1. Introduction

1.1 Under the provisions of the Council’s current Scheme of Delegation, where applications raise significant planning issues and objection from a Town and Parish Council, they are referred to the Head of Planning Services and Planning Committee Chairs for consideration to be given as to whether the
application should be referred to a Planning Committee for determination. The matter has been duly considered under these provisions and has been confirmed that the application should be determined by committee as the proposal raises Green Belt Policy issues.

2. **Description of the Proposal**

2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the construction of 9 dwellings on land described in the application as South of the Old School House, Belsay. The application site lies to the east of side of the A696 to the north of Belsay First School

2.2 The applicant originally sought permission for 28 dwellings and creation of a school car park. The application has been amended to reduce the number of dwellings to 9 following discussion with officers. Amended plans have been submitted and a re-consultation exercise took place during July 2016.

2.3 The proposal is for 8 semi-detached three bedroomed houses and one four bedroomed detached house set in a linear arrangement facing the main road through the village. Car parking would be to the rear of the dwellings in a range of garages, car ports and open car parking spaces. Access would be directly from the A696.

2.4 Belsay is a small village approximately 8 miles west of Morpeth. The site is located within Belsay Conservation Area which also contains a number of Listed Buildings and part of a Registered Park and Garden. Belsay is a small informally laid out village of mainly traditional buildings with the A696 Newcastle to Jedburgh road running through its centre.

3. **Planning History**

3.1 No planning history.

4. **Consultee Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belsay Parish Council</th>
<th><strong>Objection</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Parish Council object on the following grounds:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The scale of the development is excessive and would almost double the number of dwellings in the small village of Belsay. The Parish Council is of the opinion that the proposed housing development would constitute significant over-development and as such would have an overbearing effect upon the village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Development of the site as proposed would not be in keeping with the linear design of the village, and would be detrimental to the heritage, architectural and historical importance of the village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The development would generate a significant increase in traffic through the village and road network beyond, increasing the noise and disturbance to existing residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The alignment of the A696 is already recognised as a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
hazard to safe traffic movement at the northern and southern approaches to the village as stated in the Castle Morpeth Local Plan (2003. The size and density of the proposed development would increase traffic flow to an unreasonable level, and more significantly, create an additional hazard to motorists due to the close proximity of the site entrance/exit to the bend in the A696 at the northern end of the village.

- The Parish Council is not convinced that parents dropping off / picking up children from the school would make use of the proposed car park given access to it is via a number of turns within the housing "estate". The likely continued practice of parking on the A696 either side of the school entrance would also create a threat to safe traffic movement along the A696 and in/out of the development site.
- Should parents use the car park, they would contribute to a further increase in traffic movement in and out of the development site and create a traffic hazard within the development for resident families accessing the school on foot.
- The Parish Council questions the location of the entrance/exit, being immediately opposite the entrance to the Woodhouse development on the west side of the A696.
- The Parish Council recognises the existing Castle Morpeth Local Plan [Sec 10.3.1] which defines the settlement boundary for the village of Belsay, and it remains unconvinced that the size and scale of the proposed development sits comfortably within the definition of "scattered groups of housing at the northern (and southern) ends of the village".
- The Parish Council notes the County Council's proposal to extend the Green Belt as contained in the Core Strategy document and questions the appropriateness of the proposed development where the County Council fully intends to increase and extend the protection afforded under policy S5 of that plan.

Further consultation (July 2016)
The Parish Council considered the notification of amended/additional information to the above application. The Parish Council felt unable to comment due to a lack of clarity with regard to the amendments or additional information being presented. The Parish Council offered no further comment on the application during the further consultation.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)  No Objection
Previous objection removed subject to conditions relating to the submission of schemes for the following matters being attached to any planning permission granted for the site: Disposal of surface water
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Adoption and maintenance of SuDs features</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finished floor levels of plots 8 &amp; 9 being raised 300mm above ground level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Education - Schools</strong></th>
<th><strong>No Objection</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This is a small development which will generate very few pupils across all year groups. On the basis that 100 dwellings equates to only 3 children per year group a small development such as this will equate to only one child per year group. Although the first school is largely full, it will have the capacity to absorb such a small number of children. Other local schools will have places for older children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Historic England</strong></th>
<th><strong>No Objection</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The reduced scale of the development greatly reduces the suburban feel of the proposal, which in turn better reflects the character of the Conservation Area. As previously expressed choosing the right materials will be key to the visual success of the scheme. The application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of the Council’s specialist conservation advice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Waste Management - North</strong></th>
<th><strong>No response received.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Environment Agency</strong></th>
<th><strong>No Objection</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having reviewed the submitted document ‘14-059-Flood Zone Extents Plan (Topographic Survey)-A3L’ the Environment Agency can remove its objection to the proposed development as it is outside of Flood Zone 2 and 3, however wishes to offer the following advice to the Local Planning Authority.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advice to the LPA**

