



Appeal Decisions

Hearing Held on 21 October 2021

Site Visit made on 21 October 2021

by E Brownless BA (Hons) Solicitor (non-practising)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 January 2022

Appeal A Ref: APP/W0530/W/18/3202878

Land at Mill Lane, Sawston, CB22 3HY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Moatside Properties Ltd against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref: S/3873/17/OL, dated 23 October 2017, was refused by notice dated 5 March 2018.
 - The development proposed is described as 'residential development'.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/W0530/W/19/3224825

Land at Mill Lane, Sawston, CB22 3HY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Moatside Properties Ltd against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref: S/1625/18/OL, dated 24 April 2018, was refused by notice dated 1 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'residential development'.
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Decision

Appeal A Ref: APP/W0530/W/18/3202878

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B Ref: APP/W0530/W/19/3224825

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

3. At the Hearing an application for costs was made by the Council against Moatside Properties Ltd. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

4. For Appeal B, there is a discrepancy between the appellant and applicant name as recorded on the appeal form and the application form. The information submitted confirms the appellant as Moatside Properties Ltd, as named on the original application. This corresponded with evidence I heard at the appeal hearing and I have dealt with Appeal B on this basis.
5. As set out above, this decision letter concerns two appeals which relate to the same appeal site. The appellant has submitted the appeals on the basis of two

schemes, the first for 40 dwellings and the second, for 30 dwellings. Given that the appeals are so closely related in all respects and to avoid duplication, I have dealt with both appeals together in one decision letter.

6. Each appeal is submitted in outline with only matters of landscaping reserved for future consideration. As such, I have dealt with the plans and the appeal on this basis.
7. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (LP) was adopted by the Council on the 27 September 2018, and replaces in its entirety, the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (2007)(LDF). The Council's decision notice for Appeal A refers to LDF policies DP/3, GB/3, NE/11, NE/6 and DP/2 which have been superseded. The agreed statement of common ground (SOCG) confirms that Policies HQ/1, NH/8, CC/9, NH/4 and HQ/1 of the LP are relevant to the determination of Appeal A. I have therefore determined both appeals with regards to the LP.
8. The Council's decision notice for each appeal included a number of reasons for refusal. The agreed SOCG confirmed that as a result of additional information submitted by the appellant, the Council no longer wished to contest reason for refusal No. 2 (flood risk) and No. 3 (loss of important trees and landscaping) for both appeals. For Appeal B, the Council's Decision Notice cited a further reason for refusal, No. 4 (biodiversity), which the Council also confirmed it no longer wished to contest, as per the agreed SOCG. Notwithstanding the Council's position on these matters, the concerns of interested parties regarding flood risk remain and therefore I have dealt with this matter as a main issue in my overall consideration of each appeal.
9. A draft s.106 agreement was discussed at the hearing, with a final engrossed s.106 agreement for each appeal scheme being submitted after the hearing with my agreement. These legal agreements are a material consideration in my consideration of each appeal.
10. The obligations in the agreements would secure the provision of affordable housing (16 units for Appeal A and 12 units for Appeal B); the provision of custom build dwellings in the region of 3 units for each appeal scheme; the provision of on-site public open space to include maintenance and management; the provision of a locally equipped area of play to include maintenance and management; the provision of the Swale and Pond Area to include maintenance and management and financial contributions towards, a bus stop shelter including its maintenance and management, early years provision, primary and secondary school education, household waste receptacles, enhancement of the local library and lifelong learning and an off-site pavilion contribution. I consider these matters further in my determination of this appeal below.
11. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on the 20 July 2021. The Framework represents the Government's up to date planning policies and how they should be applied. The parties have been provided with an opportunity to comment on the implications of this for their case.

Main Issues

12. For Appeal A and Appeal B, the main issues are:-

- i) whether the appeal site would be an appropriate location for the proposed developments having regard to the development plan;
- ii) the effect of the proposed developments on the character and appearance of the countryside and adjacent green belt;
- iii) the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the streetscene;
- iv) whether the proposed developments would provide an adequate standard of living conditions for future occupiers of the dwellings with particular regard to outlook and privacy; and
- v) the effect of the appeal proposals on surface water drainage and flood risk.

