

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

25 February 2015

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

Application Number:	S/0038/15/RM
Parish(es):	Longstanton
Proposal:	Reserved matters application for the Hatton's Road ponds strategic engineering works.
Site address:	Agricultural land south of Hatton's Road, Longstanton – grid reference Easting 538993 Northing 265520
Applicant(s):	Gallagher Longstanton Ltd.
Recommendation:	That the application is Approved
Key material considerations:	The effect on the landscape and ecological mitigation and enhancement proposals having regard to the need to maintain the local drainage system and flood attenuation.
Committee Site Visit:	None
Departure Application:	No
Presenting Officer:	Ian Howes, Principal Urban Designer
Application brought to Committee because:	The application is of significant local interest to members and of potential benefit and is required to be considered by members under the delegation scheme,
Date by which decision due:	10 April 2015

Executive Summary

- 1 This Reserved Matters and landscaping details application follows from the approval of the overall earthworks for Phase 1 and the approved Hattons Road ponds strategic engineering element. This is designed to create the essential ponds that will attenuate water and minimise the likelihood of localised flooding in Longstanton, approximately 1km away to the north. The engineering and drainage details, general layout, access, landscaping and creation of ecological habitats for a range of plant and fauna, including some protected species and re-locations from phase 1' were discussed extensively with officers, the Technical Liaison Group and CCC highways before submission. It is currently intended that the District Council will take on the maintenance.

Planning History

- 2 S/0388/12/OL Outline planning application for phase 1 of Northstowe comprising up to

1,500 dwellings; a primary school; a mixed-use local centre (including a community building, and provision for non-residential institutions, financial and professional services, shops, cafes and restaurants, drinking establishments, and hot food take-away); leisure, community, residential institutions, cultural, health, and employment provision (business, general industry and storage & distribution) including a household recycling centre; formal and informal recreational space and landscaped areas; and infrastructure works including site re-profiling and associated drainage works, foul and surface water pumping stations, *two flood attenuation ponds on land east of Hattons Road*; and associated works including the demolition of existing buildings and structures. Approved 22 April 2014.

- 3 S/1116/14/DC Discharge of Conditions 26 (programme of delivery of off-site flood mitigation works approved 10th September 2014,
- 4 S/1654/14/RM Reserved matters in relation to earthworks pertaining to outline planning application S/0388/12/OL for phase 1 of Northstowe. Approved 29 October 2014.

Planning Policies

- 5 *National Planning Policy Framework*

Local Development Framework

Northstowe Area Action Plan DPD, July 2007:

- NS/1 The Vision for Northstowe
- NS/2 Development Principles
- Objective D7/d Ecology and biodiversity
- Objective D8/c biodiversity value of green spaces
- Objective D11/.e – fen edge character
- NS/12 water as a defining characteristic
- NS/17 New Biodiversity Features
- NS/21 Land Drainage, Water Conservation, Foul Drainage and Sewage Disposal

Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, 2007:

- NE/4 Landscape Character Areas
- NE/6 Biodiversity
- NE/8 Groundwater
- NE/9 Water and Drainage Infrastructure
- NE/11 Flood Risk

Supplementary Planning Documents:

- Trees & Development Sites, 2009
- Biodiversity, 2009

Draft Local Plan submitted March 2014 (incl. landscape and biodiversity policies)

Consultation

- 6 Consultation notifications were sent to Longstanton Parish Council, Willingham Parish Council Oakington Parish Council, neighbours within 200m of the site, the Internal Drainage Board, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency, together with internal consultants, the Drainage Manager, the Landscape Officer, the Ecology Officer.

- 7 Longstanton Parish Council supports the proposal but requests that life belts be provided within the site in case of emergency. This request has been discussed with the applicant who indicated that they will consider this matter favourably.
- 8 Willingham Parish Council has no objections. Oakington and Westwick Parish Council has no objections. The Old West Internal Drainage Board has no objections
- 9 The Landscape and Ecology Officers requested amendments to improve the ecological potential. The agreed amendments are:
- to locate blocks of planting around the perimeter in order to better reflect the local landscape character and to create a substantial area of open grassland habitat for farmland bird species;
 - to retain the existing drainage channel that will no longer be used to convey water to create another habitat type
 - to provide ridge and furrow features in the grassland for ecological variety.
 - to vary to the proposed plant selection to better reflect the local species mix.

These proposals were discussed with the applicant who has agreed to amend the proposals accordingly.

- 10 A detailed CEMP will be prepared prior to the commencement of works, following on from the site-wide CEMP approved on 16th May 2014.
- 11 Should any other views be expressed on the application, they will be reported verbally to members at the Committee.

Representations

- 12 None received to date.

Planning Assessment

- 13 The proposals conform to the framework of adopted and emerging policies and meet several objectives in the NAAP and local plan.
- 14 The flood alleviation and engineering principles in relation to the Hatton's Road Ponds have been approved previously, as set out above in the Planning History. Located upstream of Longstanton, the ponds are designed to hold the water and to permit a gentle release into Longstanton Brook. This application relates to the final land form and planting of the site.
- 15 The ecological features are in accordance with the Ecological Management Plan and have led the landscape design. They especially help to mitigate and adverse ecological effects of the development on the phase 1 site. Particular features include: a network of different habitats for nesting birds and reptiles, and for bat foraging; wetland and meadow grass seeding; four hibernacula for reptiles; The diversion of the brook gives rise to the opportunity for incorporating vertical banks with refuges and ledges for water voles; a bird box mounted on a pole for barn owls; and a kingfisher bank.
- 16 Two new accesses are proposed together with the closure of the existing agricultural access and the building of a replacement one (the subject of a planning application presented to NJDCC concurrently). The access points enable maintenance and meet County standard requirements and do not compromise the safety of road users.

Internal to the site are two vehicular circulations for access and overall management purposes

- 17 Amendments have been proposed by the Longstanton Parish Council, the Ecology Officer and the Landscape Officer in the interests of improving site safety and ecological diversity. The applicant agreed to amend the proposals accordingly

Recommendation

- 18 Officers recommend that the Committee approve the application, with a condition to ensure the development is built in accordance with the approved plans.

It is also recommended than informative is added to ensure that nesting birds are not disturbed during the nesting season.

Background Papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (Delete as appropriate)
- Northstowe Area Action Plan, 2007
- Northstowe, Development Framework Document, 2012
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings

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