted body which fully represents the local community; and
- viii. Its scale is appropriate to serve local needs or to support local facilities; and
- ix. The development contributes positively to the character of the settlement and the scheme is appropriate to the structure, form, character and size of the settlement.
- x. Where a community building is being provided, users of the proposed development can safely travel to and from it by sustainable modes and it is viable in the long term, ensuring its retention as a community asset.

Finally, all development in the countryside must:

- xi. Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and
- xii. Not give rise to other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others; and
- xiii. Not give rise to other impacts that would have a significant adverse effect on the environment, biodiversity or designated Natura 2000 sites.

4.20 Policy 28S (Place Making) of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 acknowledges that development will be expected to contribute to good place-making. This is to include (but not limited to): high quality design; complementing the local character; enhancing local landscapes and including appropriate new landscaping; and avoiding adverse biodiversity impacts.

4.21 Policy 29 (Design Quality and Principles) requires all new development to be designed to the highest standards and respect the context in which it will sit. Developments should protect the setting of heritage assets, promote accessibility, and promote a sense of place with attractive spaces.

- 4.22 Policy 30 (The Impact of Development – Design Impacts) outlines the material considerations which need to be regarded when determining planning applications to ensure that the design and impact of the development are appropriate. Cramped forms of development, which bear little relationship to the character of the surrounding built form are also discouraged.
- 4.23 Developments are required to not have any significant adverse impacts upon the public highway through Policy 31 (The Impact of Development – Access Impacts). Consideration must be given to highway capacity, parking provision and safety. Developments must provide suitable access arrangements for all users, including emergency vehicles.
- 4.24 Policy 37 (Landscape Character) advises that developments should seek to protect and enhance key landscape features and visual sensitivities within landscape character areas. This includes appropriate landscape design and management, the retention of important features, safeguarding key views, and protecting the landscape setting of settlements.
- 4.25 New developments shall provide landscaping on site where appropriate, or, where more suitable, this can be provided off-site in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy 38 (Landscaping in New Development).
- 4.26 Policy 39 (Retention of Trees) confirms that development proposals should consider the retention of existing trees of high amenity and environmental value, with details of how these are to be protected during any works to be submitted with any application. Works should be undertaken in accordance with the relevant British Standard to ensure retained trees are not adversely affected. Planning permission will be refused for development that results in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland or aged/veteran trees.
- 4.27 Proposals are required to consider any potential impacts or effects on the significance of non-designated heritage assets through part vii of Policy 41S (Historic Environment and Heritage Assets). Here it states that applications which result in harm or loss of significance to non-designated assets will only be supported with clear justification. The Council will weigh the significance of the heritage asset against the scale of any harm or loss to it.
- 4.28 Policy 42S (Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity) advises that developments should assess the impact of any proposal on the biodiversity and geodiversity value of the site. Appropriate mitigation will be needed where protected or priority species or habitats are to be adversely

affected. Policy 43 (Enhancing Biodiversity) looks for developments to provide a net gain in biodiversity value through enhanced features, the creation of additional habitats and linking habitats and networks through adjoining features.

- 4.29 Policy 50S (Water Resources) states that development must not adversely affect the quality, quantity and flow of both ground and surface water.
- 4.30 Policy 51S (Climate Change Strategic Approach) requires development and use of land and buildings to address climate change, adapting to anticipated future changes and mitigating against further change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 4.31 Policy 52 (Water Demand) sets out that new development is expected to minimise the use of water, and that new residential development will be required to achieve higher water efficiency standards that as set out in the Building Regulations.
- 4.32 Policy 53 (Development Layout and Accessibility) seeks developments to incorporate sustainable design and layouts where possible. This includes their location, providing convenient access to local services; the use of design and layout to maximise natural ventilation, cooling and solar gain; and landscaping and open spaces with street tree planting.
- 4.33 Policy 54 (Energy Efficiency) sets out that all residential developments of fewer than 10 dwellings are required to achieve a minimum of 10% reduction in carbon emissions above that required by current building regulations.
- 4.34 Policy 59S (Housing Mix) sets out that developments are expected to provide a mix of dwelling sizes and types to meet identified needs. This includes families with children, older people, those with disabilities or specific needs and those wishing to build their own homes.
- 4.35 Policy 89 (Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) looks for developments to be designed to allow for the charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in a safe, accessible and convenient location, and, where appropriate, provide electric vehicle charging points.
- 4.36 Policy 92 (Flood Risk) requires developments to be directed to areas at the lowest risk of flooding and to consider all sources of flooding, with allowances made for future climate

change. Any flood risk must be assessed and mitigated and development must be made safe for its lifetime.

4.37 All developments must incorporate suitable surface water drainage systems, as required by Policy 93 (Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)). Developments are required to show that drainage solutions appropriate to the site are to be incorporated and that the use of sustainable drainage methods, with reference to the preferred hierarchy, are to be utilised. Arrangements should be made for the management and maintenance of drainage systems for the lifetime of the development.

4.38 The adopted parking standards within the Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities SPD (2014) require that residential developments provide a minimum of 1 No. space per 1 bedroom property; 2 No. spaces per 2/3-bedroom property; and 3 No. spaces per 4+ bedroom property.

Riseley Neighbourhood Plan

4.39 The application site lies within the designated area of the Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan, which forms part of the statutory development plan. However, the site is located outside the defined Settlement Policy Area for Riseley village, as identified within the Neighbourhood Plan. As such, policies relating specifically to development within the Settlement Policy Area are not directly applicable to the site, and the proposal must be assessed in the context of policies that apply to land beyond the settlement boundary.