While the proposed development is outside of Flood Zone 2 and 3, the submitted documents have not considered Flood Zone 2 plus Climate Change allowances. It is suggested in the Northumberland County Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment that “any proposed development adjacent to the existing Flood Zone 2 is supported by a detailed FRA which examines the location and extent of the Flood Zone 2 plus climate change”. As such the LPA should take this into consideration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Housing Department</strong></th>
<th><strong>No Objection</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Due to the changes to the “Planning Obligations” section of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) introducing a combined 10-unit and 1,000 square metres gross floor space threshold below which contributions for affordable housing should not be sought, with this scheme of 9 dwellings the Affordable Housing team now will not be required to comment on this application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Strategy</td>
<td>No response received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways</td>
<td><strong>No Objection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Highways Officer raises no objection subject to the inclusion of conditions relating to matters including highway safety, materials and car parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Conservation</td>
<td><strong>No Objection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No objection and consider the overall scheme to be acceptable and the level of harm to be 'less than substantial' on the character, appearance and setting of the Belsay Conservation Area and individual designated heritage assets within it. The Building Conservation Officer states that the execution of the detail will be key to the integration of the development within the village settlement. Notwithstanding the materials specified in the application the Building Conservation Officer recommends these be conditioned (samples) to ensure appropriate matches, textures and finishes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Archaeologist</td>
<td><strong>No objection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Results of the evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The archaeological evaluation has revealed some very interesting results. The archaeological features exposed in the trenches included a pit, a sub-oval gully enclosing an area measuring 4m by 2.8m and two parallel gullies running roughly east-west between the pit and enclosure. The environmental sampling of the pit revealed two amber beads, a small piece of flint, fire-cracked pebbles and high levels of charcoal which are consistent with Bronze Age pyre deposits. The environmental sampling of the enclosure gully included tiny fragments of calcined (burnt) bone, a fire-cracked pebble, charred plant remains and charcoal. Charcoal and charred plant remains were also recorded in the samples from the parallel gullies. The specialist environmental report stated that there were no finds indicating domestic activity, food plants or cultivated remains on the site. It also concluded that the burnt bone, amber beads and burnt material in these features were indicative of Bronze Age funerary activity on this site. The report has identified that the enclosure in Trench 4 may be the remains of a mortuary enclosure or barrow but with no internal or associated features in the trial trench which would help in its identification. All the features on this site are located directly beneath c.0.3m of topsoil indicating that the site has been subject to later farming activity which may have impacted on shallower features and deposits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Regional context</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The North East Regional Research Framework (NERRF) and the Northumberland Historic Environment Record only record four other sites in Northumberland where amber beads have been recorded. While one site at Green Shield on Holy Island is early medieval in date, the remainder are early Bronze Age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The nearest known find of another amber bead is the site of a cairn and standing stone c.4.75km north-west of the proposed development area near East Shafte Hall, where the amber bead was found at the foot of the standing stone in 1985.

Archaeological requirement
Trial trenching is a very useful tool in identifying the archaeological potential of a site. Linear trenching is good at locating linear features such as gullies or ditches and charting their orientation and location across the site (as seen in trenches 2 and 5 on this site). Discrete features such as pits and small enclosures do get picked up in trenching (as seen in trenches 6 and 4) which establishes the presence of this type of archaeological remains on site but it is harder to establish the quantity, extent and location of further discrete features from the percentage of the site which has been subject to evaluation. This evaluation has established the presence of Bronze Age pyre deposits within the fills of the excavated features which indicates that a pyre is likely to have been located near these features. The enclosure may represent a Bronze Age mortuary enclosure or barrow. There is a strong possibility that the site may have been used on a number of occasions for cremation and burial with the remains surviving in the areas between trial trenches.

