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24 October 2006

To: Chairman – Councillor NIC Wright  
Vice-Chairman – Councillor SGM Kindersley  
All Members of the Planning Committee

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **PLANNING COMMITTEE**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, FIRST FLOOR** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **WEDNESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2006** at **10.00 a.m.**

Yours faithfully  
**GJ HARLOCK**  
Chief Executive

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## AGENDA

*Members should declare any interests immediately prior to the relevant item on the agenda.*

*Should Members wish to declare an interest in an item discussed after they have left the meeting, and wish also that that declaration be recorded in the Minutes, they should make their declarations clear to the Committee. (Members need only declare an interest in circumstances where there is an item on the agenda that may cause a conflict of interest.)*

	<b>PAGES</b>
<b>PROCEDURAL ITEMS</b>	
1. <b>Apologies</b>	
2. <b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2006 as a correct record. The Minutes can be viewed on the Council's website.	
<b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</b>	
3. <b>S/0450/06/F - Meldreth (Rear of Communal Room, Adj 23 Elin Way)</b>	<b>1 - 4</b>
4. <b>S/1662/06/F – Shepreth (Land Adjacent 20 Angle Lane, Shepreth)</b>	<b>5 - 10</b>
5. <b>S/1551/06/O – Histon (39 Home Close)</b>	<b>11 - 14</b>
6. <b>S/1752/06/F – Fowlmere (30 Pipers Close)</b>	<b>15 - 18</b>
7. <b>S/2423/06/F - Stapleford (12 Priams Way)</b>	<b>19 - 22</b>

- |        |                                                                                                                                                                                     |         |
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| 8.     | <b>S/0559/06/O – Willingham (Land Rear of 2 Short Lane and Adjacent 23 Long Lane)</b><br>In the interests of sustainability, Appendix 2 is available on the Council's website only. | 23 - 32 |
| 9.     | <b>S/0375/06/F – Willingham (Plot 2, Longacres, The Paddocks, Meadow Road)</b>                                                                                                      | 33 - 38 |
| 10.    | <b>S/0402/06/F – Willingham (Plot 5 Meadow Road)</b>                                                                                                                                | 39 - 44 |
| 11.    | <b>S/6364/06/F – Cambourne (49 Broad Street, Great Cambourne)</b>                                                                                                                   | 45 - 54 |
| 12.    | <b>S/1371/92/O – Cambourne (Submission of Masterplan Revision 30)</b>                                                                                                               | 55 - 56 |
| 12 (a) | <b>Upper Cambourne allotments and village green car park development briefing document</b>                                                                                          | 57 - 62 |
| 13.    | <b>S/1772/06/F - Fulbourn (24 Geoffrey Bishop Avenue)</b>                                                                                                                           | 63 - 66 |

**OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION**

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| 14. | <b>Key Actions following receipt of the Majors' and CPA Audit Reports</b><br>In the interests of sustainability, Appendices 1 to 7 are available on the Council's website as part of the electronic version of the agenda. | 67 - 74 |
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**INFORMATION ITEMS**

The following items are included on the agenda for information and, in the main, are available in electronic format only (at [www.scamb.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.scamb.gov.uk/meetings) and in the Weekly Bulletin dated 25 October 2006). Should Members have any comments or questions regarding issues raised by the reports, they should contact the appropriate officer.

- |     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 15. | <b>Appeals against Planning Decisions and Enforcement Action</b><br>Summaries of Decisions of interest – none this month.<br><b>Contact officers:</b><br>Gareth Jones, Head of Planning – Tel: 01954 713155<br>John Koch, Appeals Manager (Special Projects) – Tel: 01954 713268 |
| 16. | <b>Appeal Statistics - 1 July 2006 to 30 September 2006</b><br><b>Contact officers:</b><br>Gareth Jones, Head of Planning – Tel: 01954 713155<br>John Koch, Appeals Manager (Special Projects) – Tel: 01954 713268                                                               |
| 17. | <b>Performance Criteria</b><br><b>Contact Officer:</b><br>David Rush - Development Control Quality Manager - Tel: (01954) 713153                                                                                                                                                 |
| 18. | <b>To receive the Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee meetings held on 4th August 2006 and 8th September 2006</b>                                                                                                                                                              |



## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL**

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### **Recording of Business**

Unless specifically authorised by resolution, no audio and / or visual or photographic recording in any format is allowed at any meeting of the Council, the executive (Cabinet), or any committee or sub-committee of the Council or the executive.

### **Banners / Placards / Etc.**

No member of the public shall be allowed to bring into or display at any Council meeting any banner, placard, poster or other similar item. The Chairman may require any such item to be removed.

### **Disturbance by Public**

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

### **Smoking**

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Vending machines and a water dispenser are available on the ground floor near the lifts. There shall be no food and drink in the Council Chamber.

### **Mobile Phones**

Please ensure that your phone is set on silent / vibrate mode during meetings.

## **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following statement must be proposed, seconded and voted upon. The officer presenting to report will provide the paragraph number(s).

“I propose that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item number ..... in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph ..... of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act.”

### **PLEASE NOTE!**

Some development control matters in this Agenda where the periods of consultation and representation may not have quite expired are reported to Committee to save time in the decision making process. Decisions on these applications will only be made at the end of the consultation periods after taking into account all material representations made within the full consultation period. The final decisions may be delegated to the Head of Planning Services.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director/Head of Planning Services

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**S/0450/06/F - MELDRETH****4 New Garages, Rear of Communal Room (Retrospective), Adj 23 Elin Way  
for South Cambridgeshire District Council****Recommendation: Approval****Date for Determination: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006**Members will visit this site on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2006**Site and Proposal**

1. This full application, as amended by drawings received on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2006, seeks retrospective consent for the erection of a block of four garages as part of the development of an area of land off Elin Way, Meldreth for a communal facilities building.
2. The garage building measures 10.5m x 5.2m with a ridge height of 3.9m. It is constructed of yellow/buff facing bricks with brown roofing tiles both of which are to match the communal room.
3. To the north west the building faces the rear of a pair of bungalows in Elin Way and to the north east and south east it adjoins the boundary of a semi-detached house in The Grange. The ground level of the site is slightly above that of the adjacent garden.
4. This application originally appeared on the May 2006 agenda but was withdrawn from the meeting pending the receipt of the amended drawings.

**Planning History**

5. Planning consent for the erection of a new communal facilities building was approved in December 2003 (**Ref: S/2289/03/F**). Whilst the submitted drawing showed the position of the block of concrete panelled and asbestos sloping roofed garages that existed on the site at the time no work to those buildings was indicated.

**Planning Policy**

6. **Policy P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ("The County Structure Plan") requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development which, amongst other criteria, responds to the local character of the built environment.

**Consultation**

7. **Meldreth Parish Council** "recommends refusal of this application. It also recommends a site meeting with Council Planning Officers to explore the feasibility of reducing the height of the roof to the original height." It raised no objection to the original submission.

## **Representations**

8. The occupier of 7 The Grange, to the south east of the site, questions how a planning application can be made after the event. It is considered that the four garages are an unnecessarily huge eyesore and a waste of resources. They cause a loss of a private view and look like a 'prison block' by the side of the fence of No 7 and are likely to result in a loss of value. These structures were not shown on the original drawings and it was thought that the area was going to be used as a car park therefore no objection was made. An objection is made to the current building and it is felt that a screen or evergreen plants should be provided as camouflage at the very least.
9. Following the submission of the amended drawings a further letter has been received from the occupier of 7 The Grange rehearsing the concern about the loss of view caused by the garages. The fact that the buildings were constructed without planning permission is "disgusting and the Council should not be allowed to get away with it." Screening has been mentioned in the past but nothing has come of it. A street light which was on the original plans has not materialised either. Consideration should be given to lowering the height of the garages as the height structure is a total waste of resources.