Reasons

Settlement strategy

13. The appeal site comprises a large and roughly rectangular parcel of land located outside of the village framework of Sawston. It is common ground that, for the purposes of applying planning policy, the appeal site is located within the countryside.
14. LP Policy S/7 seeks to focus new development within settlement limits. The supporting text to this policy indicates that this is necessary to ensure that the countryside is protected from gradual encroachment on the edge of villages. Whilst this policy is permissive of limited development, it has not been put to me that the site is allocated within an adopted neighbourhood plan nor is the appeal scheme for the purposes of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside or where it is supported by other policies in the LP.
15. In the absence of anything to suggest that the appeal scheme would satisfy one of the exceptional categories of development, the appeal site is not a location to which new development should be directed and to do so would undermine the identified strategy for growth within the district as outlined by LP Policy S/7.

Character and appearance of the countryside and adjoining Green Belt

16. The appeal site lies within the East Anglian Chalk Character Area (NCA 87), an area notable for its shallow valleys of the River Granta and Rhee with a rich mosaic of grazing meadows and parkland that possess a strong rural character. Villages of varying sizes generally have a strong, historic, linear form with some extensive modern estate development. Nonetheless, the village edges are noted to be typically abutted by a mixture of open fields, woodland or smaller fields with long back gardens providing a transition to the surrounding countryside. Mature trees make a positive contribution to rural charm by providing a well treed character to villages which are often not visible within the wider landscape despite the presence of adjoining open arable fields.

17. At a more local level, the appeal site straddles two Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the East of England Landscape Framework (2009); the Valley Meadowlands (VM) LCA and Lowland Village Farmlands (LVF) LCA. As a fairly regular shaped and low-lying pastoral field with some boundary vegetation, for the most part, the appeal site fits with a number of the key features of the VM LCA classifications. However, as the appeal site reaches Mill Lane the increasing urban influences weaken its character such that it more closely aligns with the key characteristics of the LVF LCA.
18. The LVF LCA is identified to be a well settled, low-lying landscape which is often crossed by major river corridors. The high density of settlement, intensive agriculture and major transport infrastructure results in an often busy rural landscape. Within the South Cambridgeshire District Council District Design Guide (2010)(SPD) the SPD goes on to consider that the strong rural character of an area can be disrupted immediately adjacent to major roads. As is the case here, where the site lies within proximity of the Sawston Bypass and where the appeal site meets the existing urban features of Mill Lane, the LCA is more closely aligned with the key features of the LVF LCA.
19. The appeal site is an undeveloped and broadly rectangular parcel of rough grassland with areas of scrub and bramble surrounded by mature hedgerow punctuated with mature trees with some occasional gaps. To one side it adjoins open allotment gardens, and to the opposite side and its rear, it adjoins undeveloped open agricultural fields that comprises land within the Cambridge Green Belt (GB). Although residential properties and the highway adjoin the northern boundary, lengthy rear gardens of dwellings and vegetation assists to physically and visually separate the appeal site from the existing built form and help to form a transition to the surrounding countryside and connect the site with its generally undeveloped rural surroundings.
20. Given this degree of separation, the appeal site possesses a strong rural character and clearly forms part of a group of meadows and pastures that abut the urban edge of the village of Sawston and overall display strong characteristics of the VM LCA. Accordingly, the site reads as forming part of the countryside and its open, undeveloped character and verdant appearance means that the appeal site contributes positively in a significant manner to the rural landscape and the village setting and together with its wider surroundings it forms part of an attractive valley landscape.