Although the known archaeology was identified in the central part of the site, the whole of the current application area has the potential to contain comparable or associated remains. The North East Regional Research Framework clearly shows that this site has the potential to be of regional significance which could add to our knowledge of Bronze Age funerary sites in the region. As a result the archaeology on this site can be approached in two different ways:

1. Preservation in situ This would preserve the archaeological remains across the whole site for future research but given that the archaeological is present at a depth of 0.3m below current ground level, this would have definite implications for the ability to develop this site.

2. Preservation by record While the site is of at least regional importance, the information that could be gained from its excavation could add significantly to our knowledge of Bronze Age funerary activity and as a result, the knowledge (preservation by record) gained would balance the loss of the site, providing that an appropriate area is subject to archaeological mitigation and subsequent publication.

I would recommend the site is preserved by record and have formulated a mitigation strategy which combines full excavation of the central area of the site where archaeological remains were revealed in the evaluation with areas of strip, map and record of the wider area which associated archaeological remains may extend into. I have attached a brief which covers the scope of this mitigation work which
should be tied directly into the planning condition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Ecologist</th>
<th>No Objection</th>
<th>The County Ecologist raises no objection subject to conditions safeguarding protected species, wildlife and their habitats.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Protection</td>
<td>No Objection</td>
<td>The Public Protection Officer raises no objection subject to the inclusion of conditions relating contamination not previously discovered, noisy working and deliveries / collections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways England</td>
<td>No Objection</td>
<td>No additional comments provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumbrian Water Ltd</td>
<td>No Objection</td>
<td>No objection to application, provided the application is approved and carried out within strict accordance with the submitted documents entitled “Drainage Statement” and the submitted application form. In these document it states that foul flows from the proposed development will be treated by a private package treatment plant, whilst surface water will discharge to the Belsay Burn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whalton Parish Council</td>
<td>No response received.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Public Responses**

**Neighbour Notification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Neighbours Notified</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Objections</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Support</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of General Comments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copies of all representations received are available in the Member’s Lounge and will also be made available at the meeting of the Committee

**Notices**

A Site Notice (Affecting a Conservation Area) was posted on site on 30 December 2015.

A press notice was placed in the Morpeth Herald on 14th January 2016.

**Summary of Responses:**

A total of 24 letters of objections have been received to both the original and the amended scheme, some objectors have written multiple letters. Seven letters of support have been received and two letters of representation. These can be summarised as follows:
Support
The development is considered sustainable, would support the retention of the First School, would support local businesses, adequate parking is provided and would deliver housing to the village. The development would support the principles of highway and community safety.

Objection
The development would be contrary to Green Belt policies, the development would result in adverse impacts and harm on the historic character of the village including the Conservation Area. Matters relating to design, ecology, the scale and distribution of the development, highways/accessibility, flooding, limited services to sustain the development.

The above is a summary of the comments. The full written text is available on our website at: http://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=NXPJ2TQS M1L00

6. Planning Policy

6.1 Development Plan Policy

Castle Morpeth District Local Plan (2003)

RE6 Service Infrastructure
C1 Settlement boundaries
C3 Area of High Landscape Value
C11 Protected Species
C38 Protection of Historical Assets
H1 Housing Land Supply
H9 Affordable Housing in Rural Areas
H15 New Housing Developments

Northumberland and National Park Joint Structure Plan (2005)

S5 Extension to the Green Belt

6.1 National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014)

6.3 Emerging Policy

Northumberland Local Development Plan Core Strategy Pre-Submission Draft (Major Modifications June 2016)

1 Sustainable Development
2 High Quality Sustainable Design
3 Spatial Distribution
18 Planning for Housing
28 Principles for the Environment
29 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
7. **Appraisal**

7.1 The main issues in the determination of this application are:

- Principle of Development;
- Green Belt;
- Housing Land Supply;
- Highway Safety;
- Impact on Heritage Assets;
- Archaeological Impact;
- Residential Amenity;
- Landscaping and Ecology; and
- Flooding and Drainage.

