

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group held on
Wednesday, 8 June 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

| | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Councillors: | SJ Agnew | NN Cathcart |
| | Mrs SJO Doggett | Mrs A Elsby |
| | Dr JA Heap | Mrs CA Hunt |
| | Dr JPR Orme | Mrs DSK Spink MBE |
| | JH Stewart | RJ Turner |
| | Dr JR Williamson | NIC Wright |

and Councillor Mrs JM Healey (Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts (Community Planning Portfolio Holder) was in attendance, by invitation.

There were no apologies for absence.

**Councillor Mrs JM Healey
in the Chair.**

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Dr JPR Orme nominated Councillor SJ Agnew as Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Group. This was seconded by Councillor Dr J Williamson and, there being no further nominations, it was

RESOLVED That Councillor SJ Agnew be elected Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Group for the coming year.

Councillor SJ Agnew took the Chair and welcomed Councillors Mrs S Doggett and Mrs DSK Spink as new members of the Conservation Advisory Group. Those present agreed to increase to accommodate all those who had expressed to the Cabinet their interest in serving on the Conservation Advisory Group.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Dr JA Heap nominated Councillor NN Cathcart as Vice-Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Group. This was seconded generally and, there being no further nominations, it was

RESOLVED That Councillor NN Cathcart be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Group for the coming year.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors NN Cathcart and Dr J Williamson declared personal interests in Minute no. 7 as Trustees of the Farmland Museum. The Conservation Advisory Group agreed that they should remain in the room during the course of the debate on that issue.

Councillor Mrs A Elsby declared a personal interest in Minute no. 11 (St Denis Church) as a local Member.

Rob Mungovan, Ecology Officer, declared a personal interest in Minute no. 8 (River Shep Partnership Project) as an Honorary member of the Friends of the River Shep.

4. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 APRIL 2005.

The Conservation Advisory Group authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2005. Members noted that the revised wording of Minute no. 6 therein (South Cambs' Natural Heritage Awards 2004-05) had been circulated subsequent to preparation of the agenda.

In connection with Minute no. 1 (Cambridge Green Belt Project), the Chairman distributed copies of a leaflet promoting the Roman Road.

In connection with Minute no. 6 (South Cambs' Natural Heritage Awards 2004-05), the Chairman highlighted the list of winners and confirmed that awards would be presented at a formal ceremony on Tuesday 12th July 2005.

In connection with Minute no. 7 (South Cambs' Built Heritage Awards 2005-06), the Conservation Manager updated Members about arrangements being made. The Chairman encouraged local Members to help identify potential entrants from within their wards.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF A "GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY" FOR THE CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the proposed development of a "Green Infrastructure Strategy" for the Cambridgeshire sub-region.

The Conservation Manager highlighted the need to encourage the provision of Green infrastructure as part of proposed development, thus enabling Section 106 contributions to be channelled into providing other types of infrastructure. He added that ongoing revenue costs would be negligible from the Council's point of view as management would be undertaken by outside bodies.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder support the development of the proposed "Green Infrastructure Strategy", and allocate the unexpended revenue commitment towards a survey of watercourses, under the budget for Ecological Support Services, and support funding of the project, subject to leverage of other partnership funding and completion during 2005/06.

6. GOG MAGOG COUNTRYSIDE PROJECT - IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the countryside access project being developed under the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy for the sub-region.

The Cambridge Preservation Society's Chief Executive gave a PowerPoint presentation to Members.

Members discussed the following points:

- The Project's relationship to, and implications for, the Wandlebury Country Park and surrounding villages and public rights of way
- The risk associated with not being able to acquire land ownership, given that compulsory purchase was not seen as an option at this stage

Referring to Coton Country Park, Members expressed an interest in visiting the site in order to see how matters had developed there.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder

- (1) confirm South Cambridgeshire District Council's support for the development of the Project, thus facilitating the funding bid under the second round of the Growth Area Delivery Grant scheme (GADG II), to be completed as part of the development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy; and
- (2) in the event that GADG II funding is awarded for the Project, considers appropriate funding, subject to resource availability, for subsequent development of the Project.

7. THE FARMLAND MUSEUM AND DENNY ABBEY

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a progress report on the development scheme initiated by the Community Development Portfolio Holder and the then Conservation Portfolio Holder in 2003-04.

