



Public Meeting

Planning application 23/01448/OUT

- Land at Branch Road

Comberton Parish Council
Monday 23rd Sept 2024

Aim of this public meeting

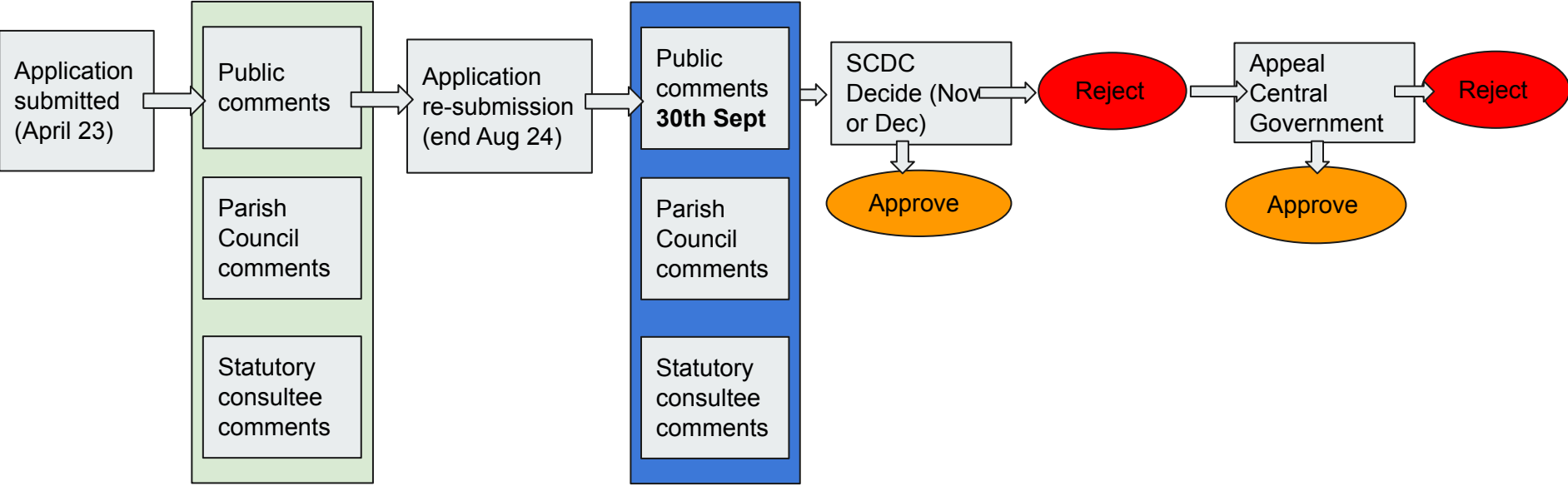
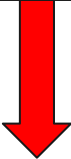


Inform residents:

- What is in the application - what has changed
- What issues we have identified
- What the Parish Council is doing about those issues
- What if the development is approved
- What residents can do

Process

We are here



Summary of application

- 200 Extra care units
 - >65yo + 2h care/week
- Green Belt land
- “Clubhouse” including amenities
- Re-wilded orchard
- Solar Farm
- Allotments
- Meadow
- Changes on Branch Road



Green Belt Land



Purpose of Green Belt is to prevent loss of openness and to prevent encroachment into countryside

Can only be built on in exceptional circumstances. Developers need to prove that;

- There is a need for this type and scale of housing
- There is no suitable non-green belt land available
- There is no more suitable green belt land

And that this need outweighs the harm to

- Openness
- The existing wildlife
- Negative effects to existing community, infrastructure

Summary of Main Issues Highlighted by PC in Response last year

- Sewage and drainage
- Healthcare provision
- Transport links - including paths
- Class of Care and Design of Development
- Ecology and Green Belt
- Open spaces
- Integration into the village
- That this harm exceeds the proposed benefits of the Application

Summary of Main Discrepancies Highlighted by PC in Response Last Year

- Size of properties are larger than expected for downsizing
- No Alternative Site Assessment performed
- Care Home Class is conflicting throughout
- Medical benefits and access to pharmacy are not correct
- Travel times from the site are grossly incorrect
- Footpath access across the Recreation Ground is not addressed nor included in Safety Assessments
- Travel Assessment has used incorrect data
- Branch Road width inconsistencies
- More hedgerow to be removed than in biodiversity report
- Solar Panels and Allotments part of later phase