**Principle of Development**

7.2 Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration. The Castle Morpeth Local Plan (2003) remains a statutory component of the development plan and the starting point for determining applications as set out at paragraph 12 of the NPPF. However the NPPF advises at paragraph 215 that Local Planning Authorities should give due weight to the relevant policies in existing Local Plans according to their weight according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

7.3 In accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, weight may be also given to the policies in emerging plans, depending on the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent to which emerging policy aligns with NPPF and the extent of unresolved objections to the emerging plan. Therefore, weight can be given to the policies in the Northumberland Local Plan Pre-Submission Core Strategy (Major Modifications June 2016) which comprises a material consideration in the determination of this application.

7.4 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the Framework identifies three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. NPPF paragraph 6 advises that the policies set out in paragraphs 18 to 219 of the document, taken as a whole, constitute the Government’s view on what sustainable development in England mean in practice for the planning system.

7.5 Paragraph 7 provides the key starting point against which sustainability of a development proposal should be assessed. This identifies three dimensions
to sustainable development, an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. Paragraph 8 goes on to advise how the three roles of sustainable development are mutually dependent and should not be undertaken in isolation. It makes it clear that to achieve sustainable development economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

7.6 Paragraph 55 identifies that to promote sustainable development in rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or, maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Whether the presumption in favour of sustainable development is successful in this case is dependent in an assessment on whether the proposed development of the site would be sustainable in terms of its economic, social and environmental roles of the scheme as well as identifying its potential impacts and benefits in planning terms.

7.7 The main issues to consider are whether the proposals accord with the policies in the adopted Development Plan; and whether the proposals would undermine the objectives of policies in emerging Local Plan Pre-submission Core Strategy (June 2016). This will include consideration of the need for additional housing; rural settlement policies; impact on the proposed Green Belt; whether the proposal would result in an unsustainable pattern of development in and the acceptance in terms of highwa

7.8 Whilst the more rural areas of Northumberland are typified by isolated villages, often of a relatively dispersed nature which may or may not be defined as a village, in this case it is clear that Belsay is such a settlement and has a range of services available within it which would be expected in a settlement of this size such as a school (currently a First School) and a shop and has public transport links to Ponteland and Newcastle in the form of bus services.

7.9 Policy C1 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan defines settlement boundaries within which development should be directed. This approach has been held in recent appeal decisions to be inconsistent with the aims of achieving sustainable development promoted by the NPPF. The proposed development is outside the settlement boundary as defined by Policy C1 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan but is considered to be in a location which could be considered to be sustainable in terms of being able to contribute to the social sustainability of the settlement and within walking distance of facilities within the village.

7.10 Taking into account the considerations set out above, it is considered that Belsay can be considered to be a sustainable location for development, in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NPPF

Housing Land Supply

7.11 The NPPF aims to significantly boost the supply of housing, paragraph 49 indicates that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if a five year
supply of deliverable sites cannot be demonstrated. These will also need to be considered having regard to the housing land supply within an area.

7.12 The emerging Core Strategy identifies four delivery areas which comprise Housing Market Areas. The application site falls within the Central Delivery Area (CDA). Current monitoring data confirms that Northumberland can demonstrate a five year supply. The CDA itself can also demonstrate a five year supply. This means that the lack of five year supply of deliverable housing land could not form a material consideration in determining this application.

7.13 Notwithstanding this, consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the housing figures are a minimum and should not be viewed as a ceiling. The key consideration is whether the proposed development is considered sustainable development in line with Policies 1 and 3 of the emerging development plan and the NPPF. It is considered that the principle of new dwellings within this location would not undermine the ability to manage housing supply. Given the location of the proposed development immediately adjacent to existing development in a sustainable location and the limited nature of the development it is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Green Belt

7.14 The NPPF attaches great weight to the importance of Green Belts (paragraph 79). Paragraph 87 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to Green Belts and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 88 goes on to state that Local Planning Authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to the harm to the Green Belt.

7.15 The Northumberland and National Park Joint Structure Plan Policy S5 established the general extent of a Green Belt extension around Morpeth. The plan did not define a detailed outer boundary or boundaries to settlements located within the general extent, as worded in Policy S5 and states that it would extend to the west of Netherwitton, Hartburn and Belsay. The intention to define an outer boundary to the Green Belt in the emerging Northumberland Core Strategy was made clear from the publication of the Issues and Options document in May 2012 through to Pre-submission (June 2016). In each version of the plan the application site is within the outer Green Belt boundary.