Effect on character and appearance

21. The appellant and Council have each produced detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) and the Council agree that the appellant's LVIA broad methodology is fit for purpose and complies with GLVIA3. The LVIAs look at the effect of the proposed developments on landscape character and visual impacts and I have considered these matters in turn below.
22. Each of the LVIAs were accompanied by a series of views to and across the site from various public vantage points within the surrounding area. These are useful aids, however, they are no substitute for the impressions and views I obtained during my post-hearing site visit which I have relied upon in reaching my conclusions on landscape and visual impact.
23. The appeal schemes would introduce built development and associated infrastructure, open space, landscaped areas and domestic paraphernalia on

this currently open and undeveloped field. Consequently, this would significantly alter the site's character through a reduction in openness and the loss of a large pastoral field. The appellant's LVIA acknowledges this change but concludes that in the long term the magnitude of effect on landscape character of the site and its' setting would be '*moderate*' and the significance of effect on the site and setting would be '*permanent minor adverse*' and '*permanent neutral*' respectively. I disagree.

24. In my view, the sensitivity of the site, and consequently, the sensitivity of its landscape setting, have been misjudged on account of the high sensitivity of the susceptibility to change of the VM LCA. Furthermore, it would appear that the appellant's conclusion is largely based upon additional planting, landscape features and the subsequent maturing of existing and new vegetation.
25. Although matters of landscaping are reserved for later consideration, taking account of the proposed layout I consider there would be limited opportunity for significant landscaping. The submitted drawings show a number of dwellings with frontage hardstanding for vehicular parking and manoeuvring, sited in a repetitive manner and, for a number of dwellings these are positioned in close proximity to the boundaries of the appeal site. The resultant limited depth of some plots and the number of dwellings, along with hardstanding of the access, pedestrian footway and parking space, this would restrict the space within the development and the scope for any substantial landscaping. Such a layout would result in a suburban estate-like development that would be unsympathetic to rural character.
26. In my view, any long-term mitigation effect from landscaping would not be as great as envisaged. It seems to me that the provision of open space together with planting, even once established, could not realistically screen the development to such an extent that the protrusion of built form into the rural environment would not be discernible in the locality and that its effect would be neutral. Albeit the scheme for Appeal B would include a far larger band of land adjacent to the southern boundary which could accommodate a greater degree of planting, and which would act as a buffer and soften views from the south towards the proposed dwellings, it would nevertheless take considerable time to become established in order to fully screen the development and it would not overcome the effect of the appeal scheme when viewed along the western boundary.
27. Even with additional planting, trees and other vegetation can be perceived as a nuisance, notably by reason of the obstruction of light, and from falling leaves and debris. In these circumstances, there is likely to be additional pressure for pruning works or even felling and removal. Moreover, any additional planting within the proposed rear gardens would be within the control of a private owner and thus their long-term contribution to mitigation of the appeal schemes cannot be guaranteed.
28. Overall, I consider the appeal site has significant value by reason of its open, undeveloped and rural character that affords little reference to the settlement and I consider that the LVIA gives insufficient recognition to this aspect of its landscape character and is overly positive about mitigation. As a result, the adverse effects upon character for both schemes would be markedly greater than indicated by the appellant's LVIA. In my view, as a result of the introduction of built form into the sensitive VM LCA, I consider the magnitude

of effect would be '*major/moderate*' for Appeal Scheme A and '*moderate*' for Appeal B respectively, and overall, the scheme would give rise to a '*permanent adverse*' rather than '*neutral*' effect on landscape character as identified in the LVIA. For similar reasons, as the development would extend the built-up area to the edge of the GB, there would be adverse impact on the countryside character of the GB.