4.40 The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate specific sites for residential development outside the Settlement Policy Area, nor does it impose an absolute restriction on development in such locations. Importantly, the Plan recognises the need to consider development proposals on their individual merits, having regard to local character, sustainability and the wider policy framework. The application site is situated within an enclave of mixed land uses, including established residential dwellings, commercial activities and agricultural uses. This context demonstrates that the site does not form part of an isolated or open countryside setting, but instead sits within a functionally mixed and developed environment.

- 4.41 The proposed development of seven dwellings, including five bungalows, reflects the established pattern of development in the immediate area and represents a contained and proportionate form of development that does not result in encroachment into undeveloped countryside. The scale and form of the proposal respond positively to the surrounding uses and are consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan's wider objectives of supporting high-quality design, respecting local character and contributing to local housing needs, including provision of accessible accommodation through bungalow development.
- 4.42 Accordingly, while the site falls outside the Settlement Policy Area, the proposal does not conflict with the overall spatial strategy of the Neighbourhood Plan when read as a whole. The development should therefore be assessed against the relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies applicable to land outside settlement boundaries, alongside the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. In this context, the proposal represents sustainable development that accords with the development plan when taken as a whole and should be supported.

DRAFT

5 Key Planning Considerations

5.1 The key planning considerations in respect of the proposed redevelopment of the existing buildings to create 7no. residential units are the following matters:

- Principle of the Development;
- Housing Mix;
- Design Considerations;
- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Surrounding Area;
- Access and Parking;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Biodiversity and Landscaping;
- Energy Efficiency.

5.2 These matters are addressed in turn below.

Principle of the Development

5.3 Although it is acknowledged that the application site is not within the Settlement Policy Area (SPA) for Riseley, it follows a somewhat sporadic pattern of development that has developed over time at Sackville Farm. The main development pattern for Riseley has been along the main High Street through the village, with various side roads that branch off creating pockets of development that extend beyond the linear pattern of development along the High Street and the historic core of the village. It is clear however that this Site falls within the built form of the existing enclave of dwellings and other land use activities that now take place at Sackville Farm, with a variety of commercial, agricultural, equestrian and aerodrome activities that take place clearly setting the character of this location as being a variation of land uses outside of the SPA.

5.4 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 7no. dwellings, including 5no. bungalows. The Government's clear objective is to significantly boost the supply of homes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community (NPPF Paragraph 60) and it is recognised that small-medium sized sites offer an opportunity to bring forward homes relatively quickly (NPPF Paragraph 70).

- 5.5 In relation to rural housing, Paragraph 82 sets out that in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 5.6 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF acknowledges that isolated homes should be avoided unless these meet one of a number of specified criteria, but these are focussed on preventing houses being built that are detached from existing settlements, rather than infill development of this nature.
- 5.7 Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1: Housing mix sets that out that in new residential developments of 5 dwellings or more dwellings, there should be a varied mix of house types and sizes which should include:
- More than 50% of smaller dwellings (one to three bedrooms)
 - Homes suitable for less mobile people including bungalows
- 5.8 This proposal therefore has been prepared with this Policy in mind, and of the 7 units proposed, 5 of these are smaller dwellings, with a mix of 2 and 3 bedrooms) which equates to 71%, far in excess of the requirements of Policy H1. The two remaining dwellings are 5-bedroom houses, that will provide a range of dwelling sizes and styles to suit the local demand. In addition, the development features 5 bungalows which again is in response to Policy H1 and as a result of engagement with the Parish Council, where they indicated they would be supportive of a number of bungalows on this site to suit the local demand within the village.
- 5.9 Paragraph 6.21 of the Local Plan states; *“Places with a scattered development form, comprising no reasonably substantial definable core are considered to form part of the countryside. Nevertheless, it is important that overly restrictive policies do not prevent the borough’s rural businesses and smaller communities from thriving. A balance therefore needs to be struck between supporting a thriving rural economy and providing opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations, whilst protecting and where*

appropriate enhancing the natural and historic environment, the character and appearance of existing settlements and the surrounding countryside.”

- 5.10 Whilst the Site is not within a Settlement Policy Area, it is close to the High Street at the eastern end of the village that houses the Primary School, a garage, community centre, a café and tennis courts, which is arguably one of the more sustainable locations in the village due to the number of facilities and services that are within a 650m walk of the Application Site. For context, those living near to the playing fields within the village are approximately 1.4km walk from the primary school and these other services and facilities, and the other end of the village (the western end) that has few services is 1.65km from the primary school.
- 5.11 The general thrust of these policies within the Local Plan acknowledges there is a balance between protecting the open countryside from development verses ensuring such policies do no prevent the borough’s smaller communities from thriving.
- 5.12 Paragraph 6.22 states that *“Policy 7S incorporates sufficient flexibility to support the provision of new homes where they will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and meet identified needs. The policy will prevent isolated homes in the countryside.”* This proposal would not result in any new isolated new housing in the countryside, rather it would provide additional housing in Riseley, helping to support the existing local community by providing a range of houses that suit local needs, and will help to support the existing services and facilities within the village, all which would benefit from additional people within the community.
- 5.13 Policy 7S States that *“Development outside defined Settlement Policy Areas and the built form of Small Settlements will be permitted if it is appropriate in the countryside in accordance with:*
- i. Policy 65 - Reuse of rural buildings in the countryside;*
 - ii. Policy 66 - The replacement and extension of dwellings in the countryside;*
 - iii. Policy 67 - Affordable housing to meet local needs in the rural area;*
 - iv. Policy 68 - Accommodation for rural workers; and,*
 - v. Neighbourhood Development Plans which have been 'made' by Bedford Borough Council.*