7.16 The site in question is immediately to the east of the settlement boundary set out in Policy C1 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan which has been shown to be inconsistent with the aims of the NPPF in terms of sustainable development. The settlement boundary is, however, proposed as an inset boundary to the Green Belt for the village of Belsay in the emerging Core Strategy.

7.17 As the emerging Core Strategy defines boundaries to settlements within the Green Belt, it is considered that areas within these settlement boundaries are not within the Green Belt. The site in question lies outside this boundary and therefore is considered that the site would be within the proposed Green Belt in the emerging development plan. As the plan remains unadopted and has
not yet been subject to public examination limited weight can be given to its Green Belt status.

7.18 Paragraph 87 of the NPPF highlights that “inappropriate development is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances”. Paragraph 88 requires that Local Planning Authorities ensure substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, and that ‘very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reasons of appropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should regard the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as inappropriate. However there are exceptions to this. One of those exceptions is ‘limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan’.

7.19 There is no accepted definition of what ‘limited infill’ in villages is and an assessment should be made on a case by case basis in accordance with local circumstances. In determining this application the development has been considered under this bullet point. The construction of 9 houses in the location and form proposed is considered to be limited infill in the context of the scale of the settlement of Belsay and can therefore be considered to be not inappropriate development in the Green Belt in the terms of the NPPF. In this respect, the proposal does not need to be assessed further in terms of impact on openness of the Green Belt or demonstrate very special circumstances.

7.20 The principle of residential development in this location is therefore considered to be acceptable in accordance with the provisions of local planning policy, emerging planning policy and the aims of the NPPF in assessing development against the tests set out in Paragraphs 86 to 89 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

7.21 The development would be accessed by a new access into the site from the A696 within the existing 30mph limit through the village. Despite objections from local residents, the Highways Authority is satisfied that the proposed access and parking provision is acceptable subject to conditions to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the details submitted. No objection has been received from Highways England.

7.22 The development is therefore acceptable in principle, subject to relevant conditions and accords with the NPPF, Emerging Core Strategy Policy 43 and Castle Morpeth Local Plan Policy H15.

Impact on Heritage Assets

7.23 The site lies within Belsay Conservation Area, which also includes Belsay Hall and Gardens. The Conservation Area includes a number of listed buildings and part of a Registered Park and Garden. The village is a small, informally laid out hamlet that has evolved around key buildings and features within a significant parkland setting.
7.24 In assessing development proposal Local Planning Authorities are duty bound to have regard to the legislative framework in terms of Section 16(2), 66(1) and 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring Local Planning Authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, Conservation Area and its setting as well as any special landscape features (such as a Registered park and Garden in this instance) and also the provisions of the NPPF in Section 12 with regard to the degree of harm and the balance of harm against the benefits of the development proposed.

7.25 The application site is considered in conservation terms to be a logical expansion of the village. The development, in the context of the size of the settlement, does however; represent development which has the potential to cause harm. Any new development should show how it responds to the distinctive pattern, layout, spatial arrangement of buildings and spaces that characterise this small, informal village. The revised layout has taken on board previous comments and conservation concerns. The layout, access, scale, form, massing and incorporation of soft landscaping and boundary treatments are considered appropriate within the Conservation Area context. The palette of materials reflects the local vernacular of stone, slate and timber windows.

7.26 Therefore, in conclusion, the proposal would have an impact on the Conservation Area and that impact, in this instance, would be less than substantial due to the form, layout, location and materials proposed. The public benefits arising from the scheme in terms of supporting the viability of the settlements and the services within in the village are however, found to outweigh any harm which is caused by the development and therefore is in accordance with the NPPF, Policy C38 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan and Policy 2 of the Emerging development plan.

Archaeological Impact

7.25 An archaeological evaluation in line with the approved written scheme of investigation has been undertaken, and the results of this work have been provided.

7.26 The site investigations have established the presence of Bronze Age remains of regional significance which require preservation. The County Archaeologist recommends the site is preserved by record and has formulated a mitigation strategy which combines full excavation of the central area of the site where archaeological remains were revealed in the evaluation with areas of strip, map and record of the wider area which associated archaeological remains may extend into. This would be a requirement of a condition attached to the permission for the development.

