

Appendix 2

Subject: Planning Ref S/1397/09/O

Thank you for clarifying to me the issues relating to the responses received from the developer regarding this application.

The principle of development on the site is accepted, but the residents of Caldecote have a number of concerns, which I wish to draw to your attention.

1. Capacity of Pumping Station.

The Caldecote Parish Council has repeatedly notified Anglian Water (AW) that there are capacity issues with the station, as it has overflowed/flooded several times. Records that I have seen dating as far back as 2005, show that this is a long standing issue, and that AW have been notified of this problem on several occasions. The Parish Clerk, Roger Hume, informs me that he has forwarded these documents to you.

Anglian Water have sent out tankers to remove the excess foul water from the station, when the station has failed to do the job properly. The station has overflowed at least 3 times each year for the past 2 years, and again early in January 2010. AW however continue to deny the problem.

When the pumping station overflows, foul water floods onto Highfields Road, threatening to flow into nearby houses on the opposite side of the road, and causing a health hazard. Residents have reported in the past being kept awake at night as tankers sent by Anglian Water disturb the nights peace with noise and lights.

The Utilities report submitted by the developers in support of the application makes the following statements:

2.2 No difficulties are anticipated with foul water capacity and an outfall is proposed to the existing system in Highfields.

In the Anglian Water report, Appendix 1, which supports this assertion, it states:

4.5 The foul drainage from this development can be accommodated within the existing sewerage system without the need for any offside reinforcements.

4.6 The foul drainage from this development will be treated at Bourn Sewerage Treatment works that at present has available capacity for these flows.

I draw your attention to the difference in the language used in both statements 4.5 and 4.6, with the pumping station being able to "accommodate" the flow whilst the treatment works has "available capacity" at present. This indicates that AW cannot fully confirm the capacity at the pumping station.

There is strong indication there is insufficient capacity in the pumping station to cope with any further additional flows.

2. Local Services & Transport

I refer you to Section 3 of the Transportation Assessment & Green travel plan document submitted by the Developer. The conclusion of this section is that

there are sufficient local services and transport facilities to support the proposed development.

This statement is not supported by the current services available, and does not fulfil Policy HG5.

Buses/Transport: There is only one bus service No. 14 that serves the village, in the morning at 07:11 toward Cambridge, and in the evening at 18:59 hours from Cambridge, Mondays to Fridays only. Clearly completely inadequate.

Anyone wanting to use public transport buses for a normal journey needs to walk nearly 1km to the A428, to catch the Citi4 bus which runs every 15 minutes, from Cambridge to Cambourne/St Neots. This is not acceptable to the residents, but they do it, as there is no other choice. Car journeys to and from the A428 are frequent, as relatives go to pickup and drop off at the bus stops, increasing traffic on the main street. Elderly folk and mothers with young children find it a struggle to use public transport, particularly in inclement weather conditions.

Additional 97 houses with at least one car per household will increase the traffic unacceptably.

Convenience Store: The store stopped trading in April 2010, and remains shut. Anyone wanting to shop must get in the car and go to the BP garage or to Morrison/Tesco, again increasing level of traffic on the road and through the village.

Primary School: The school is at capacity and there is currently no space to take additional pupils that such a development will necessarily bring to the village. There is insufficient places at the secondary school and sixth form colleges in the area.

Roads: In particular, Highfields Road with the speed thumps, is a hazard to vehicles. Smoke pollution increases as drivers slow down and speed up to take account of these thumps. In addition, several cars have been damaged by the thumps, some having claimed successfully against the County Council, whilst some claims are still pending. The road is unsuitable for additional traffic in its current state.

The road at Lower Caldecote, which is other exit out of the village, is very narrow, with steep embankments either side. There have been reports of near misses, cars/pedestrians/walkers, and is unsuitable for increased traffic flow through it.

3. Design Principle

The number of houses proposed for this site is quite large, and is perceived to be inappropriate to the size and character of the village. In particular, the number of "affordable housing" being proposed has no bearing on any identified needs in the village. The Council is obliged, by DPD 4.17 and 4.18 to show that there is a demonstrable local need for affordable housing, before a scheme is progressed.

The Parish Clerk informs me that the result of the recently conducted Parish Plan has been forwarded to you, and that this indicates a much reduced need for affordable housing, than is being proposed in this development.

The new central government has now abolished the blanket, central government dictated housing provision targets. The need for and approval of the development should be considered in the light of this.

Conclusion:

The residents of Caldecote are extremely concerned about the scale and mix of this proposed development. I urge that the above points should be taken into account by the Planning Department in its recommendation to the Planning Committee.

There is a demonstrable case for a review of the scheme, in size, scope and mix, based on current conditions and level of service provisions highlighted above.

I hereby propose that the Council

1. Examine the evidence provided already by Caldecote Parish Council, showing that AW are aware of longstanding capacity issues with the pumping station
2. Require AW to upgrade the station capacity, as a matter of priority, before any further large scale development is approved in the village.
3. Re-examine the scope of the proposed development in the light of the inadequate services in the village and ensure that adequate provision is made in any approved scheme
4. Demonstrate the local need for the number of proposed affordable housing units in the development.
5. Reconsider the size of the development altogether, in view of the abolition of the national house building targets and only consider approval for demonstrable local needs for both private and affordable housing.