## **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

10. Although the application is retrospective, Members should consider it on planning merits alone based on the key issue, which is the visual impact of the garage block on the character of the area and the amenity of adjacent residents.
11. The garage building is set behind the pair of existing bungalows to the north and is screened to the west by the new communal facilities building. As a result the building has limited visual impact on the wider character of the area. The building replaces a line of garages (16 in total) and introduces a shallow pitch roof.
12. The garage building is to the south east of the rear gardens of the pair of bungalows in Elin Way. These bungalows have shallow gardens that are 5m deep and the building is located 7.5m from the boundary with these properties. Given that the ridge height of the building is only 3.9m I do not consider that it results in a material loss of amenity to the occupiers of the bungalows.
13. The garage building is located 1m of the north east and 0.2m of the south east boundaries of the rear garden of No 7 The Grange. The boundary is formed by a 1.8m high close-boarded fence. Some planting has been removed from this boundary during the development of the site to allow for access to the rear of the new communal facilities building. The new ground level within the site is raised above that of the adjacent garden and as a result more of the wall of the building is visible above the fence than might normally be expected to be the case. The garage building is located within 10m of the north west corner of the house itself, however I am of the view, that given its orientation to the north west and low ridge height, it does not have such an unreasonable adverse effect on the amenity of the occupiers of No 7 The Grange to justify a recommendation of refusal.
14. I note the request of Meldreth Parish Council that the feasibility of reducing the height of the roof to the original height be explored, but in my view Members first need to consider whether the proposal is acceptable in its current form or not. If not then alternative options will need to be explored.



15. There is limited opportunity, if any, to provide any planting between the garage block and boundary as requested by the occupiers of No 7 The Grange but a condition could be attached to any consent requiring the treatment of the boundary to be explored further and agreed between the parties.

## Recommendations

That retrospective consent is granted subject to the following conditions.

1. Standard Condition - 60 – Boundary Treatment – north east and south east – (Reason – To help screen the development from the adjoining property at 7 The Grange).

## Informatives

### Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity
  - Visual impact on the locality

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: S/0450/06/F & S/2289/03/F

**Contact Officer:** Paul Sexton – Area Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713255

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/1662/06/F - SHEPRETH****The Erection of a Dwelling and Garage at Land Adjacent 20 Angle Lane, Shepreth for David Reed Homes Limited****Recommendation: Approval****Date for Determination: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2006****Conservation Area****Site and Proposal**

1. The site, which is in the village framework and within the Conservation Area for Shepreth was once owned by the occupier of No.20 Angle Lane, which is a detached two-storey dwelling within a site approximately 0.4ha (1 acre) in size. Following the sale of this land, the site has been subdivided into 3 separate plots and the application site now comprises 2880m<sup>2</sup> (0.28ha) of land northeast of No.20 Angle Lane.
2. The site is bound by residential properties on its southern boundaries and Kenzies Coach Depot to the southwest. The site is accessed by a driveway from the southwest boundary from Angle Lane, a road that is rural in appearance resembling a bridleway with very little vehicular movement. The driveway to No 20 is located to the north west of the site frontage. Northwest of the site approval was granted for a pair of semi detached, two storey dwellings. Planning permission has also recently been granted for a detached dwelling on the land to the northwest of No 20 Angle Lane. To the south east is the rear garden of No. 18 Angle Lane and to the west a bungalow, that is to be demolished once the new dwellings to the north are completed.
3. The full planning application received on the 16th August 2006 as amended by drawings franked 28th September 2006, proposes the erection of a detached 4-bed dwelling house and an attached single garage. The dwelling is made up of three separate elements arranged in a 'T' shape. The highest part of the house measures 7.8 metres to the ridge and 4.8 metres to the eaves. The two-storey chalet element, located to the side, closest to the southeast boundary measures 7.5 metres to the ridge, hipped away from No.18. The eaves vary from the front and rear elevations and measure 4.2 at the rear and 2.5 at the front. The siting of the house is located approximately 1 metre from the southeast boundary and approximately 4 metres from the rear boundary of No. 20. The rear garden is extensive with the furthest point from the proposed dwelling measuring approximately 55 metres in length.

**Planning History**

4. Two applications for dwellings to the rear of 20 Angle Lane were refused in 1996, the second of which was dismissed at appeal in 1997, on the grounds that it would neither preserve nor enhance the character of the Conservation Area. A revised application for a smaller dwelling at the rear was approved in 1998 after the then applicant entered into a Section 106 Agreement that meant that either scheme to the rear of 20 Angle

Lane could be implemented but not both, to avoid what was considered at that time would be an over development of the site. An application submitted in 2003 renewed the permission for the detached house. The plots were later sold separately to developers with planning consent. The newly submitted scheme is different in design, albeit the siting and general footprint is very similar to that of the approved scheme.

## **Planning Policy**

### *Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003*

5. **Policy P7/6** 'Historic Built Environment' of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states Local Planning Authorities will protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
6. **P1/3** 'Sustainable Design in Built Development' of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 requires compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities that responds to the local character of the built environment.
7. **P5/5** permits small-scale housing developments in villages, taking into account, amongst others, the character of the village and its setting.

### *South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004*

8. **Policy HG10** 'Housing Mix and Design' sets out the requirements for residential developments to make the best use of sites in addition to be informed by the wider character and context of the surrounding area.
9. **Policy SE5** 'List of Infill Villages' sets out the requirements for new dwellings in infill village frameworks considering issues of impact upon character and amenities of the locality, amongst others.
10. **Policy EN30** 'Development in Conservation Areas' requires development within Conservation Areas to preserve or enhance character and appearance of such areas.
11. **Policy EN12** seeks to retain features and habitats of nature conservation value.

## **Consultation**

12. **Shepreth Parish Council** – Recommends that the application be refused. Concerns raised included sewers, the site being in a flood plain, too large for the plot, a query regarding footpaths and the private access road, dwelling is located too close the boundary and has asked that one house should be 'affordable'.
13. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – Has considered the application and the implications of the proposals in terms of noise and environmental pollution and has no objection subject to imposition of restricted working hours and contamination assessment conditions.
14. **The Conservation Manager** – Has no objections, all materials to be agreed by condition.
15. The **Ecology Officer** requests condition/informatives to be attached to any consent.

16. **Trees and Landscape Officer** has requested further information regarding landscaping before works commence. This can be conditioned accordingly.

### **Representations**

17. Two letters have been received from neighbouring properties in regard to the original submission; one letter has been received from the occupier of 16 Angle Lane. The concerns relate to the intensification of vehicular movement that will use the lane and the adverse impact on the Conservation Area.
18. The other letter is from the occupiers of No 18 Angle Lane who have raised various objections to the development, of which these are as follows:
- (a) Visual Impact regarding the design of the dwelling being out of keeping with surrounding properties and the close proximity to No. 20 and No 18.
  - (b) Loss of Light due to the mass of the dwelling so close to the boundary.
  - (c) Loss of privacy due to the loss of planting on adjoining boundaries and the siting of the new dwelling and the fenestration at ground floor facing towards the boundary of No. 18.
  - (d) The proximity to protected trees, particularly to the Walnut trees located at the rear of the site, close to the rear of the proposed development.
  - (e) Over development of Angle Lane and increase in vehicular movement.
  - (f) The protection of the surface of the Lane from construction vehicles.
  - (g) Access restrictions caused by construction vehicles and the possibility of controlling this by conditions if consent is granted.
  - (h) Enforcing eradication of Japanese Knotweed on the site.
19. The Design Statement that was included in this application comments on the four bedroomed cottage style dwelling with low eaves with dormer windows to the main section of the house that will sit on green oak posts set forward from the main structure. It states that the development will be of vernacular design incorporating details and materials (some render, weatherboarding, red brick and pantiles) that are familiar in the surrounding properties in the village. It states that the varying height and materials are proposed to give the impression that the dwelling has evolved, much like number 20 Angle Lane.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

20. The principle of development on this site has already been established through previous planning consents. The key issues relevant to this application are impact on neighbour amenity and the impact on the Conservation Area.