Need for older people accommodation

- Cambridge County Council estimates a need for an additional 289 extra care units across the District by 2036. → why 200 here?
- C2 Class reached by
 - People living independently, able to access 24 support staff
 - Communal areas to socialise and for well being
 - 2 hours per week of help required (mandatory) but very broad range eg food provision
- C2 Class means no affordable housing required
- Far from all amenities - not suitable for old people with extra care needs.
- Over concentration of older people (32 %) vs 19.6% in South Cambs
- Will be advertised outside of South Cambridgeshire
- **Claim is that the need for this accommodation is 'Very Substantial Weighting' in very special circumstance calculation**



Location



- There are better local sites according to the Local Plan, like Bourn Airfield
- Outside of village framework
- Comberton/Toft already host CVC
- Unlikely the freeing up of existing housing stock market will benefit Comberton, and could lead to higher population as families would fill housing
- Not demonstrating 'Very Special Circumstances'

Design of buildings

Clubhouse - 15m (50 foot) tall, 70m long. As wide as a 3-lane motorway. Situated right next to Jubilee Woods

Apartments - 3 (11m) and 2 storeys

Neighbouring houses are no more than 8m tall

Mix of Apartments and houses, in clusters.

Garden areas



Sewage and drainage - current situation

- Significant sewage and drainage issues reported by residents
- Infrastructure cannot cope including drain pipes too narrow
- No response or action from Anglian Water
- Water companies cannot oppose the connection of a new development to the foul water sewer by law, so they cannot oppose the development



Comberton Drainage



Flooding is a key problem for the village:

- Drainage network is already often overwhelmed
- Proposal is for a 'Sustainable Drainage System' SuDS with one larger pond at the bottom of the site
- Rainwater Harvesting has been added into proposal
- Attenuation basin with discharge at controlled rate (no detail) has been added

Lead Local Flood Authority stated proposal did not meet requirements. Further work to include rainwater harvesting has been included, this is to be assessed by Lead Local Flood Authority.

Sewage and drainage - What we are doing

- We are collecting evidence from residents to build a case
- We have contacted
 - the Environment Agency
 - Anglian Water
 - “aware of concerns raised regarding flooding in Comberton”
 - have requested a “strategic foul water strategy”
- We have made an Environmental Information Request with Anglian Water
- A separate pumping station was required for the Thornbury estate, 20 years ago, when 21 properties were built, due to their sewage/drainage issues

Sewage and drainage

Water efficiency measures claim **additional benefit** to local infrastructure by developer in 'very special circumstances assessment'.

CALL TO ACTION:

- Send evidence to Comberton Parish Council
- Pressure Anglian Water each time an issue occurs
- Highlight sewage in your responses



Healthcare Provision - Current Situation

- Not enough space at Comberton & Eversdens GP practice
- Cost of building extensions is prohibitive
- Increasing local area population
- Mindful not to leave ourselves with no funding
- The Integrated Care Board → £164k for a normal development. No change from last year proposal
- Well below cost of any extension to meet needs of more people



Medical Provision in Application



- Care and wellbeing package —> optional extra private healthcare for Retirement Village Residents
- Nothing on care list will reduce demand on the GPs.
- Clinical space within the applicant development - won't be certified for NHS use. Integrated Care Board has confirmed this.
- Needs to input into Comberton surgery to be able to expand sufficiently to accommodate correct infrastructure into the village
- Developer claiming benefit of £960k savings per year to NHS
- Developer states that this is 'substantial weight' benefit for the development

NHS - what we are doing



Parish Council are working with Comberton Village Surgery Practice, local Surgeries (who have had similar increase in patient numbers) and the ICB