29. Turning to the visual impact of the proposed schemes, the current view of the south side of Mill Lane when approaching the village from the direction of the A1301 is predominantly of undeveloped open agricultural fields with views across a green rural landscape. The site's western boundary hedgerow is clear to see with trees and woodland positioned beyond this boundary obscuring views of the village beyond and providing a well treed and verdant edge to the village. Notwithstanding the presence of some dwellings, these are predominantly arranged in a linear fashion to front Mill Lane. Even when taking into account the cul-de-sac arrangement of dwellings of The Stakins, these dwellings do not dominate the view. The proposed dwellings of each appeal scheme would become the dominant view from the west and would be read as a significant and harmful isolated finger of development intruding into the rural landscape.
30. Receptors include drivers along Mill Lane and pedestrians using the footpaths for recreational purposes. At the time of my site visit, I saw the route was well used, including for the purposes of cycling and dog walking, and in my view, receptors along this route would exhibit a medium sensitivity.
31. Despite the existing vegetation and any additional enhancements to it as part of a reserved matters scheme of landscaping, the harmful impact of the proposals would be readily apparent in views through and above vegetation, particularly in winter months when foliage is less dense. The proposed developments would expand across a considerable width when viewed from this direction, blocking longer distance views and interrupting the links with the countryside. At night, lighting from dwellings and streetlights would illuminate the appeal schemes, serving to draw attention to them. Overall, the appeal schemes would appear prominent and incongruous and as an isolated extension of the built environment encroaching a significant distance into the countryside beyond the prevailing depth of built form. To a lesser extent, this impact would also be visible to passing motorists along the bypass, albeit momentarily, within gaps between vegetation adjacent to this highway.
32. The developments would have a significant adverse impact on mid to long range distance views from the GB and in particular, views enjoyed by walkers using public footpath Whittlesford 1 (PROW). In my experience, walkers on footpaths, particularly those within the green belt should be treated as high sensitivity receptors with a high susceptibility to change. Although this PROW is positioned at some distance from the appeal site, views obtained from the footpath are across open fields and meadows with hedgerow, trees and woodland screening the edge of the village and providing a pleasant landscape setting to the western part of Sawston. This would be replaced with views towards houses on the southern and western boundaries of the development, visible above and through the boundary vegetation, particularly during the winter months, albeit, I accept that for Appeal B, there is greater scope for significant planting adjacent to the site's southern boundary. Nevertheless,

built form would remain apparent in views from the south until such a time as additional planting were to become established in this location.

33. In views from the east, including the neighbouring allotment gardens, the verdant and undeveloped view towards the appeal site would be significantly diminished by the introduction of a suburban environment stretching beyond the depth of the allotment gardens, which would inevitably be visible above and through boundary vegetation. Furthermore, a considerable amount of existing vegetation around the site's access would need to be removed to facilitate the vehicular and pedestrian access, in particular, to accommodate the necessary visibility splays. The provision of this access to serve the proposed development would open up views of the site from Mill Lane and reduce the extent of screening that soft landscaping could provide.
34. For the reasons given above, I conclude that both appeal schemes would cause harm in both landscape and visual terms. Accordingly, I consider there would be a significant harmful effect on the rural character and appearance of the countryside including the adjoining GB and it would adversely affect the setting of the village character. The proposal would therefore conflict with LP Policies HQ/1 and NH/8 insofar as these policies require new development to be of a high quality design that preserves or enhances the character of the rural area and responds to its context in the wider landscape and, development on the edges of settlements which are surrounded by GB must include careful landscaping and design measures of a high quality.

Character and appearance - streetscene

35. Properties along Mill Lane are largely arranged in a ribbon pattern with a highway frontage albeit there are several examples of pockets of development in a cul-de-sac arrangement. Dwellings are predominantly two-storey detached properties set back from the highway behind modest sized front garden areas comprising a mix of mature, well established vegetation and hardstanding for the parking of vehicles. Notwithstanding the variety in terms of their design, style and materials, there is uniformity within the built form in terms of the prevailing roof form which is pitched.
36. Both appeal schemes would include a sizeable block of apartments adjacent to the eastern boundary at a point towards the access entrance into the appeal site. Whilst the design of the block includes some visual interest in the form of wall planes with bays, an inset balcony and an element of set back at the south west corner, by reason of its excessive width and depth, I find that the overall design would introduce a large, prominent and incongruous mass of development into an area notable for its green and open attributes. The consequent box-type bulky design would fail to reflect the type and scale of other residential development in the area and the remaining dwellings proposed as part of each scheme. Thus, it would appear out of keeping with its surroundings. The flat roof would be a particularly alien feature given the predominance of pitched roofs of existing dwellings in the vicinity.
37. Although vegetation could partly obscure views of the proposed apartments, a general absence of space, particularly to the rear of the proposed apartments would largely preclude any meaningful degree of planting and in my view, it would remain readily visible from Mill Lane and the access road, the allotment gardens and neighbouring dwellings. Despite the use of materials and architectural features common to the locality, the proposed apartments would