In addition, exceptionally development proposals will be supported on sites that are well related to a defined Settlement Policy Area, Small Settlements or the built form of other settlements where it can be demonstrated that:

- vi. It responds to an identified community need; and*
- vii. There is identifiable community support and it is made or supported by the parish council or, where there is no parish council, another properly constituted body which fully represents the local community; and*
- viii. Its scale is appropriate to serve local needs or to support local facilities; and*
- ix. The development contributes positively to the character of the settlement and the scheme is appropriate to the structure, form, character and size of the settlement.*
- x. Where a community building is being provided, users of the proposed development can safely travel to and from it by sustainable modes and it is viable in the long term, ensuring its retention as a community asset.*

Finally, all development in the countryside must:

- xi. Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and*
- xii. Not give rise to other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others; and*
- xiii. Not give rise to other impacts that would have a significant adverse effect on the environment, biodiversity or designated Natura 2000 sites.”*

5.14 Policy 7S clearly seeks to ensure that development outside of a settlement policy area or the built form of a small settlement is resisted, unless the provision laid out within the policy are achieved, which is reflected in the Policy wording that states “Development **outside defined Settlement Policy Areas and the built form of Small Settlements** will be permitted if it is appropriate in the countryside in accordance with” [criteria i-v).

5.15 Further, where policy 7S states “In addition, exceptionally development **proposals will be supported on sites that are well related to a defined Settlement Policy Area, Small Settlements or the built form of other settlements** where it can be demonstrated that:

- vi. It responds to an identified community need; and*
- vii. There is identifiable community support and it is made or supported by the parish council or, where there is no parish council, another properly constituted body which fully represents the local community; and*

- viii. Its scale is appropriate to serve local needs or to support local facilities; and*
- ix. The development contributes positively to the character of the settlement and the scheme is appropriate to the structure, form, character and size of the settlement.*
- x. Where a community building is being provided, users of the proposed development can safely travel to and from it by sustainable modes and it is viable in the long term, ensuring its retention as a community asset”,*

- 5.16 It is considered that this could be applicable to this application, as this Site is land that is well related to an existing cluster of development, rather than being located in an isolated location away from any existing built form.
- 5.17 Policy 7S therefore reads as two separate situations where the provisions of 7S would apply; rather than it being required that proposals accord with all provisions set out i) through to x). This is supported by the fact that i) - v) are ‘either/or’ criteria, whereas vi) - x) require all the applicable criterion to be achieved in order for a scheme to be supported.
- 5.18 Therefore, it is considered that although the words ‘in addition’ are used, this cannot be in the sense of ‘as well as’, or a requirement that the first criteria must be achieved and then this additional criteria should also be achieved given i) – v) apply to very specific and different types of development outside of a defined SPA or Small Settlement; whereas vi) – x) clearly relate to development that would be well related to a defined SPA or Small Settlement but may not meet the criterion set out in the section above. Indeed, it would not be possible for a development proposal to meet all criteria i) – v) given these represent a range of different types of development, and therefore although the word ‘and’ is used at the end of iv, it would not be possible for a development proposal to have met all of those criteria and therefore this identifies that Policy 7S can be interpreted other than as explicitly written.
- 5.19 It is our contention therefore that, in circumstances where i) – v) would not apply; indeed vi) – x) may still apply and therefore a development can be capable of meeting just these criteria but not all of the criterion laid down by Policy 7S.
- 5.20 To that end, it is considered that this proposal could be assessed against criterion vi) – x) of Policy 7S, and that the proposal would accord with these provisions insofar as they are related to this proposal.

5.21 These criteria are therefore assessed in turn below.

vi. It responds to an identified community need; [and]

5.22 The Housing Needs Survey for Riseley was undertaken by the Parish Council when preparing their Neighbourhood Plan. This Survey was undertaken in July/August 2019, and is therefore approaching being out of date by the time the Neighbourhood Plan was eventually adopted in April 2024. Housing Needs Surveys are typically considered valid for 3 – 5 years. does not mean that there isn't an identifiable need, just that it has not been assessed. Bedford Borough Council undertook a Housing Needs Assessment for the Borough that was updated in 2018, and therefore this is also out of date for assessing the housing need. It further cannot also be assumed that housing need can only be identified through a Housing Needs Survey, which in the rural area are typically undertaken by the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) on behalf of parish councils in connection with potential Neighbourhood Plan groups as part of the evidence base for their plans. In such cases, it would therefore be reasonable to assume that an application must be supported by reasonable evidence to demonstrate any housing need in that area. The applicant has undertaken pre-application discussions to canvas local opinion and engaged with discussions with the Parish Council, who have indicated that a development of predominately bungalows would address a need they are aware of locally, and they would support the application on the basis that the proposals included smaller, more affordable bungalows for the village.