Important to understand mitigations needed for village should this go ahead

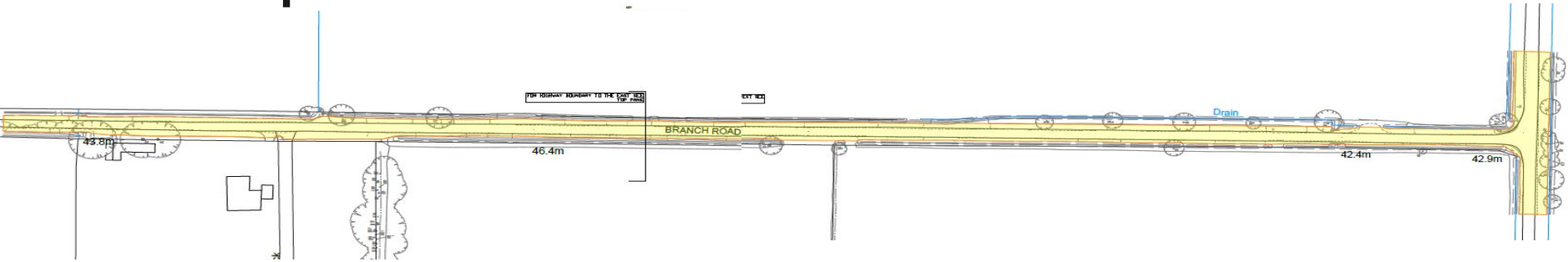
We thank the Surgery for already delivering services despite constraints on space and resource, including Saturday morning provision.

Call to Action:

Highlight your concerns in your response e.g:

- Impact on GPs
- Waiting times
- No reduction in NHS needs
- No special circumstance

Transport - Paths (1)



- Branch Road widening - loss of walking route
- Path east of Meridian Primary School not suitable width
- No access on foot to Branch Road
- In some areas, reducing the availability of footpaths



Development footpath entrance



Transport - Paths (2)



- Currently, there is no formal path to the North of the Recreation Ground extension
 - Essential to connect the development for integration
- No cost contribution identified for that path in the application.
- Application states that the development is linked by foot, cycle and car to the existing village
- Safety Assessment doesn't highlight Care needs of residents, for example need to orient themselves. Need to be safe from open water (pond).

Walking distances

Misleading times and distances not updated

Misrepresentation of integration in
Comberton

Category	Facility / Amenity	Walking and Cycling Distance from Pedestrian Site Access Point	Travel Time (minutes) from site access point	
			Walking	Cycling
Health	Comberton Surgery	95m	1 min	1 min
	Apple Tree Dental Practice	350m	4 mins	1 min
Retail / Food and Drink	Budgens and Post Office	400m	5 mins	2 mins
	Three Horseshoes Pub	550m	7 mins	2 mins
Community	Village Hall	250m	3 mins	1 min
	Hairdresser	350m	5 mins	1 min
	Library	350m	5 mins	1 min

Table 4.1: Facilities and Amenities

* Based on walking speeds of 80 metres per minute and cycling speeds of 320 metres per minute

