

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

2 October 2013

**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

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### **S/1246/13 - MELDRETH**

**Erection of 4 bungalows (2 detached and 2 semi-detached), creation of access and parking - revised design to Planning Approval S/0029/11**

**Land adj. to The Tavern Yard & The Station Yard, Meldreth for Lodge House Ltd**

**Recommendation: Refuse**

**Date for Determination: 9 August 2013**

### **Update to the report**

#### **Agenda report paragraph number 9 – Parish Council Comments**

1. Meldreth Parish Council has updated their comments on the application as follows:
2. “Meldreth Parish Council recommended approval of the application for 4 bungalows adjacent to Tavern Yard (S/1346/13/FL) because we considered it better suited to the site than the approved application for houses (S/0029/11/FL) for which we had recommended refusal. However, in light of the continuing night noise issues from the adjacent industrial site if SCDC Planning Dept or the Planning Committee is minded to grant planning permission we would strongly recommend that a similar condition to condition 16 for S/0029/11/FL be put in place to deal with noise.
3. This should cover the adoption of a noise attenuation and insulation scheme to protect future occupants from both railway noise and noise from the adjacent industrial site currently occupied by Eden Farm Ltd. This should include a ventilation system to allow acceptable internal noise levels by keeping windows shut. However, we hope that SCDC will be able to resolve the problem of night noise using all their powers.”

#### **Update to paragraph number 26 – Noise Impact Statement**

4. The applicant has submitted a noise report by Noise Advisory Service Acoustic Consultants, dated 23 September 2013, which concludes the following:
5. “Calculations based on the measured noise level data have shown that satisfactory room levels in the proposed dwellings on the site can be achieved at night with conventional building techniques and materials. For the bedrooms it may be desirable to install mechanical ventilation to avoid having to open the windows for ventilation. A boundary fence to

the site would be beneficial in reducing the noise exposure of the properties and the communal area, gardens etc.”

### **Officers View**

6. The Council’s Environmental Services has considered the submitted noise report and objects on the grounds that the information supplied is not sufficient to adequately assess the likely impacts that will be experienced by future occupiers of the new units. Due to the flaws and consequential inaccuracies in this report (outlined below) there is no option but **to maintain the recommendation of refusal at this time**. The reasons for this are highlighted below:
- a) It was noted that the on-site noise measurements were only taken over 1 night. This will only give a very restricted view of the noise environment that exists at this location. Information received by this department from local residents suggests the levels of noise fluctuate from day to day and one nights’ worth of readings is not sufficient to accurately represent noise levels experienced.
  - b) The measurements were taken during the night-time period i.e. 11pm to 7am and it is accepted that this is the most sensitive time however, the evening period between 7pm and 11pm has not been assessed, which is the time people could realistically be using outside areas during the summer months. The report states noise is only emitted from the industrial site at night. It is emitted during the day as well but is not as intrusive due to working patterns.
  - c) The LAeq s measured were captured over 1 hour periods on the night of the survey. The SCDC Design Guide SPD requires that the measurements are taken in accordance with the principles of BS 4142 and this requires LAeq s being measured over a 5 minute period at night. A 1 hour period will “even out” any impact type noise. This is especially important as the report appears to assume the refrigerated units on the delivery vehicles are the only source of noise and noise from yard activities and outside plant etc. is not taken into account. These noise sources are likely to include forklift truck movements, loading and unloading operations involving the use of wooden pallets.
  - d) Similarly the LA90 was taken over a 15min period rather than 5 mins although this may have less effect on the results. The position the measurements were taken is unclear from the report and a map detailing the location would be of help. The reason being is that BS4142 relates to noise levels predicted at the façade of the nearest noise sensitive premises. There does not seem to be any measurements or predictions as to the noise levels at the façade of the proposed development in the appropriate formats i.e. LAeq(5mins) during the night-time period and LAeq (1 hour) during the day.
  - e) During the day time period the noise levels should relate to the boundary of the property in order to protect outside areas i.e. gardens of the residential premises.
  - f) The results given in the report exclude the +5dB correction for characteristics of the noise source. The +5db correction should be added

as the noise is tonal and yard activities etc. produce intermittent and impulse noise. If this correction is added then the difference between background and source now becomes 11dB rather than the 6dB quoted. In terms of BS4142 this equates to a situation where complaints are highly likely.

- g) There is reference in the report to the inverse square law to predict a drop-off in noise levels with increasing distance. This only works when the noise is a point source under free field conditions. When the refrigerated vehicles are running in a line the situation becomes a "line source" and this inverse square law does not hold true.
- h) The buildings will also create reflections and reverberant fields that have not been represented by appropriate noise prediction software.
- i) Other considerations have not taken into account if the occupiers wish to have their bedroom windows open, particularly during the summer months, when noise levels from the industrial site are likely to be higher.
- j) The suggested noise attenuation due to the noise barrier states a reduction in levels of 5dB and 2Db whereas the measured results are in dB(A)

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