5.23 Further, conversations with a number of local estate agents set out that Riseley, along with the north Bedfordshire villages in general, are becoming increasingly popular locations where buyers, particularly families, are looking to move to, but are restricted by the lack of suitable properties on the open market. The estate agents advised that new builds are popular but are a rarity in villages due to stringent planning policies, meaning most new build developments are the typical generic boxes built by large housebuilders in volume, which does not appeal to all buyers. There is also demand from people living within the area wanting to downsize from larger family homes, and again are often put off doing so because the aged stock in villages (especially bungalows), tend to be older houses building in the 1950s-1980s and often require extensive modernisation. They advised that as the demand that exceeds supply, meaning prices are driven up as a result in the rural areas. The agents support the scheme proposed on the basis that it would provide a range of property sizes that would appeal not only to larger

families, but also to those downsizing from Riseley or surrounding villages home in the rural area.

5.24 This research undertaken by the applicant clearly demonstrates that there is not only demand for these types of houses in Riseley, but also that there is a wider need for more housing given the estate agents have identified that post-Covid, more and more people are looking for homes in the rural area, and further the agents identify the vitality of villages has been adversely affected by a lack of growth, which in turn impacts upon local facilities such as the schools, pubs and local shops and services.

5.25 This helps to identify the 'community need' based on those actively engaging with estate agents looking for housing, and the fact that these agents that know this area well have pent up demand for this type of housing. Therefore, this evidence helps to support the requirements of Policy 7S part vi as it demonstrates, from professional agents familiar with the local housing market, that there is a community need for more housing, not only to support those wishing to either move to or move back to the area, but also to support the local services that rely heavily on their local communities that they serve.

5.26 Further, the local school, Riseley CofE Primary school which serves the village and surrounding area and research has identified that as of March 2024, the school has a total capacity of 224 and had 189 pupils on role, meaning the school is operated at a capacity of less than 85%. Village schools tend to have to compete with other local village schools as capacity tends to exceed demand, which in turn can lead to the closure and amalgamation of smaller village schools, at great cost to those communities that they serve. As there is capacity within the local school, new development that would generate new families bringing in children to the catchment which is a distinct benefit to providing more housing to ensure these local facilities remain viable and open to serve their communities.

vii. There is identifiable community support and it is made or supported by the parish council or, where there is no parish council, another properly constituted body which fully represents the local community; [and]

5.27 As part of this application, the Applicant has approached the neighbouring properties that are in the immediate locality of the proposed development and access and thus may be impacted in some way, to canvas opinion on the development proposals for this Site.

- 5.28 Of those spoken to, all expressed specific support for the scheme of new for residential units including bungalows, and some specific points were raised which have been factored in, such as leaving sufficient room of larger vehicles using the private driveway and not placing boundaries against the roadway.
- 5.29 The Parish Council have also been approached and attended the site with the applicants, expressing that a development that included a number of bungalows would be met with their support from the Parish Council, as there is a lack of good quality bungalow accommodation for villagers. The Applicant also attended the Parish Council meeting on the 29th January 2026 to present the scheme to the Parish Council, and they provided the following feedback:

5.30 PC FEEDBACK HERE

- viii. Its scale is appropriate to serve local needs or to support local facilities; and*
- 5.31 This proposal has been designed to reflect and respect the character of the area, and whilst the Site could accommodate far more dwellings; the approach taken has been to provide a lower number of local homes of a variety of sizes, to provide a range of accommodation to suit local people and local demand, rather than providing a large number of similarly sized large dwellings aimed at maximising returns. The provision of 7 dwellings consisting of 3no. 2-bedroom bungalows, 2no. 3-bedroom bungalows, and 2no. 5-bedroom houses on the Site is considered an appropriate balance between the amount of development that the Site could accommodate whilst ensuring it is not overdeveloped or cramped, but can still provide a meaningful contribution towards supporting local facilities and services.

- ix. The development contributes positively to the character of the settlement and the scheme is appropriate to the structure, form, character and size of the settlement.*
- 5.32 Whilst this is an Outline application and the design of the development has not been finalised, it will seek to provide a range of dwelling and material styles, rather than follow a generic design aesthetic to give the impression that the Site has evolved over a period of time matching the character of the area, rather than having the appearance of a new development with the exact design approach used for every dwelling. Each property will could have a different style and palette of materials, to give the impression of quirky and sporadic development over time. As discussed above, the designs will take inspiration from the properties located around the Site orientated around the access road through the site. It is

therefore considered that the proposal accords with this criterion, as it would contribute in a positive manner to the character of the settlement, and it is appropriate to the structure, form, character and size of Riseley and its existing forms of sporadic built form.

- 5.33 Furthermore, the provision of 7no. additional residential properties makes a meaningful beneficial contribution to the Borough's rural housing supply and accords with the NPPF aims to boost the number of homes and help to address the shortfall in the 5YHLS for Bedford Borough.
- 5.34 Turning to the exceptional circumstances listed above (vi-xi), with respect to criterion (vi), it is important to note that the adopted Local Plan was prepared under the transitional arrangements as set out within paragraph 214 of the NPPF 2019, meaning its examination was against the 2012 version of the NPPF. This meant that in order to assist the Council achieve its Objectively Assessed Need for housing of 970 dwellings per annum, this is calculated using the standard method as opposed to the local housing need.
- 5.35 The Local Plan also covers a reduced period to 2030, as although originally the plan was to cover a longer period to 2035, however uncertainty over delivery of a new garden village around Colmworth Park resulted in a shorter period to 2030 and, as a consequence, the housing requirement it needed to deliver. As part of the examination, this approach was accepted by the Inspector although this was on the basis that the Plan would be subject to an early review to secure levels of growth that accord with the standard method and to address strategic infrastructure needs. As such, Local Plan Policy 1 required an updated or replacement plan to be submitted no later than three years after the date of adoption of the Plan – which was by 15 January 2023.
- 5.36 As the draft Local Plan was submitted for examination on 12th January 2023, the provisions of Policy 1 were therefore satisfied. However, Policy 1 does not state what would happen in the event of the reviewed Plan being withdrawn due to it being found unsound. Policy 1 also does not state that if the draft Local Plan is not advanced within a certain timescale, or is withdrawn from examination, that the policies will be deemed to be 'out of date'. However, the definition of whether a Plan is 'out-of-date' is contained in footnote 8 of Paragraph 11 of the NPPF. This includes situations where the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (including the appropriate buffer), or where the

Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below the housing requirement over the previous three years.