be read as a strident and inharmonious feature that would be significantly at odds with the appearance of the streetscene.

38. My attention has been drawn to a flatted development on the opposite side of Mill Lane at Nos 78 and 80 Mill Lane. Although the proposed apartments would share some common characteristics with this property, this type of development is not commonplace. Rather than providing justification for the proposed apartment block, if anything, its presence points to a need for such proposals to be carefully controlled if the character and appearance of the area is to be safeguarded.
39. The Council's concerns, in part, relate to areas of parking for a number of the dwellings. Whilst the inclusion of landscaping could soften and partly screen the impact of parked vehicles to the front of the 2 storey dwellings, the same cannot be said for the proposed parking area serving the apartments. A wide access together with part of the parking forecourt would sit forward of the front elevation of the apartment block and in close proximity to the estate road. The contrast with the well vegetated front gardens areas on other parts of Mill Lane, where parking is typically balanced with extensive soft landscaping would be readily apparent. Consequently, this element of the proposed schemes would also detract from the prevailing spacious and verdant character of Mill Lane, contributing to an impression of a development that is poorly related to its surroundings.
40. In addition, for Appeal A, whilst this scheme includes a mix of building forms, types and sizes which would be commensurate with the varied character of the settlement, the inclusion of a uniform row of three-bed detached houses would appear monotonous and at odds with the varied mix of dwellings both within the site itself and other dwellings within the vicinity.
41. Accordingly, I conclude that both proposals would be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposal would conflict with LP Policy HQ/1 which requires, among other things, that all new development must be of a high quality design that preserves or enhances the character of the local urban and rural area, that includes variety and interest within a coherent place responsive design, creates a positive sense of place, respects local distinctiveness, and is compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, mass, siting and design.

Living Conditions

42. As a consequence of the inclusion of first floor rear terraces to a number of plots (For Appeal A, plots 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 30 and 31, and for Appeal B, plots 20 and 21) by reason of their proposed height and proximity to other dwellings, the appeal schemes have the potential for overlooking of gardens to neighbouring dwellings, thus leading to a loss of privacy for future occupiers. However, this effect could be satisfactorily overcome through the imposition of a condition requiring screening to the terraces. As such, this would materially reduce levels of overlooking to an acceptable degree. To avoid any undue overshadowing as a result of screening to the terrace, a degree of inset from the side elevation would, to my mind, overcome this issue.
43. Proposed plots 18, 30 and 31 for Scheme A and plots 20 and 21 for Appeal B would consist of an L-shaped design which would result in a side elevation of some 4.6 metres, taking the Council's measurements, which have not been

disputed by the appellant, being adjacent to, or abutting the common boundary between neighbouring dwellings. For plot 31 of Appeal A, the two-storey element broadly aligns with the rear elevation of plot 32 and as a result it would not be perceived to be overbearing.

44. Whilst the two-storey elements of plot 18 and 30 (Appeal A) and plot 20 for Appeal B would be readily visible from the neighbouring dwellings (plots 19 and 31 of Appeal A, and plot 21 for Appeal B), the extent of the two-storey projection would be for a modest distance and each dwelling would retain a garden area of a reasonable width and depth. Although the inclusion of screening to the rear terraces would increase the height of this part of the dwelling, the use of a lightweight material and a position set away from the edge would limit the overall mass of the built form. Consequently, I find that the L-shaped form would not unduly harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupants to an extent that would warrant the withholding of planning permission.
45. Consequently, I find that each of the appeal schemes would not unduly compromise the living conditions of future occupiers of the proposed dwellings with regards to their outlook and privacy. There is no adverse harm in this respect and the proposals would not conflict with the design aims of the District Design Guide, paragraphs 6.68 and 6.69 nor LP Policy HQ/1 which, amongst other things, seeks to protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses from development that is overlooked, overbearing or results in a loss of daylight.