The Curator of the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey gave a PowerPoint presentation to Members.

There was significant landowner support for this initiative.

In the context of visitor numbers since 1997, Members welcomed proposals to further improve access to the site, especially by bicycle.

The Conservation Manager undertook to determine the timescale for providing a bridge across the river at Upware.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder acting jointly with the Community Development Portfolio Holder

- (1) continue to support the on-going partnership, development programme at the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey, and invite the Curator to present the results of the feasibility study to their respective Portfolio Holder meetings by the end of December 2005; and
- (2) support the potential of the museum to be developed as a 'countryside gateway' within the proposed Green Infrastructure Strategy.

8. RIVER SHEP PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the habitat improvement work undertaken on the River Shep.

The Ecology Officer gave a PowerPoint presentation to Members, highlighting the scope for future partnership working on this demonstration, countryside access and biodiversity enhancement project.

The following points were raised:

- The importance of the Project in helping to develop greater understanding of the environmental conditions along the river, and in motivating adjacent landowners to take responsibility for its preservation
- The invaluable role played by the District Council's Land Drainage team

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder

- (1) authorise officers to continue development work with local groups in order to progress river enhancement demonstration projects during 2005-06; and
- (2) agrees, in principle, to re-allocate funding of £5,000 from the budget for *Ecological Support Services*, previously authorised by the former Conservation Committee for works to Wilbraham New Cut, in order to support the proposed demonstration project on the River Shep, subject to confirmation partnership funding from the Environment Agency and other suitable bodies,

9. PARISH TREE INITIATIVE 2005-06

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report seeking approval to launch the pilot Parish Tree Initiative 2005-06, thus enabling South Cambridgeshire District Council to support Parish Council initiatives to enhance selected sites with tree planting.

The Trees and Landscape Officer gave a PowerPoint presentation to Members.

Officers acknowledged the need for clear criteria for allocating trees to parishes. The Chairman suggested that one such condition should be that there was strong evidence that the local community would involve itself in the future maintenance of any trees planted by virtue of the scheme.

Provision had been made for those parish councils that did not themselves own any land.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder agrees to launch formally the Parish Tree Initiative during 2005-06 on the basis of the criteria set out in paragraph 8 of the Conservation Manager's report.

10. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report suggesting that a small 'Task and Finish' Sub-Group be established to meet with officers in order to review emerging drafts for new Conservation Area Appraisals over the coming year.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RESOLVED** to establish a 'Task and Finish' Sub-Group consisting of Councillors NN Cathcart, Mrs A Elsby, Dr JPR Orme and RJ Turner, with Councillor SJ Agnew acting as substitute for any of them, such Sub-Group meeting with officers and the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder prior to submitting the Appraisals to public consultation and reporting the results therefrom to the Conservation Advisory Group for consideration.

11. ST. DENIS CHURCH, EAST HATLEY

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the recent tender process, seeking support for letting a contract.

The Conservation Manager circulated details of the three Tenders received. The Council's Project Architects had recommended that the lowest tender be accepted in the cases of both a corrugated iron roof and clay tile roof. After taking into account the grant on offer from English Heritage, the Council would need to find £48,848 should repairs proceed on the basis of a corrugated iron roof, or £87,711.49p otherwise.

Budgetary provision had already been made by the Council. The Conservation Manager added that the English Heritage grant was extremely generous, and no further funds would be made available. At its meeting on 9th June, the Cabinet would have to decide on how to proceed because the grant offer was time limited. The Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder observed that the only alternative to spending this money was to settle for ongoing revenue costs that could amount to about £7,000 a year. Members of the Conservation Advisory Group expressed a strong preference for clay tiles, agreeing with the Conservation Manager that this would greatly increase demand should the Council wish to transfer the building in the future. It was also noted that Hatley Parish Council had offered to contribute to the costs only if clay tiles were used.

The Conservation Manager informed Members that the Council could not demolish the Church, without the consent of English Heritage, because it was Grade II listed. Furthermore, it would be difficult to argue that point, since English Heritage had, by offering such a grant, indicated its view that the building should be repaired. In relation to the potential demands on the Council's budget, a Member referred to the possible implications should further buildings need financial support.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder seek Cabinet authorisation to let a contract to implement first phase repair works at St. Denis Church, East Hatley, subject to satisfactory tender returns and funded by grant support from English Heritage and funding from the Historic Buildings Preservation Fund.