5.37 As a result, Bedford Borough Council currently do not have a demonstrable 5 Year Housing Land Supply (5HYLS), and it was published in January 2025 that Bedford could only demonstrate 3.46 years supply.

5.38 As on the 15 January 2025 the Local Plan became 5 years old, it should be measured against the Local Housing Need (LHN) calculated using the standard method. The Council's latest Five-Years Supply of Deliverable Housing Sites Report published in January 2025 sets out that the standard method figure of 1,202 dwellings per annum equates to 6,010 over a five-year period. Once a 5% buffer is applied, this results in a five-year housing requirement of 6,311 dwellings. The Council's report sets out that the Council has identified the supply of specific and deliverable sites that are estimated to deliver an additional 4,371 dwellings in the five-year period, thus resulting in a housing land supply short of 5 years, or only 3.46 years.

5.39 As the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5YHLS, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF comes into effect. Paragraph 11(d) states that in the absence of a 5YHLS, the policies which are most important for determining this application are out-of-date and permission should be granted unless:

- i. *“the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong 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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”*

5.40 There are no areas or assets of particular importance within the Site or located in close proximity to the Site that are affected by the proposals and the revised Heritage Impact Assessment has further considered the impact upon heritage assets in the locality of the site (addressed below). It is considered that even in the normal planning balance (i.e. non-tilted),

the benefits of the proposed development weigh in support of this proposal, especially considering the clear local support and therefore an identified community need.

- 5.41 As the balance is now however tilted, the consideration is now even further in favour of granting planning permission and it is therefore abundantly clear that there is a significant identified housing and affordable housing need across the Borough.
- 5.42 Given the fundamental concerns of soundness raised by the Inspector with regard to the draft Local Plan, which results in a shortfall of approximately 2,000 homes, it therefore appears that a Plan-led solution to deliver this housing requirement within a reasonable timescale is unlikely to materialise in the near future. The proposed development therefore offers considerable benefits not only locally where housing is in demand and supported by the community, but also by providing a small but valuable contribution towards the immediate housing supply issue with a site than can be delivered immediately.
- 5.43 Therefore, with regards to point vi of Policy 7S, there are now significant material considerations in favour of the proposed development and that the identified need would be met by this development and therefore it is considered that this application is in accordance with provision vi.

Housing Mix

- 5.44 The proposed dwellings would comprise 7no. units consisting of a mix of 2, 3 and 5-bedroom homes. All of the dwellings will meet the Nationally Described Space Standards and the proposed mix of dwellings provides for families with children, older residents, or those wishing to remain living in Riseley or the surrounding area but wish to either downsize or upscale to a larger family home. The proposed development, therefore, complies with the requirements of Policy 59S of the Local Plan 2030.
- 5.45 The proposal comprises only 7no. units across the site allowing there to be a good degree of space around the properties, allowing each dwelling to benefit from a large garden, rather than seeking to maximise the number of units and have a cramped form of development as well as demonstrating that all the requirements for dwellings sizes, parking standards,

outdoor space and cycle parking can be achieved. Thus, the Site provides a unique and interesting development that respects the character of the surrounding area.

Design Considerations

- 5.46 As an Outline application with all matters reserved, consideration for the design of the development focuses on an indicative layout for the site and access, to demonstrate that the required standards for residential development can be achieved. The access is taken from The Drive and indicates how a development could comfortably be arranged around the internal access road, providing the units as described in the application description.
- 5.47 The submitted scheme proposes a development that responds to the comments made by the Parish Council and local, namely by providing a mix of bungalows and differing sized dwellings that are needed in the village. The dwellings have been set back from The Drive to allow for landscaping and possible SuDS within the site that does not form part of the proposed plots.
- 5.48 The two larger properties are indicatively shown to back onto the retained paddock, with a field access provided between the properties to maintain the rural context of the development. It is anticipated that the paddock could be attributed to one or both of these larger dwellings, to provide equestrian facilities combined with either or both of these properties, thus allowing those looking for both a dwelling and equestrian facilities to make use of the retained paddock.
- 5.49 In terms of landscaping, the existing boundary hedgerows and trees are to be retained and are unaffected by the proposals, and the retained field/paddock to the north will be retained as a paddock. A range of new landscaping features could be introduced to achieve the required 10% net gain in biodiversity, as set out in the BNG metric and report that accompanies this application. In terms of other new landscaping, new native species hedgerows with post and mesh fencing around and within the site. Areas of species-rich grassland and scattered native trees will further contribute towards providing net gain, along with the new pond that can provide wetland habitat along with supporting any SuDS that may be necessary. A suitable pre-commencement condition can be agreed for further details on landscaping and maintenance over and above the information submitted.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Buildings and Surrounding Area