#### ***Impact upon neighbour amenity***

21. The residents at No. 20 Angle Lane are not adversely affected by the development as the fenestration has been arranged so as not to infringe on the privacy and the amenity of the occupiers of this neighbouring property. The siting of the dwelling is located behind that of No. 20 and the impact of the building is predominately to the rear, away from that of No. 20. Windows that are located in the northwest elevation are of a far enough distance and oblique angle as to not adversely impact the privacy of the occupiers of No 20.
22. The impact on the occupiers of No.18 is also considered to be minimal. Although the development is located approximately 1 metre from the boundary, the development has been sited so there are no openings that would adversely affect the privacy of the

occupiers of No. 18. The two first floor dormer bedroom windows facing southwest project forward of the neighbours building line and not over the rear garden of No. 18. The amended scheme has also removed the bulk of the two storey element of this dwelling away from that of No 18 and has therefore reduced any overbearing impact the dwelling may have had, taking on the form of the originally approved scheme in 1998.

### ***Impact upon the Conservation Area***

23. The Conservation Officer has had various dealings with this site since the original approval and discussions regarding the application site with the Agent have concluded that the current design approach is acceptable and a better approach to that of the originally approved scheme. Further negotiation, preliminary to this application, has achieved a design that is in accordance with the relevant policies and preserves the Conservation Area.

### ***Other Matters***

24. The site of the proposed dwelling is not within Flood Zones 2 or 3 (medium to high risk). There is a commitment to development of two plots to the side and rear of No. 20 Angle Lane, respectively. I do not consider it reasonable to now require one to be affordable.

### **Recommendation**

25. Approval subject to safeguarding conditions
1. Standard Condition A – Reason A.
  2. SC5 – submission of details a, b, c, d, f – RC5 a) i) ii), b), c), d), f).
  3. No power operated machinery shall be operated on the site, during the course of construction, before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions – RC26.
  4. SC51 – Landscaping – RC51.
  5. SC52 – Implementation of Landscaping – RC52.
  6. SC56 – Protect Trees – RC56.
  7. SC60 – Boundary treatment – all boundaries – RC60.
  8. SC22 – No further windows (southwest and south east elevations and roof slopes) – RC22.
  9. CS Para – C3 a) and b) – Permanent Turning and Parking – CS RC b – Safety
  10. CS Para – C2 Temporary Parking – CS RC10 – Safety.
  11. Prior to the development commencing an investigation of the site shall be undertaken to establish the nature and extent of any contamination of the site and any remedial works to deal with contamination. The investigative study will include details of the site history, development of the site conceptual model and preliminary qualitative risk assessment. If this investigation indicates contamination a further detailed assessment shall be carried out which shall include intrusive investigations and which shall fully characterise the nature, extent and severity of contamination. Recommendations for a remediation strategy and post remediation validation should be included. Remedial work shall be carried out before development commences. The work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details; any variation shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before

work is undertaken. Copies of all reports should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

12. Control of vegetation during nesting period – for ecology purposes.
13. Provision of a scheme of nest and bat box provision - RC To provide habitats in accordance with Policy EN12 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

## Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**  
**P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development)  
**P7/6** (Historic Built Environment)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**  
**HG10** (Housing Mix and Design)  
**SE5** (Development in Infill Villages)  
**EN30** (Development in Conservation Areas)  
**EN12** (Nature Conservation)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Adverse impact on the Conservation Area
  - Increase in vehicular movement
  - Residential amenity
  - Drainage

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Files Ref: S/1662/06/F, S/1143/06/F and S/1034/03/F

**Contact Officer:** Saffron Garner– Senior Planning Assistant  
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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/1551/06/O - HISTON**  
**Two dwellings at 39 Home Close, for Mr's Crane****Recommendation: Approval****Date for Determination: 27<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

Members will visit the site on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

**Site and Proposal**

1. The site, measuring 0.056 hectares, is located on the eastern side of Home Close and backs onto West Road. Home Close has a mix of post-war dwellings including bungalows and houses. The site itself contains a detached post-war bungalow of pre-fabricated construction, a detached garage to the side and rear, accessed via a driveway, and a detached sunroom, which is located to the rear of the bungalow. To the north of the site is a bungalow (no. 37) that is set off the boundary with no. 39 by a drive that provides access to a garage at the rear of it. To the south there is a two-storey semi-detached house (no. 41), which has been extended. This has a timber garage forward of the garage serving no. 39. The site boundaries are low to the front and increase in height towards the rear of the bungalow.
2. This outline planning application, received on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2006, proposes to demolish the existing, sub-standard bungalow. It was proposed to replace it with a pair of semi-detached houses with single storey rear elements. The houses would have been set back behind the fronts of both of the neighbouring dwellings. Determination of siting and access was sought. The application was amended on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006 to propose two individual access points, as opposed to one centrally located serving both plots. Each house would have been served by two car parking spaces. Following discussions with the agent the application has been amended and all matters are now reserved i.e. siting and access have been withdrawn from the application and the plans are to be considered for indicative purposes only. This followed concerns having been raised regarding the siting and access. The density of development would be 35.7 dwellings per hectare.

**Planning History**

3. The bungalow presently on site was constructed with the benefit of planning permission ref. no. **C/0614/56**. Planning application **S/0595/82/F** granted permission for a small rear extension and the garage.

**Planning Policy**

4. **Policy SE2 'Rural Growth Settlements'** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (Local Plan) defines Histon as a Rural Growth Settlement in which residential development will be permitted on unallocated land, providing the development meets with the criteria of this and other polices included within the Local Plan.

Development should achieve a minimum density of 30 dph unless there are strong grounds for not doing so.

5. **Policy HG10 ‘Housing Mix and Design’** of the Local Plan requires residential developments to include a mix of housing types and sizes, including one and two bedroom dwellings, making best use of the site and promoting a sense of community that reflects local needs. Design and layouts should be informed by the wider character and context. In addition, high quality design is sought, combining energy efficiency.
6. **Policy TP1 ‘Planning More Sustainable Travel’** of the Local Plan seeks to promote sustainable travel by limiting car parking to maximum levels and requiring cycle parking to be provided, as set out in standards in appendix 7/2.
7. **Policy P1/3 ‘Sustainable Design in Built Development’** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (Structure Plan) states that a high standard of design and sustainability should be adopted for all new forms of development.
8. **Policy P5/3 ‘Density’** of the Structure Plan requires previously developed land to be re-used efficiently. A guideline of 40 dwellings per hectare is identified for sites close to a good range of services, facilities and public transport. Densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable. The highest density possible that is compatible with local character should be applied.

#### **Consultation**

9. **Histon Parish Council** – In response to consultation on the amended scheme comment: “On reflection of the parking situation as it has been presented, having reviewed the density of the houses on the plot, we believe that the access for parking could be a problem on this particular road which already has considerable parking problems of its own. We therefore feel that it may be more appropriate to refurbish the current property rather than demolish and build two and wish to change our response to **RECOMMEND REFUSAL**”.

#### **Representations**

10. Three letters of objection have been received from occupiers of three neighbouring properties, at 34, 37 and 41 Home Close. These representations raise the following material planning considerations:
  - a. Close proximity of two-storey development to the bungalow at no. 37 – loss of daylight from living room windows and sun in the summer months.
  - b. Impact of the loss of daylight and sunlight on the owner of no. 37 who is disabled and therefore occupies these rooms for most of the time.
  - c. Loss of privacy to no. 37 due to overlooking windows.
  - d. Impact upon the character of the street due to the replacement with modern two-storey dwellings. A new build bungalow would have for less impact.
  - e. If approved it could mean other similar plots in the road are also developed.

#### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

11. The key issues in relation to this application are car parking, neighbouring amenities and impact upon the street scene.

### **Access**

12. The amended layout, to which the Parish object, would encourage vehicles to turn in the road. Home Close is a narrow road, and experiences high levels of on-street car parking. In providing two separate access points, with the configuration proposed there will be a loss of on-street parking provision and increased likelihood of the additional vehicles resulting from the development attempting to reverse out of the site onto the road. This could be overcome through an alternative layout and will be reserved matter.

