

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a special meeting of the Council held on
Tuesday, 15 March 2005 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor RF Bryant – Chairman
Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Dr DR Bard, RE Barrett, JD Batchelor, JP Chatfield, Mrs PS Corney, SM Edwards, Mrs A Elsby, R Hall, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs SA Hatton, Dr JA Heap, Mrs EM Heazell, Mrs CA Hunt, Mrs HF Kember, SGM Kindersley, RMA Manning, RB Martlew, MJ Mason, DC McCraith, Mrs DP Roberts, NJ Scarr, Mrs GJ Smith, Mrs HM Smith, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, JH Stewart, RT Summerfield, JF Williams, Dr JR Williamson, TJ Wotherspoon and NIC Wright

Officers: Jonathan Dixon Senior Planning Policy Officer (Economic Development)
Caroline Hunt Principal Planning Policy Officer (Housing)
David Hussell Development Services Director
Keith Miles Planning Policy Manager
Michael Monk Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Claire Spencer Senior Planning Policy Officer (Transport)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors BR Burling, NN Cathcart, Mrs J Dixon, Mrs SJO Doggett, JA Hockney, Mrs JA Muncey, CR Nightingale, Dr JPR Orme, EJ Pateman, A Riley, J Shepperson, RJ Turner, Dr SEK van de Ven, Mrs BE Waters and DALG Wherrell.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

In response to a point of order raised by Councillor Mason, the Chairman stated that the process for discussing the LDF had been agreed by Council and the process for receiving minutes had been agreed by himself as Chairman. Council reaffirmed the method chosen for examining the LDF and expressed its gratitude to officers for their extra work in accommodating Council's wishes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2005 were accepted as a correct record subject to the deletion of the second paragraph on page 5 under the heading "Histon and Impington".

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2005 were accepted as a correct record subject to inclusion of Councillor SA Harangozo in the list of Councillors who had given their apologies for this meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt declared a personal interest as a resident of Steeple Morden.

Councillor RMA Manning declared a personal interest as a resident of Willingham.

Councillor Dr DR Bard declared a personal interest, as his pension provider was the University Superannuation Scheme, one of the joint funders of the Monsanto site.

3. LDF - CORE STRATEGY AND RURAL CENTRES (DECISION ON DETAIL OF POLICIES AND PROPOSALS FOR THE DPD)

The Planning Policy Manager reminded members that the responses to representations to the Core Strategy and the approach to drafting the Core Strategy DPD, which would replace the Structure Plan, had been agreed at the Council meeting on 20th and 21st January. This meeting was to consider an emerging draft DPD in the light of those decisions. Council would be invited to agree the Core Strategy for publication at its meeting on 9th May.

Members were warned against being too prescriptive in the setting of policies and that they should be robust but flexible. It was recognised that the Development and Conservation Control Committee would have flexibility to make decisions on a case-by-case basis within the framework of the Core Strategy. It was also understood that it was unlikely that the Government would allow the inclusion of words such as “usually”, as these weakened policy statements and could lead to more appeals.

STRATEGY

Rural Strategy

The category of Minor Rural Centres was introduced to recognise that some villages that do not meet the tests to be Rural Centres nevertheless perform a role in providing services and facilities for a rural hinterland. The location of the village was a key-determining factor, for example Duxford was not considered a minor rural centre due to the proximity of Sawston. In recognition of the more limited service base, larger scale development was contingent on contributions towards their development or improvement.

Building of New Homes

The Planning Policy Manager stated that although the Structure Plan figure of 20,000 new homes was challenging, it was achievable through major new developments and housing in villages compatible with their category.

It was noted that the Core Strategy aimed to ensure only sustainable development through the location, form and design of buildings. The number of houses coming forward would be reviewed in the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report required under the new system. Cambridgeshire Horizons’ role was to ensure implementation of the development strategy and the Council was working in partnership with them to that end.

Amendments

It was agreed that all references to “motor car” should be abbreviated to “car”.

The first sentence of paragraph 2.35 was amended to read: “Group villages are generally less sustainable locations for new development than Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, having fewer services ...”

The final sentence of paragraph 2.35 was shortened to read “All Group Villages have at least a primary school and limited development will help maintain remaining services and facilities and provide for affordable housing to meet local needs.”