- 5.50 The proposed development has been designed to have a positive contribution to the area both in terms of the designs of the dwellings, but also in terms of providing new properties in the village meeting a locally identified need, given no new housing sites were allocated by the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan. This will therefore ensure the development has a positive contribution both on the immediate setting and also its contribution to the village as a whole. From a design perspective, this is achieved by utilising a range of in-keeping materials such as bricks to match those used locally, timber and render detailing, slate and pan tile style roofs and unique design feature details across all buildings.
- 5.51 The proposed development has been designed to maintain the traditional rural character and appearance of the village and this location, which is a former farmstead that has over time evolved and developed to include a number of different uses, including residential units that are not associated with the farmstead, industrial and commercial units that house a number of local businesses, self-storage facilities and an aerodrome, along with the remaining existing agricultural uses. As a result, the pattern of development in this location is varied and features a range of structures and buildings and this site would be a continuation of this, whilst providing housing to meet the needs of the village. This will result in an attractive and desirable development and the buildings have been designed to sensitively reflect the local needs. The layout, nature and mix of the development ensure a vibrant and cohesive contribution to the existing community can be achieved, ensuring the proposal in accordance with both Policy 29 and Policy 30 of the Local Plan.

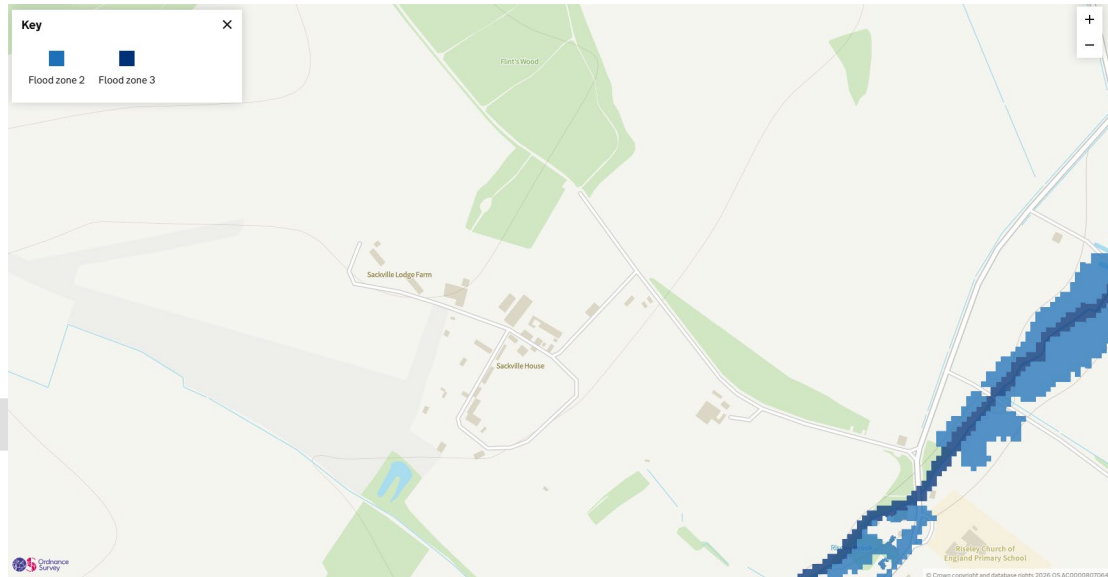
Access and Parking

- 5.52 The proposal includes policy compliant parking for the proposed development which is achieved within the Application Site for the 7no. dwellings, along with cycle parking that can also be achieved in line with policy for the properties, in terms of both short stay and secure long stay provided for on plot.
- 5.53 The proposal will provide sufficient parking in line with the Council's Parking Standards for the new dwellings that require 2 No. spaces per 2/3-bedroom property, and 3 No. spaces per 4+ bedroom property along with 0.4 visitor spaces per property.

- 5.54 The proposed 7no. dwellings include 3no. 2-bedroom properties, 2no. 3-bedroom properties and 2no. 5-bedroom properties. This results in a parking requirement of 16 spaces, plus 3 visitor spaces – a total requirement of 19 spaces.
- 5.55 The indicative plans illustrate how each property is provided with sufficient parking to meet or exceed the Council's standards, along with visitor parking, clear of the public highway and The Drive. In addition, the plans show that garages could also be provided for the larger houses, which also meet the Council's standards for garages (minimum internal area of 22m² which can either have a minimum length of 5.5m (4.0m width) or a minimum width of 3.2m (6.9m length) with no internal obstructions) which means that additional parking could be provided within garaged.
- 5.56 The plans also show that driveways can be provided for all plots providing ample parking provision for all of the properties, which indicatively show how 22no. spaces can easily be provided, along with 3no. visitor spaces. This means in terms of allocated parking spaces, there are a total of 25.no marked spaces provided (excluding garage spaces) which exceeds the parking standards and would ensure no parking issues would arise as a result of the development.
- 5.57 The long-stay cycle parking would be accommodated on plot for all units within a secure cycle shelter, and short stay cycle parking would be provided on plot. A total of 20 long stay cycle spaces in secure covered sheds or within the garages (where provided) can be provided and 14 short stay cycle spaces (2no. per unit) either via secure cycle stands or within the gardens of the units are proposed, which is in accordance with the Parking Standards SPD for cycle parking provision.
- 5.58 The access arrangements provide a single vehicular and pedestrian access into the site which provides adequate visibility as the hedgerow remains set back from The Drive. The access has been shown to include footpaths or space for footpaths on each site, allowing sufficient space for a 2m wide footpath lining the access road, as required.