Residential Amenity

7.27 Due to the location of the site, and residential properties within the settlement, the proposed layout and scale of the development acceptable and it is considered that the proposed development would not have any detrimental impact on residential amenity in terms of outlook and privacy from existing properties and their curtilages. The proposal would therefore be in
accordance with policy H15 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan and the provisions of the NPPF in this respect.

**Landscaping and Ecology**

7.28 Policy C11 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan does not permit development which would adversely affect protected species or their habitats. Policy 28 of the emerging Core Strategy also identifies principles for the environment, policy 29 seeks to minimise adverse impacts the adverse impact of development on biodiversity.

7.29 Consultation has taken place with the County Ecologist who is satisfied with the conclusions of the Phase 1 Habitat Survey which was submitted with the application, and subject to conditions the proposal would not have any adverse impact on protected species or biodiversity in this location. The proposal is therefore in accordance with the NPPF, Policy C11 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan and Policies 28 and 29 of the emerging development plan.

**Flooding and Drainage**

7.30 The NPPF advises that development should be directed towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding and that Local Planning Authorities should ensure that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

7.31 Castle Morpeth Local Plan Policy RE6 states that the Council will consider the implications of granting planning permission for new development where they affect land drainage, water supply and sewerage. Policies 27, 35 and 38 of the emerging development plan also seek to ensure that development is acceptable in terms of these.

7.32 As the site lies within Flood Zone 1 and given the size of the proposed development a Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted to support the application. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has advised that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions. Northumbrian Water also raises no objection to the proposal provided that the development is carried out in accordance with the details submitted in the Drainage Statement accompanying the application.

7.33 The proposal is therefore in accordance with the NPPF, Policy RE6 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan and Policies 27, 35 and 38 of the emerging development plan.

**8. Conclusion**

8.1 Having regard to the above appraisal, and the basis of the information submitted with the application, it is officer opinion that the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable and complies with policies contained within the Castle Morpeth Local Plan. The site is within the Green Belt proposed by the emerging development plan which has yet to go through Examination in Public and therefore limited weight can be given to the Green Belt status of the site. Nevertheless, the proposal would not be considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt as it would be limited infill and
therefore constitutes one of the exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt listed in the NPPF.

8.2 Subject to recommended conditions, it is considered that the development would be sustainable in terms of its economic, social and environmental role. Having paid regard to the Local Plan, the emerging development plan and the NPPF, the benefits of the proposal in terms of housing delivery would outweigh the harm that would be caused by the proposal. In line with the aims of the NPPF, the scheme represents sustainable development.

9. **Recommendation**

That this application be GRANTED permission subject to the following:

**Conditions/Reason**

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

    Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

02. The development hereby approved shall not be carried out otherwise in complete accordance with the approved plans and documents. The approved plans and documents are:-

    Proposed Site Plan received on 1 July 2016  
    GA/18 Highways Proposals Rev C dated 11-04-16  
    GA/20 House Type A dated 19-04-16  
    GA/21 House Type B dated 19-04-16  
    GA/22 House Type C Floor Plans dated 19-04-16  
    GA/23 House Type C Elevations dated 19-04-16  
    GA/24 Proposed Garage and Car Port dated 01-07-16  
    GA/25 House Type A (Handed) dated 19-04-16  
    GA/26 House Type B (Handed) dated 19-04-16  
    MD01014/0100 Preliminary Drainage Strategy dated November 2015  
    MD01014/rep/001/Rev A Drainage Assessment

    Reason: To ensure that the approved development is carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and documents and to ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained.

03. Notwithstanding the details submitted, the development shall not commence until the precise details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external walls, roofs, windows and doors of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved materials thereafter.

    Reason: To retain control over the external appearance of the development in the interests of the appearance of Belsay Conservation Area in accordance with the provisions of Policy H15 of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan.
04. Prior to commencement of development details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the car parking spaces and private drives shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

05. No dwelling shall be occupied until the car parking area indicated on the approved plans for the said dwelling, has been hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays. Thereafter, the car parking area shall be retained in accordance with the approved plans and shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles associated with the development.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

06. Development shall not commence until details of the proposed highway works, including a schedule of implementation, to facilitate the site access, including details relating to the relocation of the route confirmatory sign, reinstatement of the footway along the frontage of the development site and the pedestrian connection outside Plot 7 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved highway works shall be constructed in accordance with the approved plans and schedule of implementation.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

07. No development shall commence until details of proposed arrangements for future management and maintenance of the proposed streets within the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following occupation of the first dwelling on the site, the streets shall be maintained in accordance with the approved management and maintenance details.