Flood risk

46. For the purposes of the Environment Agency Flood Map, the appeal site lies mostly within Flood Zone 1, albeit the north eastern tip of the site lies within Flood Zone 2. The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Flood Map identifies the appeal site as being wholly within Flood Zone 1. Notwithstanding these differences, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is used to refine information on river and sea flooding risk shown on the Environment Agency's Flood Map. Given that the appeal site lies within Flood Zone 1 for the purposes of the SFRA, the site is deemed to be within an area with the lowest risk of flooding and therefore sequential testing is not required in this instance for either schemes.
47. A site specific Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy¹ was provided for each proposal and subsequently, an updated assessment². The updated assessment proposes the use of permeable paving with an outfall to an attenuation basin, or alternatively, in the event of infiltration techniques being unsuitable, discharging from the attenuation basin to the adjacent watercourse. The updated information has been considered by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and confirmation given by the LLFA that it has no objection to the proposed surface water drainage strategy subject to the imposition of a suitable worded condition to secure precise details.
48. I have had regard to the concerns of local residents regarding global warming together with their evidence of historic incidents of flooding at the appeal site and within neighbouring gardens and driveways. I note their anxiety regarding

¹ November 2017.

² Ref 1224-FRA & DS – Rev C - Dated August 2018.

the capacity within the proposed attenuation basin and adjacent watercourse to manage frequent and intense rainfall events, particularly given that the recent development at Challis Close is said to drain to the same watercourse. However, notwithstanding the above, there is no clear evidence before me to demonstrate that the issue of flood risk associated with the appeal schemes could not be dealt with satisfactorily by appropriately worded conditions.

49. Additional photographic evidence provided at the hearing regarding a recent flood event concerned a site at Sunderland Avenue at some distance away from the appeal site and its occurrence does not alter my findings.
50. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the site can be adequately drained to ensure there is no increased flood risk on or off site as a consequence of the proposed developments. Thus, the proposed schemes would accord with LP Policies CC/8 and CC/9 insofar as these policies require development to incorporate appropriate sustainable surface water drainage systems to minimise flood risk.

Other Matters

51. My attention has been drawn to a residential development at Challis Close on the opposite side of the allotment gardens, which is stated to set a precedent, affect views in the locality and means that the alleged harm to the character and appearance as a result of both Appeal A and Appeal B cannot be substantiated. However, I observed this development to be bordered on three of its sides by built form which has in effect resulted in the filling of a gap between the built form such that it does not encroach or interrupt the green space flowing into and out of the village. Despite being in close proximity to the appeal site, it therefore has a different context and character and reads as more related to Sawston than the appeal site. Accordingly, I find that the Challis Close development, does not indicate that either Appeal A or Appeal B would be acceptable, and I have considered the appeal schemes on their individual planning merits.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

52. The appeal site lies outside of, albeit adjoining the settlement framework of the village and future occupants of the proposed dwellings would have access to services and facilities within the village and other nearby settlements through sustainable modes of transport.
53. In the short term, the appeal scheme would generate economic benefits during the construction and in the longer term, future occupants of the dwellings would deliver economic benefits including support to local services, facilities and shops. This would accord with the Framework's aims to locate housing where it would enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.
54. Whilst I have not considered in detail the matters secured through the s.106 planning obligation, the provision of affordable housing in the region of 16 units for Appeal A or 12 units for Appeal B together with custom built units of accommodation (in the region of three units for each appeal scheme) would be significant benefits of the proposals. However, other matters secured through the s.106 planning obligation are matters that principally mitigate the harms of the proposals rather than a benefit.
55. It is the appellant's case that the Council are not able to properly demonstrate an adequate 5-year housing land supply. The Council, whose housing supply

requirement is considered jointly across the administrative areas of South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council, maintains it is able to demonstrate a supply of 6.1 years, compared to the appellant's view that the Council's supply position lies between 3.95 years and 4.52 years. If I were minded to accept the appellant's case, this would amount to a substantial shortfall and each appeal scheme would go some way towards addressing that deficit. Thus, the provision of 40 dwellings for Appeal A or 30 dwellings for Appeal B, respectively, would be a substantial benefit of those schemes.