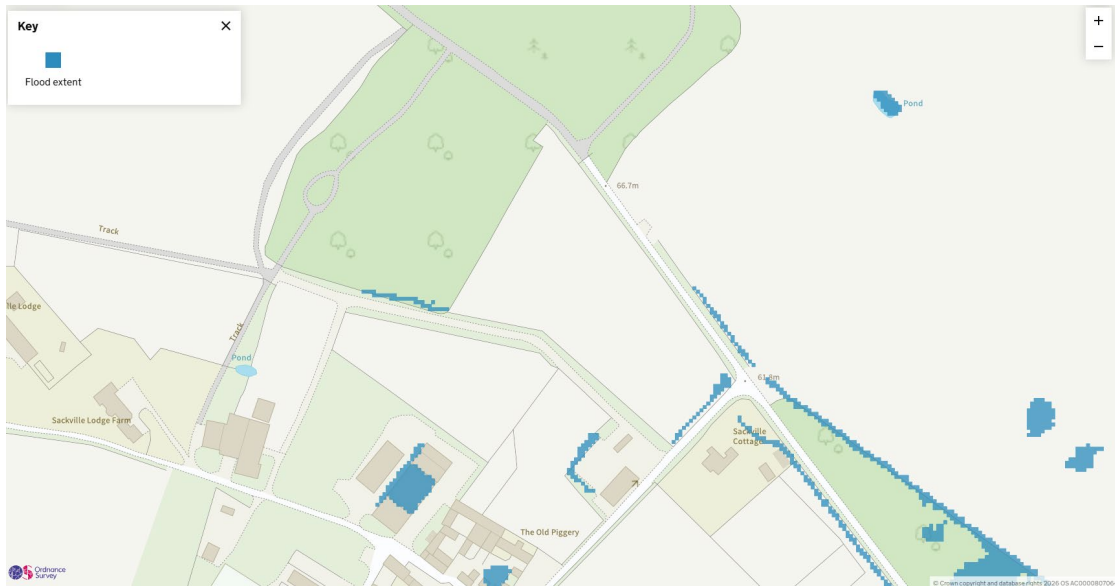
Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.59 The Site lies within Flood Zone 1, land with the lowest probability of flooding from fluvial sources, and as such is not considered to be a location at risk of flooding. The Site is under 1ha and therefore the development does not require a Flood Risk Assessment to be submitted.



Flood Risk Map – Source flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk

- 5.60 The proposed development would ensure that any additional hard surfacing across the Site would include permeable surfaces to be used, therefore ensuring any surface run-off can be easily accommodated onsite.
- 5.61 It is intended that surface water from the dwellings will be discharged into new soakaways and onsite attenuation. The development would not, therefore, conflict with either Policy 92 or Policy 93 of the Local Plan.
- 5.62 In terms of surface water flood risk, there is a small portion of the site where there is a risk as highlighted by the map below, however this is minimal and as the land slopes, it would not put any new or existing properties at risk, and indeed the development would allow for enhancements that will reduce this risk. At present, the water may puddle in this location during significant weather events before draining into the surrounding ditches which run adjacent to The Drive. The application would allow for Sustainable Drainage Systems to be accommodated on site, as shown on the indicative plans, which could include ponds and swales. The drainage requirements would be based on the eventual layout for the site, and suitable conditions can be agreed to ensure this detail is provided at reserved matters stage.



Flood Risk Map Surface Water Flooding – Source flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk

5.63 In any event, the development is not located on land which is at risk of any surface water flooding and the properties and built form as shown on the indicative plans are located away from this small existing risk as identified by the flood maps.

Biodiversity, Ecology and Landscaping

5.64 Policy 28S of the Local Plan requires that new developments avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity, Policy 29 requires proposals to have regard to the environment, and Policy 38 seeks for developments to provide landscaping on site that incorporate existing features, and that new planting should consider the character, function and ecological value of the site.

5.65 Policy 42S requires new developments to assess the potential for impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity and that adverse impacts on designated or locally important sites should be avoided. Any impacts upon protected species or priority habitats must be mitigated. Policy 43 looks for developments to increase biodiversity through ecological enhancements, creating new habitats, or linking existing habitats.

5.66 Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) now requires developers to deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of 10%, which means that a development must result in more or better-quality natural habitat than there was before the development.

5.67 To support the application, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Report have been prepared by Environmental Design UK.

Biodiversity Net Gain

5.68 The BNG Metric report found that the post-intervention outcome relies on the creation and management of habitats and hedgerows to reach their target conditions within the metric timescales and that by creating a variety of new habitats, including Grassland creation (0.3874 ha), Retained grassland management (0.61 ha), new pond (0.0026 ha) and Hedgerow creation (0.265 km), the proposal achieves a measurable on-site net gain in biodiversity and delivers a net gain of +4.21 area habitat units (+86.93%), a net gain of +1.04 hedgerow units (+306.77%) and trading rules are satisfied with no reliance on off-site units.

5.69 On this basis, the proposal meets and exceeds the mandatory minimum 10% BNG requirement with habitat and management provided in accordance with the submitted plans and maintenance commitments. Given the existing baseline biodiversity value for the site is low, the proposals would allow for significant enhancements to easily be achieved.

5.70 It therefore considers that the minor biodiversity loss as a result of the development proposals can be more than adequately compensated for with the ecological value of the site uplifted as shown by the forecast increase of 13.43% and 0.17 Habitat Units in the net gain value for habitats. The new habitats to be created include grassland, pond and hedgerows that could provide more niches for wildlife, especially invertebrates, aquatic varieties and birds than is currently available.