### **Neighbouring amenities**

13. The siting of the two storey dwellings presents several issues in terms of the neighbouring amenities.
14. Firstly, there is a likelihood that as a result of the siting indicated daylight and direct sunlight will be lost to the side window of no. 37, which is to the north of the site. At present the separation created by no. 37's drive and the relatively low eaves and ridge heights ensures good levels of light reach the neighbouring property's living room. It is reasonable to conclude that some light would be lost to this dwelling. It will be necessary as part of a detailed submission to ensure that this is not significantly detrimental to the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers.
15. The siting and height of any dwelling could result in a visually overbearing relationship with the neighbouring properties, however there would remain reasonable separation on the side windows, which appear to be largely secondary windows or windows not serving habitable rooms. The projection beyond the rear of no. 41 is however excessive and therefore the siting has been withdrawn.

### **Reserved matters**

16. There is not an objection to the principle of a development of two dwellings on this site. The site can accommodate a pair of semi-detached houses with off-street car parking to current standards and generous gardens. It is considered that a pair of semi-detached houses, if sited so that they are staggered slightly forward of the bungalow at no. 37 and slightly behind the house at no. 41, would not harm the street scene, subject to the detailed design and layout. As indicated above, it is possible to provide access to the site without significant detriment to the safe and free flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic within the street.

### **Other**

17. Future developments, if proposed, elsewhere in the road would be assessed upon their individual planning merits.

### **Recommendations**

18. Approve, as amended in writing on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006.
  1. Standard Condition B – Time limited permission (Outline) (Reason A);
  2. SC1 (Reserved matters) a, b, c and e – Reserved matters – (RC1);
  3. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60);
  4. Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery during construction;
  5. C1 (wording to include b) – Parking clear of the highway (Reason 1);
  6. D5 (worded 2.0m x 2.0m, b. Back of the footway) – Visibility (Reason 10).

**Reasons for approval**

**Informatives**

1. See attached Environment Agency advice regarding soakaways.

**Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development) and **P5/3** (Density)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE2** (Development in Rural Growth Settlements), **HG10** (Housing Mix and Design) and **TP1** (Planning More Sustainable Travel).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity
  - Highway safety
  - Visual impact on the locality

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Refs: C/0614/56, S/0595/82/F and S/1551/06/O

**Contact Officer:** Melissa Reynolds - Area Planning Officer - Area Two  
Telephone: (01954) 713237

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director/Head of Planning Services

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**S/1752/06/F - FOWLMERE  
Extension at 30 Pipers Close for Mr and Mrs J. Miller****Recommendation: Approval****Date for Determination: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2006****Site and Proposal**

1. Number 30 Pipers Close is an ex-local authority dwellinghouse that is located in a ribbon of development extending to the southern most boundary of the Fowlmere village framework. The semi-detached dwellinghouse is set back from the highway (Chrishall Road) and is of a red brick construction with a tiled, hipped roof.
2. The full planning application received on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2006 proposes to extend the dwellinghouse towards the south eastern neighbour by way of a two-storey hipped roof extension with a rear projecting gable, which has a ridgeline one metre lower than that of the main dwellinghouse. A single storey lean-to element extending approximately 3m to the rear links the rear gable with the rear elevation of the main dwellinghouse. In addition to an increase in the overall width of the front elevation by 4.4 metres, a single storey lean-to forward projecting extension, incorporating a porch area and part of the garage, is also proposed.

**Planning History**

3. None.

**Planning Policy***South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004*

4. **Policy HG12** 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings with Frameworks' sets out requirements for development of dwellings within frameworks having regard to impact upon neighbour amenity and the street scene.

**Consultation**

5. **Fowlmere Parish Council** – Recommends that the application be refused, as it believes that the extension would be overbearing for neighbouring properties and an overdevelopment of the site. The Parish would be sympathetic to some form of extension but felt that the present application is too excessive.

## **Representations**

6. None received.

## **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

7. In response to the comments of the Parish Council the two issues for Members to consider in the determination of this application are whether the proposed extension would have a detrimental impact upon neighbour amenity and whether the development would constitute overdevelopment, and as such would have a detrimental visual impact upon the character of the area and the street scene of Pipers Close.

### ***Impact upon neighbour amenity***

8. The proposed extension would result in a two-storey expanse of wall within 0.5m of the boundary with number 31 Pipers Close, which is a house set back behind the front elevation of number 30.
9. In 1988 planning consent was granted for a garage and extension at number 31 Pipers Close, which has an asymmetrical ridged roof dropping away to the rear (S/1084/88/F). The set back nature of number 31 means that the proposed rear projecting gable of the extension would not extend beyond the rear elevation of number 31. Therefore the only area where the bulk of the development would be apparent to the neighbouring occupiers would be above the aforementioned pitched roof of the garage. The only opening in the side elevation of the neighbouring dwellinghouse is believed, based on the first floor plan of the application property, to be a landing window, which is approximately 4 metres from the boundary. Having regard to the nature of that opening and the existing built development adjacent to the boundary with number 30, I consider that the impact upon the amenities of the occupiers of number 31 Pipers Close is acceptable.
10. In addition to number 31 being set behind the front elevation of number 30, it is also elevated slightly higher, which would help to further limit the impact of the proposed extension on the neighbouring property. The two openings in the side elevation of the extension, which serve a bathroom and shower room, can be conditioned to be fitted and maintained with obscure glazing, if the application is approved.
11. The single storey element at the rear of the property, although to the south of the northern neighbour (number 29 Pipers Close), is not considered to have an unacceptable impact upon neighbouring amenity by virtue of its lean-to roof and modest depth.

### ***Visual impact upon the street scene through overdevelopment***

12. The accumulative visual impact of the aforementioned neighbouring extension and the proposed two-storey element on the street scene would undoubtedly result in a reduction in the gap between the two properties. However the visual impact that the rear projecting gable would have on the street scene is a very limited one as number 31 would screen it from views from the south. At first floor level the visual impact of the development is limited due to the fact that the neighbour's extension is single storey only, and the hipped roof, which is in keeping with the existing roof of the dwellinghouse, would limit the overall bulk of the extension.

13. Moreover the set back nature of the properties in the street scene means that those travelling along Chrishall Road would only be aware of the additional bulk of the extension when passing the property, as it would be screened by the existing dwellinghouse from the north and number 31 would in part screen views from the south. The lower ground level of the application site would also help to limit the visual impact of the development by keeping it lower, and thus visually separating it from the bulk of the neighbouring property.
14. Taking into account the physical relationship that number 30 Pipers Close has with the neighbouring property (number 31), and the distance (approximately 12 metres) that both dwellings are set back from the public highway, I do not consider that the proposed extension has an unacceptable impact upon neighbour amenity or the street scene of Pipers Close.

### **Recommendation**

15. Approval – subject to the following conditions:
  1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
  2. Sc5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5a(ii));
  3. Sc22 – No further windows at first floor level in the south east elevation of the development (Rc22);
  4. The bathroom and shower room windows at first floor level in the south east elevation of the development, hereby approved, shall be fitted and permanently maintained with obscure glazing (Rc22).

### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**  
**HG12** (Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings with Frameworks)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity (overbearing)
  - Visual impact on the locality (overdevelopment)

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning File Ref: S/1752/06/F

**Contact Officer:** Edward Durrant – Planning Assistant  
Telephone: (01954) 713082

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/2423/05/F - STAPLEFORD****Extensions to Dwelling and Garage at 12 Priams Way for J. Newson****Recommendation: Approval of Amendment**

Members will visit the site on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

**Site and Proposal**

1. No. 12 Priams Way is a two-storey, semi-detached brick and tile house that is situated on the northern side of Priams Way, within the Stapleford village framework.
2. No. 10 Priams Way is situated to the east of the site and forms the other half of the semi-detached property. It has a ground floor kitchen window in its rear elevation and a patio area immediately to the rear of the dwelling. No. 14 Priams Way is situated to the west of the site. It has a ground floor sitting room window in its side elevation.
3. Planning permission was granted for a two-storey side extension, single storey rear extension and garage extension in February 2006 (reference **S/2423/05/F**). The approved single storey extension had a depth of 3 metres and a height of 2.3 metres to the eaves and 3.2 metres to the ridge. The amended drawing P01 Rev D proposes an increase in the height of the single storey rear extension by 0.15 metres resulting in an extension that measures 2.45 metres in height to the eaves and 3.35 metres to the ridge.