56. I have concluded that neither scheme would respect its local context or conserve or enhance the open countryside character of its surroundings. It would be a substantial and inappropriate extension into the countryside particularly given the open character of the landscape. As such the visual impact of the scheme, particularly when viewed in its surroundings, would significantly harm the character and appearance of the landscape and the setting of the village and such harm would be substantial and permanent. The development would be visually unattractive and unsympathetic to local character. Consequently, the appeal scheme fails to create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places which is a fundamental aim to what the Framework³ requires and the planning and development process should achieve. Thus, the appeal schemes would conflict with the Framework and I attach significant weight to this harm.
57. Whilst I have concluded that there would be no adverse harm arising as a consequence of flood risk and the living conditions of future occupiers, there would be, in addition to the harm cited above, a conflict with the spatial strategy for new development of the LP.
58. The benefits of each scheme would be wide ranging and the provision of affordable housing attracts significant weight in favour of the proposal. The market housing and the economic and environmental benefits identified would also bring some positive outcomes resulting from each scheme. However, when assessed and considered individually and cumulatively these benefits do not overcome the significant weight that I attach to the harm identified to the landscape and the streetscene. Accordingly, even if I were minded to accept the appellant's view with regards to the Council's 5-year housing land supply position and apply the tilted balance, I find that the adverse impacts of both appeal schemes would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.
59. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

E Brownless

INSPECTOR

³ National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 126.

Appendix 1

List of those who have appealed

Reference	Case Reference	Appellant
Appeal A	APP/W0530/W/18/3202878	Moatside Properties Ltd
Appeal B	APP/W0530/W/19/3224825	Moatside Properties Ltd

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

David Mead	Director, Partners in Planning and Architecture
Andy Brand	Planning Consultant, Partners in Planning and Architecture
Linda Walker	Principal Planner, Partners in Planning and Architecture

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Karen Pell-Coggins	Senior Planning Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council
Simon Neesam	Technical Director, The Landscape Partnership
Elizabeth Moon	Urban Design Consultant, South Cambridgeshire District Council
Phillipa Kelly	Principal Planner, South Cambridgeshire District Council
Jenny Nuttycombe	Principal Planner and Policy Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council
Stephen Reid	Senior Planning Lawyer, 3C Legal Services, South Cambridgeshire District Council

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Cllr Brian Milnes	Parish, District & County Councillor (for Sawston)
David Bard	Sawston Parish Council
John Godwood	Sawston Resident

DOCUMENTS

- 1 Notification of hearing dated 4 October 2021 (x2) together with list of persons notified of appeal
- 2 Statement of Common Ground (Signed and dated 21 October 2021)

PLANS

- 3 Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge (1 April 2019 -31 March 2020) (published January 2021)
- 4 Greater Cambridge City Deal
- 5 The Planning Inspectorate, Report to South Cambridgeshire District Council, Report on the Examination of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan
- 6 Appellant's calculation of the five year housing land supply for 2021-2026 for Greater Cambridgeshire based on the Liverpool methodology V.2
- 7 South Cambridgeshire District Council, October 2021 Update to Council's Rebuttal (dated 16 June 2021)- Appendix A (response to Appellants evidence)
- 8 Extent of flooding from surface water
- 9 Environment Agency – Extent of fluvial flooding and river overflow

PHOTOGRAPHS

- 10 Photographs x3 of Sunderland Avenue, Sawston