Reason: To ensure estate streets serving the development are completed in the interests of residential amenity and highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

08. No development shall commence until full engineering, drainage, street lighting and constructional details of the streets proposed for adoption have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety; to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the highways infrastructure serving the approved development; and to safeguard the amenities of the locality and users of the highway in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.
09. No dwelling shall be occupied until details of cycle parking for that dwelling have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved cycle parking shall be implemented before the dwelling is occupied. Thereafter, the cycle parking shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and shall be kept available for the parking of cycles at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and sustainable development, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

10. Prior to occupation, details of surface water drainage to manage run off from private land have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved surface water drainage scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is occupied and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to prevent surface water run off in the interests of the amenity of the area and to ensure suitable drainage has been investigated for the development and implemented, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any other re-enacting or revoking Order with or without modification), no doors or other such feature shall be provided to the approved Car Ports labelled CP2 to CP 7 shall be erected or constructed without planning permission being obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. Development shall not commence until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Construction Method Statement shall, where applicable, provide for:

i. details of temporary traffic management measures, temporary access, routes and vehicles;
ii. vehicle cleaning facilities;
iii. the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
iv. the loading and unloading of plant and materials;
v. storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
vi. measures to control the emission of dust and dirt;

Reason: To prevent nuisance in the interests of residential amenity and highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

13. The development shall not be occupied until the approved refuse storage area has been formed in accordance with the approved plans. The approved refuse storage area shall thereafter be retained for the storage of refuse at all times.
14. No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision and management of a buffer zone alongside the watercourse shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and any subsequent amendments shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The buffer zone scheme shall be free from built development including lighting, domestic gardens and formal landscaping; and could form a vital part of green infrastructure provision. The schemes shall include:
   - plans showing the extent and layout of the buffer zone
   - details of any proposed planting scheme (for example, native species)
   - details demonstrating how the buffer zone will be protected during development and managed/maintained over the longer term.
   - details of any proposed footpaths, fencing, lighting etc.

Reason: Development that encroaches on watercourses has a potentially severe impact on their ecological value. Land alongside watercourses is particularly valuable for wildlife and it is essential this is protected.

15. Prior to the construction to the development, a scheme for the disposal of surface water from the development which shall use sustainable drainage techniques wherever possible shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the effective disposal of surface water from the development

16. Prior to first occupation details of the adoption and maintenance of all SuDS features shall be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority. A maintenance schedule which includes details for all SuDS features for the lifetime of development shall be comprised within and be implemented forthwith in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure that the scheme to disposal of surface water operates at its full potential throughout the developments lifetime.

17. The finished floor levels of plots 8 and 9 shall be raised 300mm above ground level.

Reason: To prevent the buildings from flooding in extreme flood events.

18. If during redevelopment contamination not previously considered is identified, then an additional written Method Statement regarding this material shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No building shall be occupied until a method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and measures proposed to deal with the contamination have been carried out. Should no contamination be found during development then the applicant shall submit a signed statement indicating this to discharge this condition.
Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and dwellings are minimised and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to any future occupants.

19. During the construction period, there should be no noisy activity, i.e. audible at the site boundary, on Sundays or Bank Holidays or outside the hours: Monday to Friday - 0800 to 1800, Saturday 0800 to 1300. Any repeatedly noisy activity at any time may render the developer liable to complaints which could result in investigation as to whether a statutory nuisance is being caused.

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents.

20. No development shall take place unless in accordance with the recommendations of the report Phase 1 Habitat And Protected Species Risk Assessment Land Adjacent To A696 Belsay Northumberland by Naturally Wild (September 2015), including:

1. All vegetation removal works and site clearance work must be conducted outside of the bird nesting season, which generally runs from late February to late August. Should these activities be timed within this period, they should only be conducted following an assessment by an ecologist to confirm the absence of nesting birds.
2. All retained trees will be protected from damage or the potential encroachment of building works, by the implementation of a suitable Root Protection Area (RPA) and erection of a temporary protective fence to designate this area. The fencing should be erected prior to the commencement of works on site. The RPA should be calculated following current guidance: reference BS5837 document.
3. Construction pits and trenches will be covered at the end of each working day or a means of escape added.
4. Noise, light and dust to be controlled during construction.