**Planning History**

4. A planning application for a two-storey side extension and part two-storey, part single storey rear extension (reference **S/0360/05/F**) was withdrawn in April 2005.

**Planning Policy**

5. **Policy P1/3** of the **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003** seeks to ensure that all new developments incorporate a high standard of design that respond to the local character of the built environment.
6. **Policy HG12** of the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004** states that extensions to dwellings within village frameworks will not be permitted where they would seriously harm the amenities of neighbours through being unduly overbearing in mass, through a significant loss of light, or through overlooking leading to a loss of privacy; or if they would have an unacceptable visual impact upon the street scene.

**Consultation**

7. **Stapleford Parish Council** recommends refusal of the amendment because of the persistent neglect of the requirements of the planning permission already given. The wall is overbearing to neighbours and is reducing their light. It is recommended that the Planning Committee should arrange a visit.

### Representations

8. Two letters of objection have been received to the amendment from the neighbours at **Nos. 10 and 14 Priams Way**. Issues of concern include the oppressive nature of the mass of the brick wall, a loss of light, obscured views from windows, building not in accordance with the approved plans, poor quality work, demolition of a wall, breach of the Party Wall Act, storage of building materials, noise, and loss in value of property.
9. Councillor Berent 'one of the local member representing Stapleford states: "Both I and the neighbours understand that the wall as currently built is already taller than is proposed in either the original or the revised planning application, but we feel that the height given in the originally approved application is at the limit of what is acceptable in this location".

### Planning Comments – Key Issues

10. The main issue to be considered during the determination of this amendment relate to the impact of the increase in the height of the extension upon the amenities of neighbours.
11. The current partly constructed extension is unauthorised and the side wall adjacent to No. 10 Priams Way measures approximately 2.83 metres in height to eaves level. If the amendment were to be approved, the height of the wall would be 2.45 metres to the eaves and 3.35 metres to the ridge. Approval of the amendment would not mean that the current height of the wall or any further unauthorised change to the approved plans would be acceptable in planning terms. Each proposal would be determined upon its own merits.
12. The extension as amended is no higher relative to the existing first floor windows, than shown on the approved scheme. The 0.15 metres increase in height is as a result of the distance between the ground level and the bottom of the first floor windows being shown 0.15 metres less than is actually the case on the approved plan.
13. No. 10 Priams Way has a ground floor kitchen window in its rear elevation. Whilst I acknowledge that the proposed single storey rear extension abuts the boundary with that property and the wall would be higher than that originally approved, I do not consider that an increase in height of the extension by 0.15 metres would seriously harm the amenities of that neighbour. The combination of the depth of the extension, its height, orientation to the west of No. 10 and boundary hedge is not considered to result in a dominant feature that would be unduly oppressive and overbearing in mass when viewed from, and lead to a significant loss of light to, the kitchen window and patio area of that property. There would be no additional overlooking that would result in a loss of privacy.
14. No. 14 Priams Way has a ground floor sitting room window in its side elevation. The single storey rear extension is orientated to the south east and situated approximately 3 metres from this window. The proposed increase in the height of the wall is not considered to adversely affect the outlook from, or result in a significant loss of light to, the sitting room window of that property, as a result of the height of the extension and distance between the two dwellings.
15. The proposed increase in the height of the single storey extension would not be visible from within the street scene.

16. Although there are no dimensions on the plans, they are drawn to scale.
17. The concerns raised by the neighbour with regards to the location of the storage of building materials on the site, the period of construction, rubbish from the builders, and the demolition of part of their boundary wall, is a civil matter between the two relevant parties. The breach to the party wall is a building regulations issue.

**Recommendation**

18. a. Approval of amended drawing No. P01 Rev D.
- b. Enforcement Action be instigated, if required, to ensure that the unauthorised works to the walls of the extension are removed within one month of the Notice coming into effect.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning File Reference S/2423/05/F

**Contact Officer:** Karen Bonnett – Planning Assistant  
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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

1<sup>st</sup> November 2006

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director/Head of Planning Services

**S/0559/06/O - Willingham  
Proposed Residential Development at Land Rear of 2 Short Lane and  
Adjacent 23 Long Lane For Mr RJ and Mrs JL Laffling****Recommendation: Approval****Date for Determination: 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006****Update**

1. This application was considered by Members of the Development and Conservation Control Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2006. A copy of the original report is attached at Appendix 1. The minute of the meeting reads:
2. MINDED TO REFUSE, contrary to the recommendation of the Director of Development Services, on the grounds of highway safety if such ground was substantiated by an independent highways consultant. If the independent consultant considered the application acceptable, it would be referred back to Committee for determination.

**Highway Safety Report**

3. The proposed means of access has been assessed by Atkins Highways and Transportation. A report provided on 22<sup>nd</sup> June indicated a need for further information to be obtained concerning obstructions in the visibility splays and the technical design of the access. An amended plan was received on 26<sup>th</sup> June. Atkins assessment dated 28<sup>th</sup> July indicated continued safety concerns about the provision for pedestrians across the proposed access. A sketch drawing detailing the access was received on 10<sup>th</sup> August. This was confirmed as being acceptable in principle by Atkins on 25<sup>th</sup> September, but required to be confirmed by safety audit based on detailed drawings. Copies of the report and letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> September are attached at Appendix 2.

**Consultations**

4. **Building Control Manager:** Comments awaited, following additional representations received from neighbours (see below). These will be reported verbally to Members at the Committee.

**Additional Representations**

5. Further representations have been received from the occupiers of 23 Long Lane (adjoining the southern boundary of the site), 29 Long Lane (to the south of the site but not adjoining it), 36 and 38 Long Lane (opposite the site) and 8 Short Lane (adjoining the northern boundary of the site). The concerns raised are:
6. Potential overlooking/ overbearing of existing dwelling at No.23.
7. Potential weakening of foundations of existing dwelling at No.23.

8. Out of keeping with the character of the area.
9. Long Lane is one-way and narrow, and is unsuitable for large construction vehicles. There is a high risk that roadside properties would be damaged by such construction vehicles and, as a matter of record, last week an articulated lorry drove the wrong way down the lane and badly damaged the wall and sloping roof of the house at the entrance point to Long Lane (photos supplied).
10. Construction vehicles are likely to block Long Lane, causing severe aggravation to the existing residents by preventing them from getting their vehicles out and preventing maintenance and refuse collection vehicles from gaining proper access. Construction traffic should be made to comply with the one-way system.
11. If development on the site goes ahead, it is inevitable that any new site residents and, particularly, their visitors would resort to parking along Long Lane. There is already on-street parking in the area, which is a problem, especially at school times.
12. Danger to pedestrians because of poor visibility splay to the south.
13. The pavements are not adequate for parents and children going to/from school, who have to walk in the road.
14. The sewerage system in Long Lane is barely adequate. The addition of five more houses is likely to overload it. Similarly, the surface water sewer in Long Road already floods after a heavy downpour.
15. This development will not serve any serious community need. There is adequate new house building in the village and with Northstowe coming.
16. If consent is granted, the existing hedge on the boundary with Short Lane should be safeguarded.
17. This area should be kept as open space to balance housing concentration in the village. If this is allowed, the whole area could be developed in the future, causing more congestion on these roads and other services.

### **Planning Comments**

18. The independent assessment of the position of the access and its design, as shown in the amended plans, has concluded that access design is acceptable in principle. The assessment includes an accident report, which indicates that two slight injury accidents occurred in the vicinity of Long Lane/Short Lane and Church Street in the 5-year period to December 2005. The report acknowledges that some on street parking takes place at present, and that parents and children use the footway on the east side of Long Lane. The consultant engineer has recommended that the proposals be subject to a formal Stage 1,2 and 3 Road Safety Audit on detailed drawings. I recommend that access be retained as a reserved matter, subject to the agent's confirmation of this.
19. The comments of occupiers of neighbouring occupiers are noted. As explained at paragraphs 24 and 25 of my 10<sup>th</sup> May report, I consider that the principle of residential development of this land is acceptable. Detailed matters of siting and design will be the subject of a further application for reserved matters, when any potential overlooking/overbearing impact can be assessed. I agree that a condition to safeguard the existing hedge on the northern boundary is warranted. Similarly, whilst short-term inconvenience

arising from construction traffic using the road network is a feature of many developments, I agree that a condition to require submission of details of the measures to ensure that such vehicles can be accommodated on the site is warranted.