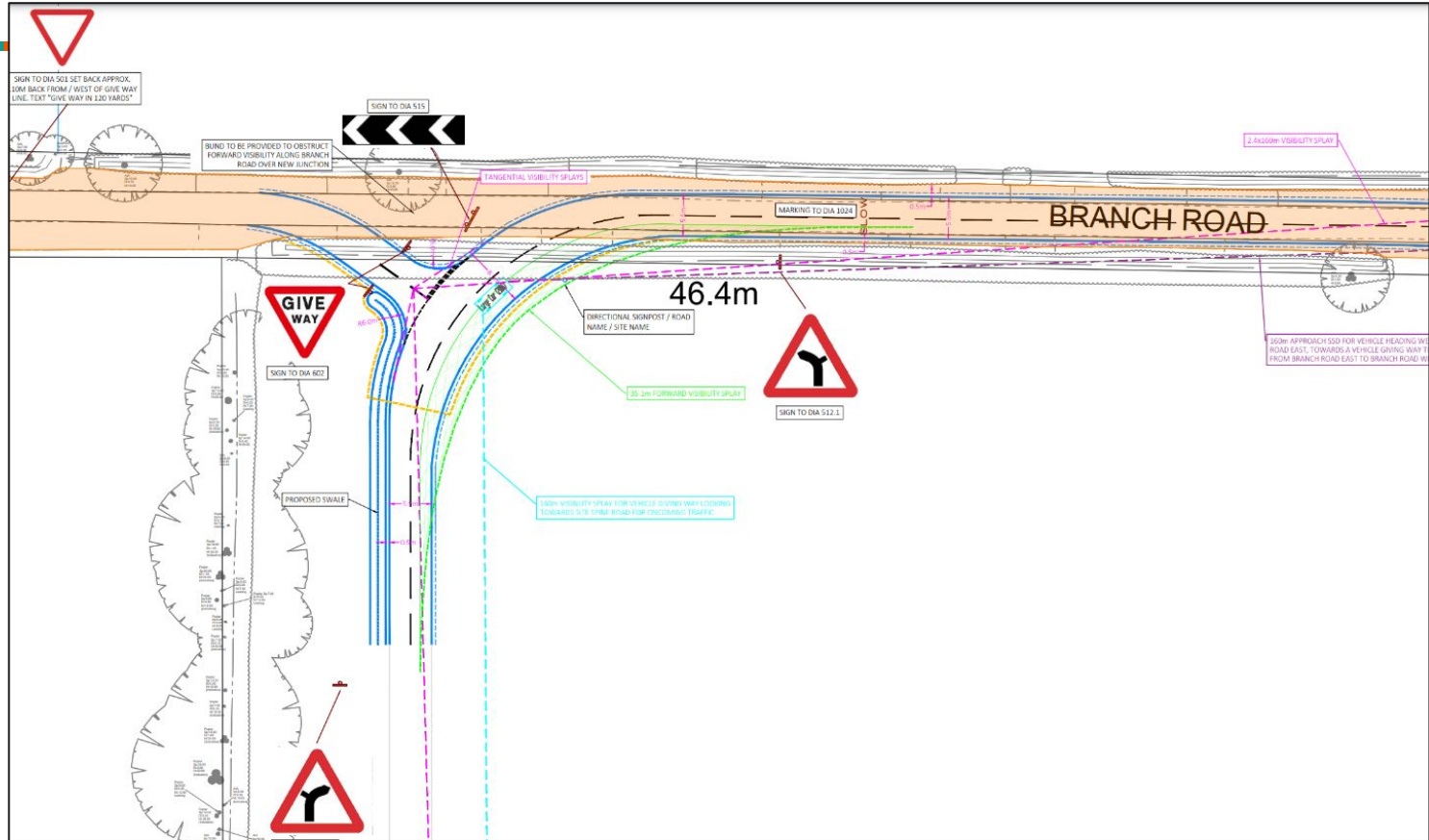
Category	Facility/Amenity	Walking/cycling distance from pedestrian site access point (metres)	Travel time walking (minute)
Health	Comberton surgery	516	9
	Apple tree dental practice	646	11
Retail/Food and drink	Village shop/butcher	565/725	10/13
	Pub	802	14
Community	Village Hall	691	12
	Hairdresser	646	11
	Library	1200	21

*Distances measured on Google map along existing paths, Average walking speed for >65 yo: 57m / minute

Transport - Roads

- Long Road is in a state of disrepair - there will be an increase of usage
- Branch Road will have priority into the site
- Development remote from local amenities, including bus stop
- Residents will need to drive → lack of sustainable transport, lack of parking in Comberton
- Limited parking provided for mobility scooters
- Developer stating that the proposed improvements to roads and paths have a 'moderate weight' benefit to the very special circumstance calculation

Branch Road



Village Green Lungs



The importance of the Green Lungs of the village is in Comberton Village Design Guide (2012) and importance emphasised since the building of the estate to the East of the village in the 1970s

Sense of green space lost from recreation ground and the value of the green lung

Recreation extension and Jubilee Woods were created to increase the green spaces by the Parish Council for the village, for recreational sports and to open up the village.

Green Space

- The development will cut out views from the Recreation Ground
- Destroys a large green belt space in Comberton
- Changes the rural aspect of Branch Road - also used by walkers
- Solar Panel area is considered remaining green space
- Developer states that 'it would not prejudice or harmfully impact upon the openness of the Green Belt' so not detracting from Very Special Circumstance



Sustainability

- Proposal states Net Zero site- very little detail
- Solar Panels on large area of Green Belt land - more efficient ways to generate energy, such as solar panels on roofs.
- Water collection proposed to be used for planting
- There is only irregular and not regular sustainable travel for the staff.
- No detail on sustainable options such as shared bus services
- Application discusses cycling but no cycle connections
- Developer states that this should be given Very Substantial Weighting benefit in very special circumstance calculation

