



42 Headlands
 Kettering
 Northamptonshire
 NN15 7HR

Tel: 01536 412464
 Fax: 01536 482517

enquiries@berrys.com
 www.berrys.com

Chelveston-cum-Caldecott Neighbourhood Plan
 c/o Chair of the Working Group

Our Ref: IRS/KA14353
Date: 13th August 2014

Dear Chair

Re: Comments on the Neighbourhood Development Plan

We act on behalf of Mr Knight who owns land in the neighbourhood plan area that has been allocated for development. We have set out below our comments on the draft plan for you to consider and we would be happy to discuss these points in more detail in due course.

1. General – overall we are very impressed with the content and style of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Clearly a lot of detailed work has been undertaken and the efforts of the Plan authors should be fully recognised.
2. We fully support the allocation of Site NDP-S007 at Water Lane under Policy H5f. This land is highly suitable for a single dwelling. We are already aware of the constraints affecting this site and believe this site could be brought forward in the short term.
3. We have a number of separate comments in respect of Site NDP-S006 but we very much support the principle of this allocation for housing. Our comments relate to detailed matters as follows:
 - a. We do not understand the basis of the approach to phasing whereby this site is earmarked for the period 2026-2035. We do understand that the Neighbourhood Plan wishes to phase development of the total level of housing over the plan period but we are unsure as to how that has been applied to each housing site. The Plan would therefore benefit from a clear justification as to phasing of all housing sites.

In the case of Site NDP-S006 our preference would be to bring this site forward over a shorter timescale. In that way, wider benefits such as possible highway improvements or affordable housing for locals for example, would be implemented at an earlier stage.

- b. We do not feel that it is appropriate to restrict the whole site to being 'dormer bungalows'. There are generally a mix of house types, not just bungalows, and therefore it is felt that the site should also support a mix of different types and sizes of dwellings so as to encourage a range of different occupiers/households.

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Associates - Guy Banham BSc (Hons) FAAV MBIAC, Peter Baron MRICS, James Fulton BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV, Sarah Reece BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV, Andrew Tompson BA (Hons) MRICS
 Consultants - N Beers BA (Hons) MSc MRICS, W A Gray FRICS

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The stated reason for the dormer bungalows approach is so as to minimise the impact on the visual amenity of existing properties on Raunds Road and Sawyers Crescent. Impacts on visual amenity are dependent on a much wider range of factors in our view including landscaping, house type, materials, set back distances and density for example. In addition the height of a traditional two storey dwelling may not be much greater than the maximum height of a dormer bungalow and so the effect on visual amenity may be little different.

In conclusion we believe that the policy criteria should be somewhat less prescriptive about the specific form of dwellings as what is more important is the overall quality of design.

- c. It is appreciated that the widening of Sawyers Crescent may be one option to alleviate parking problems but again this seems a slightly prescriptive approach pending further detailed assessments. Pavement parking is an existing problem and there may be a number of ways this could be addressed for example the provision of off-road parking for general resident use or other traffic management arrangements. If, for example, a single point of access from Raunds Road were feasible then, in strict planning terms, there would be no need to widen Sawyers Crescent.

In summary, it is premature in our view to state that such widening will definitely be required. What will be required is a thorough assessment of options and a solution which addresses relevant issues. We suggest that Criteria ii and iii should be revised to reflect the above.

- d. We appreciate that it may be necessary to divert the existing public right of way and it would be helpful to understand the parish Councils views on any future alignment. We assume that responsibility for the long term maintenance of this path will remain unchanged and so we are uncertain why the Neighbourhood Plan touches on this?
- e. Finally, we would question how the capacity of the site has been established as 'up to 8 properties'. The eventual capacity is likely to be determined by a range of site specific constraints, opportunities and technical factors – the majority of which are unknown at this stage. Therefore the site capacity could potentially be slightly more or slightly less than 8. As with some of our previous comments we believe therefore that the right approach at this stage would be one with a degree of flexibility i.e. 'about 8 dwellings'.

I do hope that you will find these comments of use and please note that we would be happy to discuss further as appropriate.



I would be grateful if you would acknowledge safe receipt of this letter and look forward to hearing your further thoughts in due course.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'I'.

Ian Smith MRTPI CEnv
For and on behalf of Berrys
DDI: 01536 532387
Mobile: 07766 365984
email: ian.smith@berrybros.com