20. I recommend that a condition be attached to ensure that arrangements for payment of the required education contribution are secured. I await the comments of the Building Control Manager on the drainage issues that have been raised by objectors.

### Recommendation

21. Subject to no objections being received from the Building Control Manager and to the agent's agreement for final details of the access to be submitted as a reserved matter, approval of the application dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2006, subject to the following conditions:

Approve, subject to:

1. Standard Condition B – Time limited permission (Reason B);
2. SC1 reserved matters- layout, scale, appearance, access, landscaping. (RC1);
3. Sc58 – Protection of existing hedge on the northern boundary (delete 'except at the point of access') (RC58);
4. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
5. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60);
6. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works/scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme. (Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment);
7. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a binding undertaking prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 shall have been entered into which requires the payment of a financial contribution towards the provision of educational facilities in the local area. (Reason - To ensure the development makes a gain for the provision of educational facilities as required by Policy CS10 (Education) of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004);
8. SC26 – [Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery] – *Add at beginning* "During the period of construction..." then "8am/8am/6pm/1pm" (Reason - 26);
9. No development shall take place on the application site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
(Reason - To secure the provision of archaeological excavation and the subsequent recording of remains);
10. Highways C2 – parking of construction vehicles (Reason – In the interests of highway safety);
11. Highways B9 - Access road 5.0m for a minimum of 10.0m (Reason – In the interests of highway safety);
12. Highways B10 Access Road (Reason – In the interests of highway safety);
13. Before the dwellings, hereby permitted, are occupied a common turning area shall be provided at the end of the private drive and shall thereafter be maintained. (Reason - In the interests of highway safety);

14. Highways D3 provision of visibility splays (Reason – In the interests of highway safety);
15. Highways D5 (a) pedestrian/vehicle visibility splays 2.0m x 2.0m (Reason – In the interests of highway safety);

#### **Informatives**

1. Details of pedestrian and vehicular access as required to be submitted in pursuance of Condition no.2 above shall accord closely with submitted access plans Nos. VC.164.1A and VC.164.2.
2. Where soakaways are proposed for the disposal of uncontaminated surface water, percolation tests should be undertaken, and soakaways designed and constructed in accordance with BRE Digest 365 (or CIRA Report 156), and to the satisfaction of the Local Authority. The maximum acceptable depth for soakaways is 2 metres below existing ground level. If, after tests, it is found that soakaways do not work satisfactorily, alternative proposals must be submitted.
3. An acceptable method of foul drainage disposal would be connection to the public foul sewer.
4. During construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on the site except with the prior permission of the District Council's Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.

#### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**  
**P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**  
**SE2** (Development in Rural Growth Settlements)  
**SE8** (Village Frameworks)  
**HG10** (Housing Mix and Design)  
**CS10** (Education).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity
  - Highway safety
  - Visual impact on the locality and density of development
  - Drainage

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- South Cambridgeshire LDF Submission Documents – January 2006
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Files Reference: S/0559/06/O, S/0824/80/O, S/0338/84/O and S/2007/05/O.

**Contact Officer:** Nigel Blazeby – Area Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713165



## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee 10<sup>th</sup> May 2006  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/0559/06/O - WILLINGHAM****Proposed Residential Development at Land Rear of 2 Short Lane and Adjacent  
23 Long Lane For Mr RJ and Mrs JL Laffling**

**Recommendation: Approval**  
**Date for Determination: 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**Site and Proposal**

1. This application, received on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2006, proposes the erection of five dwellings on a 0.15 hectare site to the rear of 2 Short Lane at a density of 33/ha. The application is in outline form, with only the proposed access being determined at this time. The siting, design of the dwellings and landscaping are to be agreed at a later date.
2. The proposals are for the removal of old and dilapidated greenhouses on the site and the erection of two three-bed semi detached dwellings (93 sq m each), and three four-bed detached dwellings (112 sq m each). The density equates to 33.3 dph.
3. Long Lane is characterised by a mixture of bungalows and two-storey dwellings along the lane frontage, many having long rear gardens, with greenhouses and other outbuildings located to the rear.
4. The site is currently overgrown garden land, and was previously in horticultural use. The site lies within the village settlement limit, and contains no specific Local Plan designations.

**Planning History**

5. **S/0824/80/O**- Planning permission was refused for residential development on the site by Decision Notice dated 12<sup>th</sup> July 1982. The three reasons for refusal stated the following:
  1. The access to the site is inadequate other than to serve a small development of no more than three dwellings, which if built would result in a piecemeal development poorly related to the existing development surrounding the site.
  2. The application, if approved, would set a precedent for the development of other restricted sites within Willingham served by inadequate accesses.
  3. There is sufficient land with planning permission in Willingham to satisfy the short-term needs of the village.
6. **S/0338/84/O**- Planning permission was refused for storage and offices on the site by Decision Notice dated 11<sup>th</sup> April 1984. The two reasons for refusal stated the following:

1. The introduction of a commercial use of the scale proposed would be detrimental to the amenities of the surrounding residential properties by reason of general disturbance and the increased traffic generated.
  2. The proposed access to the site is inadequate and below the standard required by reason of its restricted width and visibility.
7. **S/2007/05/O** - Residential development on the application site. This application was refused by decision notice dated 9<sup>th</sup> January 2006. This decision notice contained three reasons for refusal:
1. Inadequate information has been submitted to demonstrate that vehicle to vehicle visibility splays to a private access road (if serving in excess of one dwelling) can be achieved within the application site area. A frontage survey is required indicating the proposed splays in their entirety so that the extent of effect of the splays on land edged blue can be established. The applicant has not demonstrated that adequate visibility splays can be achieved within the application site.
  2. Inadequate information has been submitted to demonstrate how foul and particularly surface water drainage from the site will be undertaken, and whether contaminated land is present on any part of the site.
  3. Given the location of the application site, its configuration and relationships to adjacent dwellings insufficient information has been submitted on the number, size and scale of dwellings to be accommodated on the site. Development of the site with fewer than five dwellings would, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, represent inefficient use of the land contrary to Policy SE2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

### Planning Policy

#### Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

8. **Policy P1/3** explains that a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development will be required which creates a compact form of development through the promotion of higher densities, and provides a sense of place which responds to the local character of the built environment and pays attention to the detail of form, massing, textures, colours and landscaping.

#### South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004

9. **Policy SE2** states that Willingham is designated as a Rural Growth Settlement, and residential development and redevelopment will be permitted on unallocated land within village frameworks provided that:
  1. The retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village;
  2. The development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape or ecological importance, and the amenities of neighbours;
  3. The village has the necessary infrastructure capacity;
  4. Residential development would not conflict with another policy of the Plan.

10. **Policy SE8** notes that there will be a general presumption in favour of residential development within village frameworks. Residential development outside these frameworks will not be permitted.
11. **Policy HG10** explains that residential developments will be required to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes and affordability, making the best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs. The design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape.
12. **Policy HG11** relates to criteria to be considered in the consideration of applications for backland development.

### **South Cambridgeshire LDF Submission Documents**

13. **Policy ST/5** states that Willingham has been selected as a Minor Rural Centre. Residential development up to a maximum scheme size of 25 dwellings will be permitted within village frameworks.
14. **Policy DP/3** states that all development proposals must provide appropriate access from the highway network, and have car parking kept to a minimum (as far as is compatible with its location and maximum car parking standards).