Reason: To maintain the favourable conservation status of protected species and to maintain and enhance the biodiversity value of the area.

21. No development shall take place unless any new lighting on the site is designed in accordance with the Institute of Lighting Engineers/Bat Conservation Trust guidance (Bats And Lighting In The UK, Bats and the Built Environment Series, Version 2, 2008). New external lighting will be directional, low wattage and controlled by motion sensor.

Reason: To maintain the favourable conservation status of protected species and to maintain and enhance the biodiversity value of the area.

22. A detailed landscape planting plan, including the planting of locally native trees and shrubs of local provenance, and nectar rich plants shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the LPA with the planting to be fully implemented during the first full planting season (November March inclusive) following the commencement of development.

Reason: To maintain and protect the landscape value of the area and to enhance the biodiversity value of the site.
23. All garden boundaries will include a gap at the base measuring 13cm x 13cm to allow continued access through the site for hedgehog.

Reason: To maintain the population of a priority species.

24. A programme of archaeological work is required in accordance with the brief provided by Northumberland Conservation (NC ref CM1/2; 25902 dated 07/04/2017). The archaeological scheme shall comprise three stages of work. Each stage shall be completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before it can be discharged.

   a) No development or archaeological mitigation shall commence on site until a written scheme of investigation based on the brief has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

   b) The archaeological recording scheme required by the brief must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

   c) The programme of analysis, reporting, publication and archiving if required by the brief must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

Reason: The site is of archaeological interest.

**Informatives**

**Highways**

You are advised to contact the Council’s Highway Development Management team at highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk concerning the need for a Section 38 Agreement of the Highway Act 1980 relating to the adoption of new highways.

You are advised that offsite highway works required in connection with this permission are under the control of the Council’s Technical Services Division and will require an agreement under section 278 of the Highway Act 1980. These works should be carried out before first occupation of the development. All such works will be undertaken by the Council at the applicant’s expense. You should contact Highway Development Management at highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk to progress this matter.

You should note that a highway condition survey should be carried out before the commencement of construction vehicle movements from this site. To arrange a survey contact Highway Development Management at highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk.

The applicant is advised that to discharge condition [insert] the Local Planning Authority requires a copy of a completed agreement between the applicant and the Local Highway Authority under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 or the constitution and details of a Private Management and Maintenance Company confirming funding, management and maintenance regimes. You can contact Highway Development Management at highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk.
The applicant is advised to obtain a technical approval for all estate street details from the Local Highway Authority prior to the submission of such approved details to the Local Planning Authority to discharge condition [insert] of this permission. You can contact the Highway Development Management at highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk

The risk of encountering bats, nesting birds or other protected species in connection with the execution of this planning consent is low providing the conditions are strictly adhered to, but there is a small risk that individual animals may be encountered during works.

Ecology
All species of bat and their roosts (whether occupied or not) are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Similarly, all wild birds and their nests are protected whilst in use and it is an offence to recklessly or intentionally destroy nests or dependent young when on or near the nest, or to kill or take them.

Applicants and contractors should note that the protected species legislation operates independently of the planning system, planning consent does not override the legislation relating to protected species and that they should be aware that there is a small chance of encountering protected species during works.

In the unlikely event of protected species such as bats or nesting birds being encountered during development then works should cease immediately and professional advice should be sought straight away. Applicants and contractors can obtain advice and a list of appropriately qualified consultants by telephoning Natural England’s bat advice line on 0845 1300 228.

Further information about protected species and the law can be found on the Natural England website at www.naturalengland.org.uk

Archaeology
Northumberland Conservation can provide briefs for archaeological work; however, it is now obliged to make a charge for the production and approval of certain pieces of work which exceed the advisory role of the NC within the planning process. This includes the production of briefs, the approval of documents such as written schemes of investigation, reports and site visits. The cost of each service provided is dependent on the size and nature of the application and have been calculated using the same planning application categories as those defined by NCC Development Services. At the request of the applicant I can provide a brief for archaeological work and/or provide a list of archaeological contractors who work within the county.

Background Papers: Planning application file(s) 15/03810/FUL