5.71 The BNG Matrix has been undertaken and demonstrates that in the required 10% increase can be provided for within the site without the need for offsite units.

5.72 The only loss is of other neutral grassland in poor condition, with no other existing biodiversity affected, and as shown by the creation plan, the opportunity to enhance existing BNG would allow for a significant enhancement compared with the existing position.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- 5.75 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) provides an initial assessment of ecological constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed residential development and the report records the habitats and ecological features within the red line boundary, describes their likely ecological value, and identifies potential receptors including protected and notable species.
- 5.76 A site walkover was undertaken by a qualified ecologist to record and map the habitats and principal ecological features within the red line boundary, and to provide a proportionate assessment of habitat condition using UKHab and Phase 1 survey principles where appropriate.
- 5.77 The PEA concludes that the site comprises primarily low-quality grassland, with ecological value concentrated in the boundary hedgerows and trees that provide habitat structure and connectivity. The proposals retain and manage areas of grassland, introduce a new pond, and deliver new native hedgerow planting, which together provide clear opportunities for ecological enhancement and Biodiversity Net Gain delivery. No evidence of protected species was identified during the walkover survey. Subject to completion of the recommended desk study and confirmation walkover, and implementation of the avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures set out in this report, the proposals are anticipated to proceed with a manageable level of ecological risk and a strong biodiversity outcome. Therefore, for the purposes of this outline application, the PEA has identified no constraints or impacts on existing habitats.

Energy Efficiency

- 5.78 Policy 54 of the Local Plan requires developments of fewer than 10 new dwellings to achieve a 10% reduction in carbon emissions below the approved Building Regulations requirement.
- 5.79 The proposed development would comply with the requirements of this policy, through a fabric first approach. This means there will be a focus on energy reduction and efficiency at the dwelling through the materials and fixtures and fittings used in the first instance, thereby reducing energy demands which in turn reduces energy usage. This includes increasing the

amount and type of insulation in the properties to achieve the lowest U-values, as well as utilising the most energy efficient appliances, heating and hot water services.

- 5.80 The orientation of the site would allow for low-impact Photovoltaic panels to be installed on the south-facing elevations of the properties which would help to further reduce energy demands of the properties.

Refuse Collections

- 5.81 At present, there are a number of residential properties in this location served by the private access road known as The Drive. Waste collections are made with the Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV) driving to each dwelling and collecting the waste from the council-supplied wheelie bins. It is considered therefore that this approach would continue, with the additional units having their waste collected in the same manner as currently takes place. There is sufficient space within each plot to accommodate 3-4 wheelie bins and for kerbside collections to take place, and suitable turning is providing within the site for RCVs and fire appliances to access the site, turn and egress from the site in a forwards gear.

DRAFT

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 In conclusion, the proposed development seeks to provide 7no. residential properties on the land to the north of Sackville Cottage respecting the character and layout of the existing built form at Sackville Farm, Riseley, and providing a mix of units including 5no. bungalows that would address a local demonstrable need.
- 6.2 The scheme provides an appropriately and pragmatically designed residential scheme that is considered to be an acceptable development proposal for the viable future use of the Site. This proposal for seven new dwellings including 5 bungalows and two houses represents a sustainable and appropriate form of development that will contribute positively to the housing needs of Bedford Borough and Riseley. Given the Council's acknowledged shortfall in its five-year housing land supply, this application should be assessed in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the tilted balance. The site is well-related to existing development, offers a meaningful contribution to local housing delivery, and does not give rise to any significant adverse impacts that would outweigh the clear benefits. As such, in light of the ongoing housing land supply deficit, this development should be supported as a proactive response to the borough's pressing need for new homes.
- 6.3 The proposed units would create 7no. new homes to assist with the local and wider housing delivery targets of the Borough whilst providing a range of smaller and larger family homes in Riseley, provide options for both lower cost housing options for local people, older people or those wishing to relocate or return to Riseley.
- 6.4 The Applicant has undertaken local engagement with the local community and Parish Council and has sought to obtain support from the community, which has shaped this proposal to address the need for housing, particularly bungalows, in this location. The Parish Council have indicated that bungalows are needed and could be supported at the Parish level, and the applicant has attended the Parish Council meeting ahead of submission to consult with the community ahead of making the application. The indicative plans have been made available to the Parish Council to provide comments and amendments to the scheme have been made as a result of that pre-submission consultation.

- 6.5 The indicative proposals respect the context of the existing built form surrounding the application site and provides for a compliant development that accords with the requirements of the Local Plan in terms car and cycle parking standards, access, visibility splays and turning, refuse collections and garden sizes, as well as addressing matters such as ecology and BNG.
- 6.6 The development would not lead to any flood risk elsewhere, or be at risk of flooding itself. Existing landscaping features are to be retained and enhanced and biodiversity levels are increased through the provision of new planting within the Site, ensuring in excess of the 10% BNG requirements are met.
- 6.7 The revised development complies with all the relevant Policies of the Local Plan and the requirements of the NPPF and addresses or provides additional justification or evidence to demonstrate the proposal accords with the relevant criteria as laid down in Policy 7S, notwithstanding the current lack of a 5-year housing land supply which puts the tilted balance towards supporting sustainable development proposals that are well related to the existing built form, as it the case with this proposal. With the use of appropriate conditions, the Application should therefore be considered acceptable in principle and the proposal to create of seven new homes be approved.

DRAFT



DRAFT