Important Biodiversity Area

- The development site is important for wildlife
- Part of a network of green spaces and corridors that connect across the village and outside to SSSIs (site of special scientific interest)
- Dark sky area
- St Mary's Churchyard Ecology Report (2022) demonstrates the Village cares for its Ecology, especially the central Green Lung which links down to the St Mary's area.
- Wildlife will be greatly affected by this development



Developers Biodiversity Plans



Plans to achieve required 20% above required biodiversity through;

- Wildflower meadow
- Solar Area
- New hedgerows
- Enhancing Orchard
- Pond
- Trees around site

Branch Road widening will remove hedgerow

Restoration of orchard by Green End

Ecology



Parish Council submitted detailed Ecology report written by residents. Applicant has responded to this;

- Accepting that some hedgerows in biodiversity calculation were not in their ownership
- Accepting that some areas, such as lost verges, were in their calculations
- Refuting our claims that surveys of wildlife (birds, badgers and fauna) were at wrong times of year
- Suggesting that Grey Partridge will find alternative homes
- Drainage pond now suggested to always have water present
- Some areas described as scrub which should be considered young plantation woodland - this has now been accepted by the Natural Environment Consultee
- Update on lighting for the site and Branch Road, which still exceed maximum allowed for nocturnal animals

Species affected

Breeding badgers, grass snake, great crested and common newts.

Many birds on the UK Red List (declined by more than 50% in the last 25 years): skylark, starling, greenfinch, yellowhammer and whitethroat. Grey Partridge have been documented by residents .

The area is hunted regularly by mobile predators tawny owl (on the UK Amber List: 25 - 50% decline), barn owl, buzzard, red kite, kestrel and sparrow hawk

Barbastelle bats (which breed at Eversden and Wimpole Woods), one of six species hunting in the area.

- **There are fewer than 5000 left in the UK**
- The proposed buildings and associated lighting will rob these species of important foraging resources



Biodiversity Calculation



Bringing together the planting and restoration of land versus removal of habitat, a figure is produced

This indicates that overall, there is increase biodiversity areas and increased hedgerow

However, these are changing the current biodiverse area

Replacement hedging (in different locations) will take time to develop, and will not be the same height as those lost

Several areas of concern raised by us have been ignored, such as how the wildflower hay meadow will be maintained.

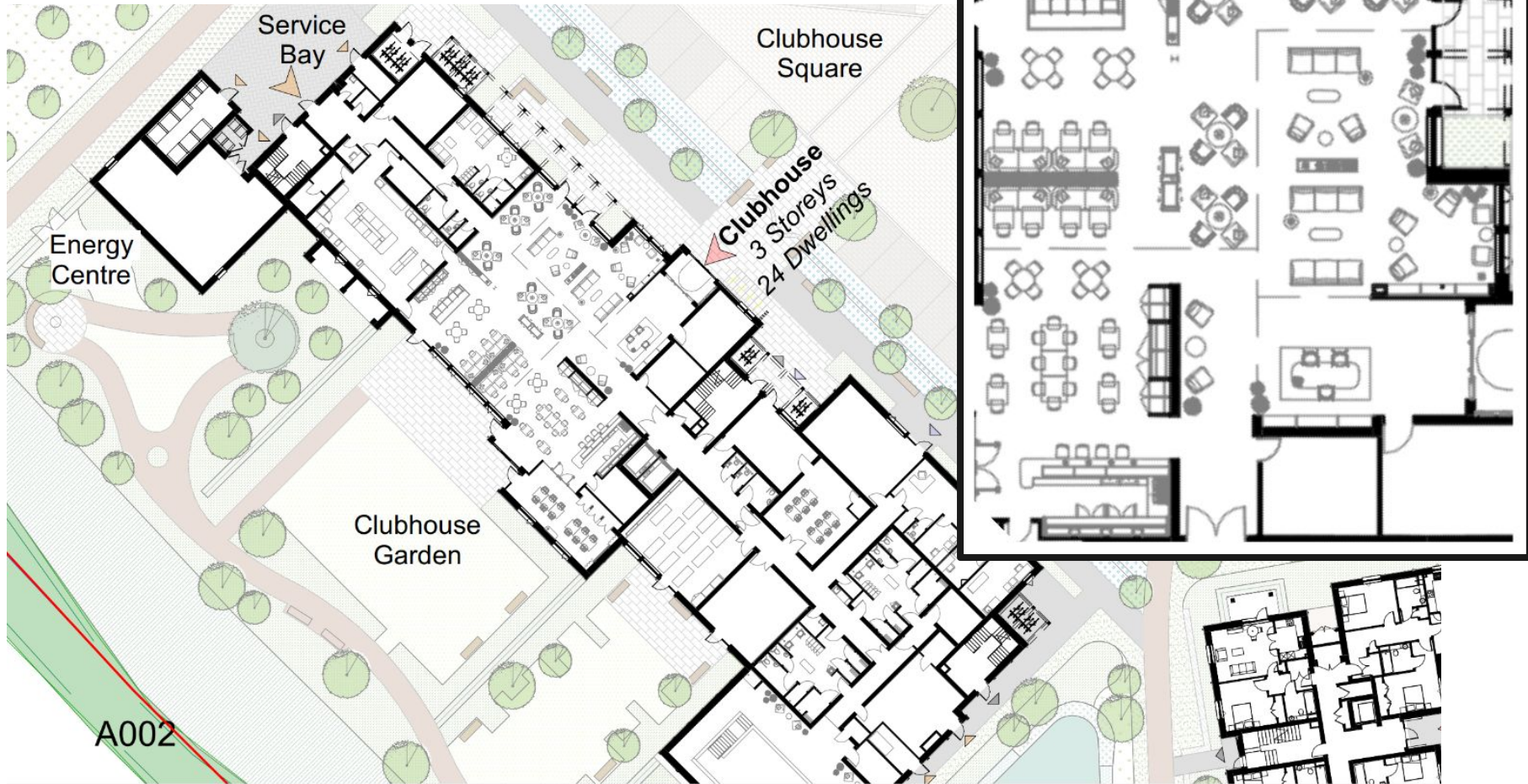
Type of species and criticality is not considered