Council **AGREED** the Strategy Section

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Village Frameworks

A number of members asserted that some of the village framework boundaries needed to be amended to address anomalies. Officer reminded Members that the village

frameworks had been subject to considerable scrutiny including two Local Plan Inquiries and that Council had agreed at its meeting on 20/21 January 2005 to roll forward the frameworks set out in the Local Plan 2004.

It was agreed that the Chairman of Council should send a letter to the County Council seeking a change in the policy to allow the introduction of 30 mile an hour speed limits in the smaller settlements outside village frameworks.

Amendment

Under Policy DP/8 Village Frameworks the word "state" was added to point 1 after the word "present".

Council **AGREED** the Development Principles.

GREEN BELT

Concern was expressed regarding the extension of the Green Belt around Northstowe without formal consultation with the parish councils of Over, Willingham, Rampton and Cottenham. It was proposed that these parish councils be consulted before a final decision on the Green Belt boundary was made at the meeting on 9th May.

Council

AGREED to formally consult with the parishes of Over, Willingham, Rampton and Cottenham regarding the proposed extension of the Green Belt around Northstowe as set out in the maps in Appendix 2 of the report. The results of the consultation would then inform the decision to be taken by Council on 9th May 2005.

It was understood that the Northstowe Green Belt would be discussed at the Council meeting on 23rd March as part of the debate on the Northstowe Area Action Plan.

Council **AGREED** the Green Belt policies and boundaries subject to the above.

HOUSING

The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Housing) advised that the Government had published new guidance for consultation which recommended that housing mix in terms of bedroom sizes be left to the market but that authorities should plan for household composition in their areas. Concern was expressed at the failure of the market to build houses to meet the local demands of the residents. It was agreed to pursue a policy on market housing mix given the findings of the Housing Needs Survey.

It was understood a definition of key worker would be provided at the Council meeting on 9th May, in a glossary of terms. Concern was expressed at the proposals for key worker housing as it appeared that there was low demand from key workers for these houses.

It was suggested that horsiculture could be appropriate in the Green Belt and covered by incorporating into the same policy as policy HG/8, dwelling to support a rural-based enterprise. Officers asked to consider whether horsiculture was an appropriate use of the Green Belt in the light of revised PPS7.

Council **AGREED** the Housing policies.

ECONOMY AND TOURISM

The Senior Planning Officer (Economic Policy) presented this item.

Clusters

It was suggested that the Council should encourage small-scale industries to employ local residents who did not necessarily have exceptional scientific or ICT skills. However, it was understood that the Council needed to be consistent with the Structure Plan policy of selective management of employment. It was acknowledged that clusters are of great importance to the success of not only the local, but also the regional and national economy. It was noted that policy EM/3 point 7 addressed the issue of other clusters as they emerged.

In response to concern that policy EM/8 regarding the conversion of rural buildings could have a negative impact on the countryside, the Senior Planning Policy Officer (Economic Development) stated that the policy had clauses that which would minimise the impact of such conversions on the surrounding countryside, and that it must be read alongside the development principles policies.

Council **AGREED** the Economy and Tourism policies.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Council **AGREED** the Services and Facilities policies

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) explained that the 10% reduction in CO₂ emissions compared with minimum Building Regulation requirements was a target that developers would be encouraged to meet rather than it being a requirement, responding to GO - East representations that the planning system could not seek to change requirements of other legislation.

Drainage

The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) agreed to consider rewording the last sentence of paragraph 8.41 to clarify that the applicant should consult statutory undertakers including any internal Drainage Board about their proposals.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer (Economic Development) agreed to amend paragraph 8.44 to include a reference to the relevant flood maps provided by the Environment Agency.

On page 87, paragraph 8.8, the words "and the objectives of the Cambridge Green Belt" were removed from the second sentence, as it was agreed that all the natural landscape of the District was important.

Council **AGREED** the Natural Environment policies subject to the above.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Adverts and Signage

Members expressed concern regarding the visual impact of advertisements and it was recognised that enforcement of regulations was often slow, as the Council were required to operate within the legal process.

Various concerns were expressed regarding signage in villages. The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) advised that if members are concerned about a new sign in a Conservation Area they should contact the Conservation Section.

Historic Buildings

Concern was expressed that developers sometimes deliberately damage historic buildings and then apply for their demolition. This was a matter for the Conservation Section.