12. BUILDINGS AT RISK - MONITORING REPORT

The Conservation Advisory Group **NOTED** a six-monthly monitoring report on historic buildings at risk.

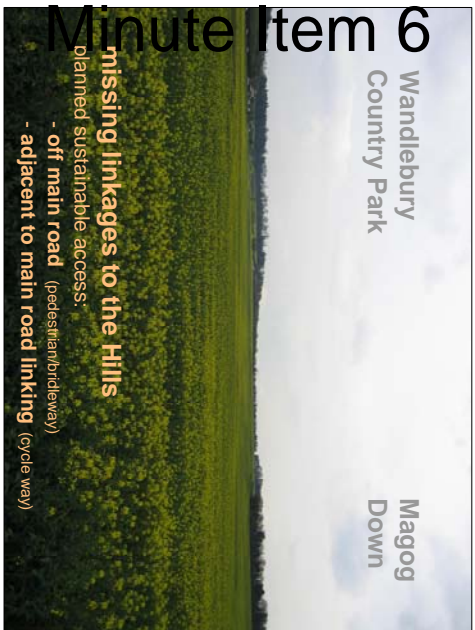
It was agreed that local Members should be advised at the earliest opportunity when the Council was considering options for protecting such buildings in their wards.

13. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group would be held on Wednesday 20th July 2005.

The Meeting ended at 1.10 p.m.

• GOG MAGOG COUNTRYSIDE PROJECT - SOUTH EAST OF CAMBRIDGE • Context & Proposals •



Wandlebury
Country Park

Magog
Down

Minute Item 6

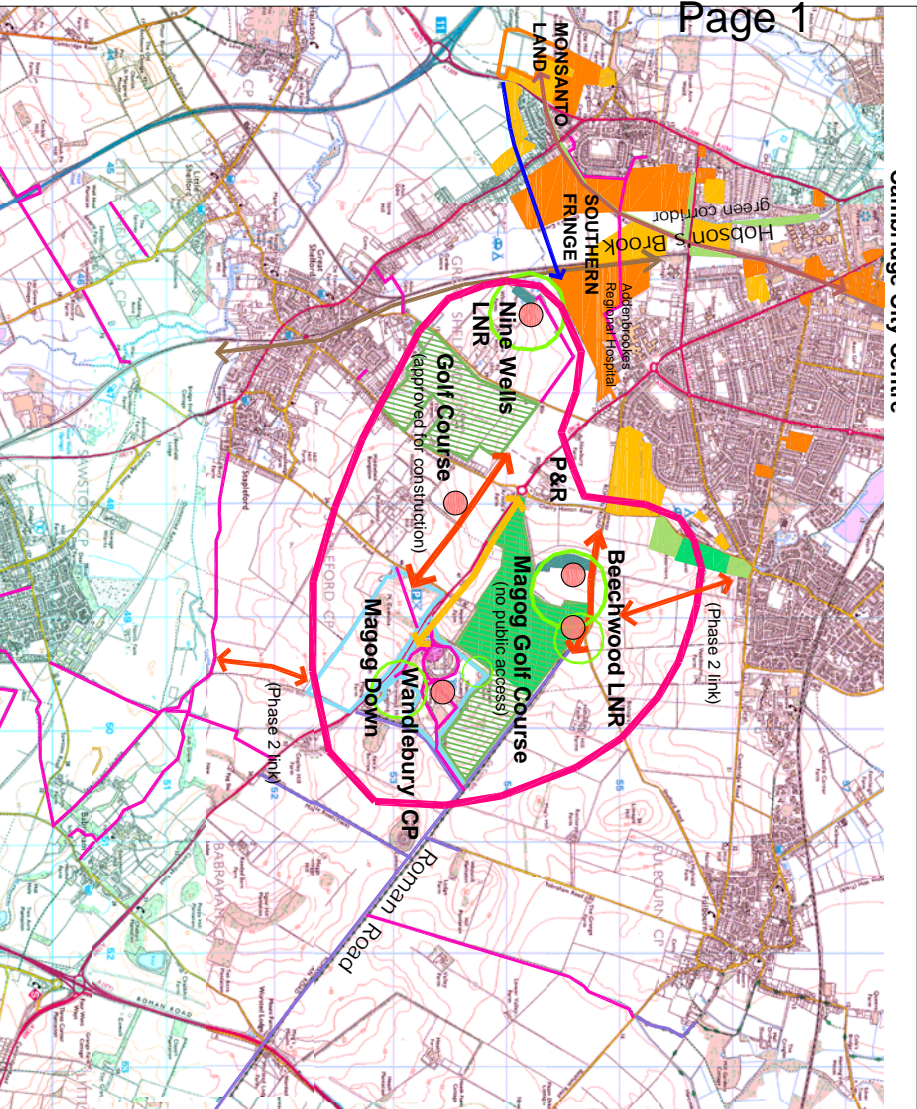
missing linkages to the Hills
planned sustainable access:
- off main road (pedestrian/bridleway)
- adjacent to main road linking (cycle way)