Overall developer claiming that there is Substantial Benefit to Biodiversity from the development

Facilities and Integration

- Restaurant and cafe: approx 82 seats
- Comberton has a pub and soon a cafe
- Swimming pool - access and capacity unclear; now removed from S106
- Gym, fitness studio - access unclear; now removed from S106
- Treatment rooms onsite
- Meeting space that can be booked/classes - no confirmation of this
- Not designed with integration with wider community in mind
- Unclear how Comberton residents would use the facilities, and therefore how they would benefit from them.
- Greater provision made in Heads of Terms towards shared spaces, such as towards a new Pavilion, supporting the Bowls Club and Recreation Ground
- Developer claiming that there is a substantial weight to Integration Strategy

Cafe/ Restaurant



Economic Benefits



Developers state that the jobs generated will be up to 30 direct and 36 indirect jobs

These would be advertised in the local area for 2 weeks before wider advertisement

Input to local area spending by new residents

Input to local area is said to be 'Substantial Weight' benefit into the Very Special Circumstance calculator

Parish Council



Public Meeting with Developers (Nov 22)

Public Meeting to explain application (May 23)

99 Page Response to Application (July 23)

Information gathering and survey on Sewage and Drainage

Meetings with Council on Sewage, GP, Footpaths, Pavilion

Input to Council on Pavilion needs

Meetings with GP practice and other area practices, and the ICB

Public Meeting (Sept 24)

We will submit comments by 30th September 2024

Call to Action: Comment on the Application - Deadline 30th Sept

Comments via the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website
tinyurl.com/endurancecomberton

Application :



The image is a composite of two screenshots from a web browser. The left screenshot shows the 'Greater Cambridge Shared Planning' website interface. The top navigation bar includes a search bar, 'My Profile', 'Login', and 'Register'. The main heading is 'Planning - Application Comments'. Below this, there is a detailed description of a planning application for an Integrated Retirement Community (IRC) with care units. A 'Back to search results' link is visible. The 'Comments' tab is selected, showing 'Public Comments (199)' and 'Consultee Comments (16)'. The bottom part of the screenshot shows the start of the comment submission instructions. The right screenshot is a close-up of the comment submission form. It contains several paragraphs of instructions, including a warning not to include personal information. A red circle highlights the text 'Login and make a comment.' and 'Not got a login? Register here.' at the bottom of the form area. The bottom of the right screenshot shows an important note about the 30-minute expiration of the page and a disclaimer about the council's policy on removing discriminatory comments.