### **Consultation**

15. **Willingham Parish Council** - Recommends refusal of the application on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site; lack of adequate detail; concern over the visibility splay on to Long Lane (as it is used as a pedestrian school route and as the proposed houses fronting Long Lane are sited close to number 23, which would make it difficult for vehicles exiting from the proposed development to see pedestrians approaching from the south). Members also wished to draw attention to two old cooking apple trees on the property, probably part of an orchard formerly on the site. It is suggested that it be checked whether these trees are an old Willingham variety before any permission was granted leading to their removal.
16. **Local Highways Authority** - Notes that a common turning area should be provided at the end of the private drive. Such a facility should be provided prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings and thereafter maintained. It is noted that the application site area edged red satisfactorily includes such adjacent land or number 2 over which the visibility splay crosses. Unfortunately the layout plan gives no indication of how the visibility splay is to be provided ie the plan identifies a close boarded fence within the splay but is this to be removed, lowered, set back behind the splay?
17. **Old West Internal Drainage Board** - It is stated in the application that surface water will be disposed of via soakaways. Providing that this method of surface water disposal is used to accommodate all the run-off from the site, the Board's surface water receiving system will not be affected by this proposal. If any other method of surface water disposal is used in connection with the proposal, the Board must be re-consulted.
18. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** - Concerned that problems of noise could arise from the development during the period of construction and suggests a condition to minimise the effects.

19. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue** - Is of the opinion that additional water supplies for firefighting are not required.
20. **County Financial Planning Officer** - Contributions are required of £2,750 per dwelling. Therefore, in the case of this application contributions are required of £13,750. This will help provide facilities at the village school, the secondary school at Cottenham and various community facilities and amenities.
21. **Environment Agency** - No objections.
22. **County Archaeology Officer** - The application site lies within an area of archaeological potential, and excavations carried out nearby in 1997 revealed features ranging from pre-historic to medieval in date, and it is possible that additional (as yet unknown) archaeological features may survive on the site that could be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development. It is therefore recommended that the site is subject to a programme of archaeological investigation to confirm the presence or absence, date, character and significance of any archaeological deposits that may be present. This programme of work can be secured through the inclusion of a negative condition in any planning consent.

### **Representations**

23. The current owners/occupiers of numbers 8 and 10 Short Lane state that, under Local Plan Policy HG11, proposed development should be in keeping with the intrinsic character of the surrounding village. It is therefore proposed that any development is kept solely lane facing, and not developed to the rear. This would keep it with the pattern and character of development in the vicinity of the application site.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

#### **Principle of residential development on the site**

24. There are no policy objections relating to the development of the application site for residential dwellings. As this application is in outline form only, with just the means of access to be determined at this time, design, siting and landscaping of the site will be agreed at a later date.

#### **Density of development**

25. The application proposes the erection of five dwellings on the site. Two (to the front of the site) are to be semi-detached, whilst the remaining three are to be detached. It is considered that in order to comply with Policy SE2 of the Local Plan, which states that development should achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare, five dwellings are required on the site.

#### **Visibility splays and access to the site**

26. Long Lane is a one-way street running from north to south. The application drawings therefore indicate the visibility splay of 2.4m x 70.0m to the north of the site. No serious concerns have been raised in relation to the visibility splay by the County Highways Authority, although clarification has been sought from the applicant's agents as to the fence situated within the visibility splay.
27. The application proposals provide an appropriate means of access in relation to distances of the access itself and the length of the road to serve the new dwellings. It

is suggested by the County Highways Authority that a condition be attached to ensure there is a common turning area provided at the end of the private drive, and for this to be provided prior to the occupation of the dwellings.

### **Neighbour amenity**

28. The application site currently has an existing hedge (approximately 2 metres high) along its northern boundary with the rear gardens of dwellings located down Short Lane. Along the southern boundary there is an existing wooden fence (approximately 2 metres high), whilst along the eastern boundary of the site there is an approximately 2 metre high panel fencing with sporadic hedging and vegetation. A number of concerns have been raised regarding neighbour amenity of the existing dwellings located in the vicinity of the application site, especially in relation to number 23 Long Lane.
29. Number 23 has two first floor windows located in its northern elevation which are both obscurely glazed. There is also a kitchen window, small obscurely glazed window and side door to the dwelling on the ground floor. There is an existing wooden fence between number 23 and the application site. In the eastern elevation of number 23 Long Lane there is a bedroom window at first floor level, and a further one located on the first floor of the southern elevation of the dwelling's side extension. There are existing patio doors to the rear of number 23.
30. There is an existing fence and landscaping between the application site and properties located down Short Lane. It is therefore considered that, with appropriate design of the new dwellings to be considered at reserved matters stage, no significant amenity issues will arise.

### **Site contamination**

31. In a letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> April 2006 from the applicant's agents, it was confirmed that the application site has been in the ownership of the applicant for 20 years and used as a market garden during that time. The green-houses were used to grow salad products. There has been no contamination of the site during the applicant's ownership.

### **Conclusions**

32. On the basis of the above, I recommend that this application be approved, subject to conditions.

### **Recommendation**

#### **Approve, subject to:**

1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
2. Sc5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5a);
3. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
4. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
5. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60);
6. Sc5f – Details of materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas (Reason – To minimise disturbance to adjoining residents);
7. Before the dwellings, hereby permitted, are occupied a common turning area shall be provided at the end of the private drive and shall thereafter be maintained.

8. Surface water drainage details;
9. Foul water drainage details;
10. Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery during the period of construction.
11. No development shall take place on the application site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
(Reason - To secure the provision of archaeological excavation and the subsequent recording of remains).

### **Informatives**

1. Where soakaways are proposed for the disposal of uncontaminated surface water, percolation tests should be undertaken, and soakaways designed and constructed in accordance with BRE Digest 365 (or CIRA Report 156), and to the satisfaction of the Local Authority. The maximum acceptable depth for soakways is 2 metres below existing ground level. If, after tests, it is found that soakaways do not work satisfactorily, alternative proposals must be submitted.
2. An acceptable method of foul drainage disposal would be connection to the public foul sewer.

### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE2** (Development in Rural Growth Settlements), **SE8** (Village Frameworks) and **HG10** (Housing Mix and Design)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity
  - Highway safety
  - Visual impact on the locality and density of development

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- South Cambridgeshire LDF Submission Documents – January 2006
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Files Reference: S/0559/06/O, S/0824/80/O, S/0338/84/O and S/2007/05/O.

**Contact Officer:** Area Team 3

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/0375/06/F – WILLINGHAM****Siting of two Gypsy Mobile Homes, at Plot 2, Longacres, The Paddocks, Meadow Road for Mrs. E. Webb****Recommendation: Temporary consent****Date for Determination: 26<sup>th</sup> April 2006****Site and Proposal**

1. Meadow Road is an area of generally flat agricultural Fen land with few hedges. The application site itself is a rectangular plot approximately 25 by 30 meters. Between the site and Meadow Road are several authorised sites.

**Planning History**

2. The site is in an area where there are a number of existing sites some of which have the benefit of planning permission while others are unauthorised.
3. Planning permission has been refused in the ninties for the use of the as a Gypsy caravan site with one of the main reasons being that, at the time, adequate provision was already made by the then open County Council site further along Meadow Road.
4. In addition enforcement appeals have also been dismissed on plots in the area.

**Planning Policy**

5. The relevant Development Plan comprises the approved Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.
6. **Policy P5/4** of the Structure Plan says that local plans should make provision to meet the locally assessed need for housing specific groups including Gypsies and Travellers.
7. **Policy P1/2** says, inter alia, that development will be restricted in the countryside unless the proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
8. **Policy 7/4** says that development must relate sensitively to the local environment and contribute to the sense of place, identity and diversity of the distinct landscape character areas.
9. **Policy SE8** of the Local Plan says that there will be a general presumption in favour of residential development within village frameworks and that residential development outside these frameworks will not be permitted.