Council **AGREED** the Cultural Heritage policies.

TRAVEL

It was understood that applicants would be required to provide a travel to work plan.

It was noted that the current Supplementary Planning Guidance for Area Transport Plans will be replaced by the planning obligations Supplementary Planning Document.

Members agreed the importance that alternatives to car travel be sought and questioned whether it would be possible to include targets for modal split.

Council **AGREED** the Travel policies

APPENDIX 1: CAR PARKING STANDARDS

It was understood that the car parking standards were clear regarding the maximum amount of parking that should be provided but no clear statement regarding the minimum amount of parking. The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) noted that Government guidance did not any longer specify any minimum standards.

Amendments

It was agreed to remove the first word, "Generally", from the beginning of paragraph 8 on page 122.

Council **AGREED** the car parking standards.

APPENDIX 2: CYCLING STANDARDS

It was suggested that the Council should ensure that there are adequate facilities for residents who cycle to park and ride sites.

Council **AGREED** the cycling standards.

SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES

Housing Allocations

Members were advised that the figures in the table on pages 132 and 133 were related to March 2004, the latest information available.

Flood Maps

Concern was raised about the accuracy of the flood risk maps produced by the Environment Agency. It was noted that the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which would be presented to the Land Drainage Advisory Group, would address this.

Linton Village Framework

Members were advised that it would be inappropriate to redraw the village framework to include an area south of the A1307 as policies had consistently sought to restrict development here as it was severed by the A1307 from the facilities in the village.

Council **AGREED** to include the Site Specific Policies.

APPENDIX 2

Northstowe Area Action Plan

On behalf of the local member for Longstanton, Councillor Mrs DP Roberts stated that map 78, the Area Action Plan for Northstowe, had caused concern for Longstanton residents, as it appeared to show a transfer of 90% of parish land. She suggested that this could mean that Longstanton would lose its identity. The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) advised no changes were proposed to the extent of Longstanton Parish, which is not a planning matter, and that all the proposals maps, including those for the Area Action Plan and village insets, needed to be read together to see the overall picture. Officers were suggesting that Longstanton Inset Plan should be discussed alongside the Northstowe Area Action Plan at the Council meeting on 23rd March 2005. The Area Action Plan coverage had to include all land that was relevant to the proposals for Northstowe including Green Separation. It was suggested that in this circumstance it would have been useful if the site boundary for Northstowe had been included in the Longstanton map. However, officers advised that the LDF Regulations did not allow proposals to be shown on more than one proposals map.

Sawston Village Framework

Councillor Bard proposed and Councillor Mrs Hatton seconded that the village framework for Sawston be amended to include a small triangle of land next to the grounds of Sawston Hall, which he asserted was an anomaly and was suffering from a litter problem. It was understood that the parish council supported this amendment. However, it was suggested that there were a number of other areas in the District where there were parcels of undeveloped land adjacent to the framework and to amend this village framework could set a dangerous precedent of "rounding-off" elsewhere, and that in this case the land was also included in the Green Belt and a Conservation Area. The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) advised that a litter problem should not be taken into account in determining the village framework.

A vote was taken and by 18 votes against, 9 in favour and 1 abstention

Council

REJECTED the proposed amendment to the Sawston village framework.

Histon and Impington

Councillor Mason expressed his concern regarding the employment/ housing balance with regard to a planning application on the land of the old Chivers factory. He also stated that action was required to ensure that land on the recreation ground was protected and he suggested that the PVAA at Histon infant school was not allocated on the map. The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) agreed to check whether the boundary of the PVAA at Histon infant school needed to be amended on the inset map and to consider whether it was appropriate to allocate a recreation ground that already existed.

Thriplow Village Framework

It was understood that Councillor Quinlan wanted Thriplow's village framework to be amended to include a "brownfield" silo site on the edge of the village. Council agreed

with the officer recommendation to reject this proposal.

The Council **AGREED** the maps in appendix 2.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR FURTHER AMENDMENTS

Council **AGREED** to delegate responsibility for agreeing minor amendments to the Core Strategy to the Planning Director and the portfolio holder for Planning and Economic Development.

It was understood that minor grammatical and editorial corrections, which members had noted, should be passed to the officers.

The Meeting ended at 3.50 p.m.