The Gog Magog Hills

History - A complex history of ancient settlements and the impact of people on the landscape over the centuries is particularly apparent in this part of the County. Iron Age hill fort, Roman roads, Anglo-Saxon earthworks etc amongst modern roads and development are visible - within and adjacent to the project site.

Wildlife - The chalk influenced hills are rich in spectacular wildlife. Ecological restoration work is undertaken in isolated areas. Chalk grassland sites and woodlands are the area's key components.

People - In recent decades some areas of the Gog Magog Hills have been secured for recreation and conservation through the enthusiasm, support and subsequent management by local charities (Cambridge Preservation Society, Wildlife Trust, Magog Trust etc.). Dramatic views to the Fens (Ely) and Cambridge are afforded from some vantage points. Access to the hills without car/bus is difficult.

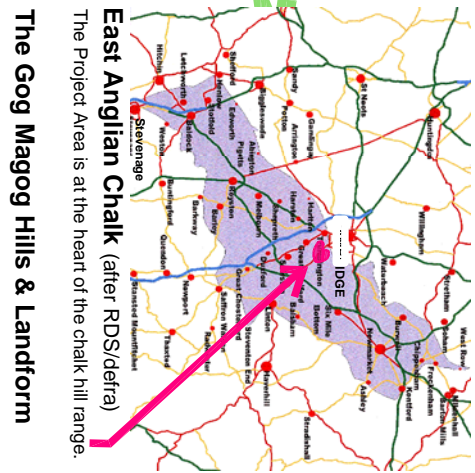


Existing / In Planning

- Urban Extensions (Major Areas of Change & other Proposal Sites/Housing Areas)
- Omission Sites (late submissions - Local Plan Review Spring 2005)
- New Access Road (proposed)
- Public Right of Way (existing)
- Sustrans Cycle Route (proposal)
- Golf Course (existing & proposed with planning approval)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Wildlife Sites (County & City Council designations)
- Wandlebury Country Park & Magog Down (owned and managed by the Cambridge Preservation Society and Magog Trust respectively)

PROPOSALS - Phase 1

- **Missing Linkages & Land Acquisition** (proposed sustainable access linking with existing PROW and Permissive Paths (later not shown on plan); new pedestrian/bridleway routes - Public Right of Ways)
- **Missing Linkages & Land Acquisition** (proposed sustainable cycleway link connecting with adjacent existing infrastructure)
- **Additional Recreational/Green Space & Land Acquisition** (Optional Sites: new open access; broad access corridors/buffer landscapes; wildlife habitats etc)
- **Enhanced Interpretation** (on site - site information and directional signage, including public consultations; active volunteer event programme)
- **PROJECT AREA - Phase 1** (ODPM Growth Area Fund - Bid Spring 2005)



East Anglian Chalk (after RDS/defra)

The Project Area is at the heart of the chalk hill range.

The Gog Magog Hills & Landform

| | | |
|----------|-----------|--|
| Revision | Date | Detail |
| A + B | for Magog | Annotation changes; changes to graphics; revised boundaries of sites etc |

Drawn by: CG

Scale: as shown

Date: April 2005

Site: The Gog Magog Countryside Project

Drawing: Context & Proposals

ODPM Growth Areas Fund 2006 to 2008

Dwg no: GOGS - 12 B

Revision: B

© Image produced from Ordnance Survey Geo-arming service. Images reproduced with kind permission of Ordnance Survey. Grid reference at centre - TL 463 542 GB 046