Thank You

Thank you for attending - your support and input to village life makes a difference

Thank you to everyone who commented previously - please comment again

A very big **Thank You** to everyone how has helped, both in putting this meeting together, writing the responses and supporting us.



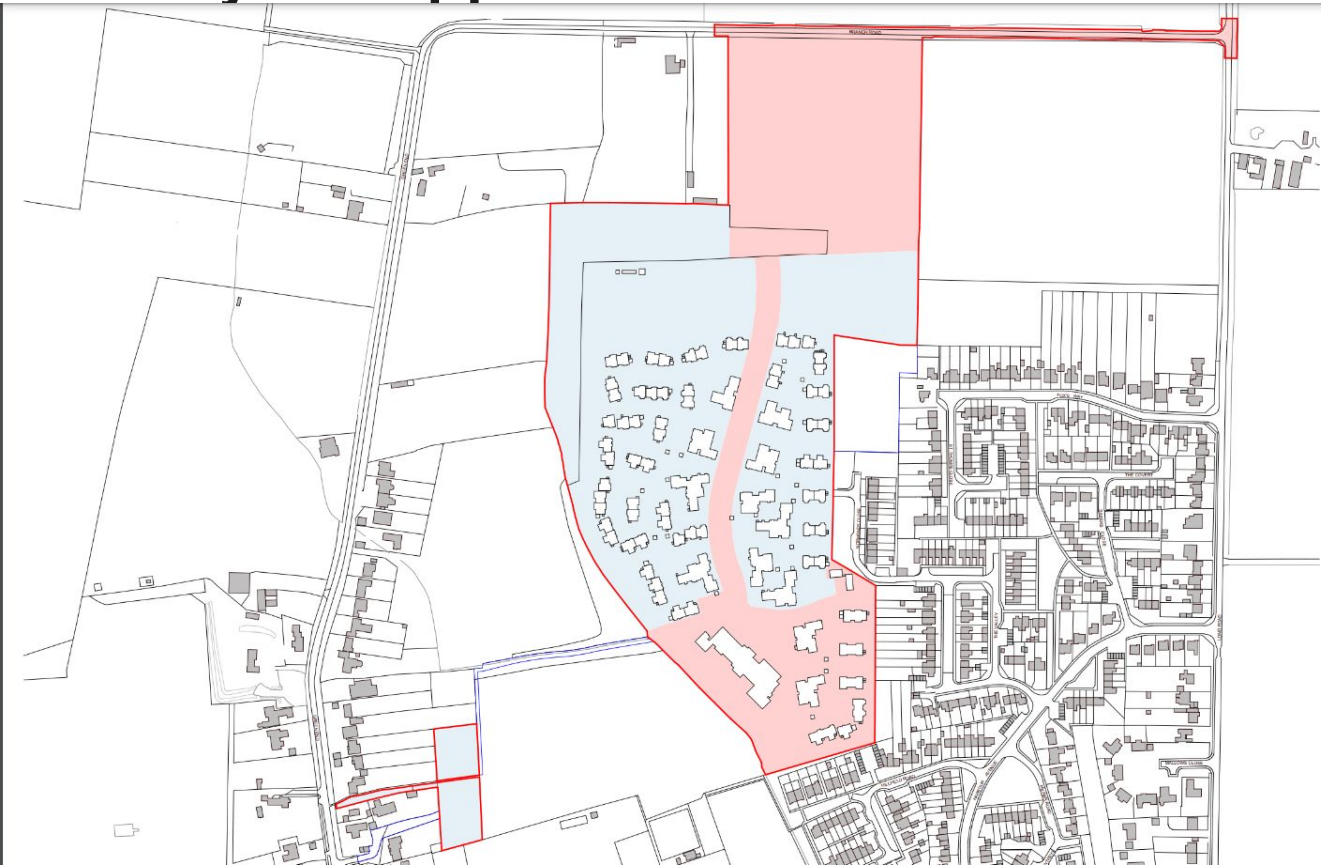
Special thanks to all those who have shared time to put this all together, particularly

Jo, Geoff, Francine, Bill, Mary, Joa, Paul, Chris and Richard

Councillor Marshall and Councillor Michel

[Tinyurl.com/endurancecomberton](https://tinyurl.com/endurancecomberton)

Hybrid Application



- Application Boundary
- Land in Applicant's Ownership
- Extent of Detailed Area
- Extent of Outline Area