10. **Policy EN1** relates to Landscape Character Areas, and in respect of this site, it is concerned with respecting, retaining and wherever possible, enhancing the Fens Landscape Character & Natural Area.
11. **Policy HG23** is a specific policy concerned with caravan sites for Gypsies and Travelling show-people. It indicates that proposals for caravans for Gypsies will only be considered when the need for a site is shown to be essential to enable the applicants to exercise a travelling lifestyle for the purpose of making and seeking their livelihood. Where the need is proven 9 criteria have to be met if planning permission is to be granted for such sites. The criteria in summary are as follows:

- (1) The site is reasonably located for schools, shops and other local services.
- (2) The site would have minimal impact on the amenities of existing local residents and adjoining land uses; concentration of sites will be avoided.
- (3) The site would not, either on its own, or cumulatively, have a significant adverse effect on the rural character and appearance, or the amenities of the surrounding area.
- (4) The site can be satisfactorily assimilated into its surroundings by existing or proposed landscaping; an approved landscaping scheme will be required.
- (5) The use of the site would not give rise to unacceptable parking, highway access or service provision problems.
- (6) The site would not adversely affect any buildings of historic or archaeological importance, or sites of wildlife or nature conservation value.
- (7) Where planning permission is allowed, built forms of development will not be permitted except for utility outhouses. Small stables will be considered on their merits depending upon need and the nature of the site.
- (8) The site has adequate infrastructural connections to local services including water supply.
- (9) The use would not detract from convenient, safe and enjoyable use of a public right of way.

12. Also relevant is **Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites and PPG3 Housing**. Circular 1/2006 confirms that the Government is committed to ensuring that members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities should have the same rights and responsibilities as every other citizen and provides updated guidance on the planning aspects of finding sites for Gypsies and Travellers and how local authorities and Gypsies and Travellers can work together to achieve that aim. The policies in this Circular apply throughout England.
13. Advice on the use of temporary permissions is contained in paragraphs 108 – 113 of Circular 11/95, *The Use of Conditions in Planning Permission*. Paragraph 110 advises that a temporary permission may be justified where it is expected that the planning circumstances will change in a particular way at the end of the period of the temporary permission. Where there is unmet need but no available alternative Gypsy and Traveller site provision in an area but there is a reasonable expectation that new sites are likely to become available at the end of that period in the area which will meet that need, local planning authorities should give consideration to granting a temporary permission. Such circumstances may arise, for example, in a case where a local planning authority is preparing its site allocations DPD. In such circumstances, local planning authorities are expected to give substantial weight to the unmet need in considering whether a temporary planning permission is justified.



14. The fact that temporary permission has been granted on this basis should not be regarded as setting a precedent for the determination of any future applications for full permission for use of the land as a caravan site. In some cases, it may not be reasonable to impose certain conditions on a temporary permission such as those that require significant capital outlay.

**Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document**

15. Consultants CDN Planning began working on this project in April 2006. The first draft Issues and Options 1 is now available for public consultation until 24 November 2006. This initial Issues and Options stage is looking at criteria for site location. A second Issues and Options report will be prepared following representations on the first, and this will specifically identify potential sites within South Cambs for Gypsy/Traveller sites using the criteria already agreed. At this stage we expect the second Issues and Options report to be consulted on in Summer 2007.

**Consultations**

**Parish Council**

16. Willingham Parish Council recommends refusal. This should be a retrospective application as the mobile homes are already on the site. In any event Willingham Parish council is opposed to any further increases in Traveller sites due to the very high number that the village already struggles to accommodate. The questions of proportionality and fair sharing of the load have to been raised on a number of occasions and answers to these questions are still awaited.

**Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service**

17. No objections.

**Chief Environmental Health Officer**

18. The application has been considered in respect of noise and environmental pollution and it is concluded that there are no significant impacts. It is recommended that if the application is successful, the applicant should be able to comply with the attached site license conditions relating to permanent residential caravan sites.

**Traveller's Liaison Officer**

19. This extended family, whom describe themselves as English Gypsies, have been in Cambridgeshire all their lives. This site provides a stable base enabling their three young children to attend school locally. Included in this family are the applicants parents, one of whom is disabled, this site allows for their continued care and support. This family previously lived in Cottenham but state they left due to neighbour disputes in 2003. Upon arriving at this site the family spent a significant period clearing the land of rubbish including over 20 abandoned vehicles.

**Old West Internal Drainage Board**

20. The Board do not object from a drainage point of view.

**Environment Agency**

Further details required of foul water drainage.

**Representations**

22. Advertised in CEN 07/03/06.

23. None received.

**Personal Circumstances**

24. The applicant has submitted a statement in support of her proposal. She confirms she lives on the site with her 3 children aged 8, 6 and 18 months. The oldest children attend the local school and have been doing so continuously since they moved onto the site. The older children are in receipt of Special Needs education and this would not be possible if they had to back to living on the roadside
25. The family have strong local connections working in the past for local farmers.
26. In addition, her parents who are pensioners, and the Mother is disabled, are being cared for on the site

**Equal Opportunities Implications**

27. In line with general and specific statutory duties under the Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Council operates a Race Equality Scheme (RES). This was last revised and agreed by the Council in July 2006, with an update of the 2005 - 2008 action plan.
  - (a) The Council is committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, whatever their race or background.
  - (b) The Scheme gives priority to actions relating to Travellers as the biggest ethnic minority in the district (around 1.0% of the district's population).
  - (c) Planning is identified as being amongst the services most relevant to promoting race equality.
  - (d) The lead Cabinet Member for Race Equality, Councillor Edwards, is establishing an RES Member Working Group. This will highlight to the Cabinet and GTDPD Member Reference Group findings and recommendations from ODPM Circular 1/2006 and the Commission for Race Equality's "Common Ground" report, which may be appropriate to the Council's strategic approach to Traveller issues and the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document.

**Planning Comments – Key Issues**

28. The key issue is conflict with countryside policies and policy for Gypsy caravan sites with regard to the need to limit impact on the landscape and rural character of the area, and having regard to the special circumstances that are argued here, together with the advice in circular 01/2006 concerning temporary consent while councils such as South Cambs are preparing a Development Plan Document.
29. From the evidence of the photographs, a considerable amount of fly tipping had taken place on the site, and it is now much tidier. Further the applicant has refrained from other improvements while their application has been determined.
30. In terms of the relevant criteria it is reasonably well located for schools shops and other local services. Indeed the children on the site are well established at local schools. The site does not impact on the amenities of neighbours and no letters of objection are on the file. It is seen in the context of the adjacent permitted and unauthorised Traveller sites, and to that extent it does add to the concentration of sites. However, I am not aware of any service provision issue, and the existing authorised plots that front onto Meadow Road already have a significant visual impact.
31. It follows that the applicant's proposal does not in itself have a significant impact on the landscape. If it is granted permission, I am confident that appropriate landscaping could take place to reduce its impact.

32. There are no highway issues resulting from its use, nor are there any significant conservation, archaeological or wildlife issues.
33. There have been no adverse comments from any of the service providers and it would not adversely in itself detract from the use of a public right of way.
34. The consultation on the options for Traveller site provision within the district are proceeding and it seems to me that this is an entirely appropriate case to be considered for a temporary consent on a without prejudice basis. Such consent would enable the Parish Council's reasonable concerns about the cumulative impact of Traveller sites within the Parish to be properly considered. Since the last meeting, Officers have met with the Parish Council to discuss their general concerns and it was agreed that the Council would look at obtaining "hotspot" pre-emptive injunctions in Willingham to minimise additional sites in advance of the Development Plan Document.

**Recommendation**

35. That temporary permission subject to conditions be granted for 3 years.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Circular 01/2006
- Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment 2006
- Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document

**Contact Officer:** G.H.Jones – Head of Planning  
Telephone: (01954) 713151

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/0402/06/F – WILLINGHAM****Siting of 2 Gypsy Mobile Homes and 2 touring Caravans,  
at Plot 5 Meadow Road for T.A Webb and G.C. Webb****Recommendation: Temporary Consent  
Date for Determination: 26<sup>th</sup> April 2006****Site and Proposal**

1. Meadow Road is an area of generally flat agricultural Fen land with few hedges. The application site itself is a rectangular plot measuring 32 by, on average, 25 meters.

**Planning History**

2. The site is in an area where there are a number of existing sites some of which have the benefit of planning permission while others are unauthorised
3. Planning permission has been refused in the ninties for the use of the as a Gypsy caravan site with one of the main reasons being that, at the time, adequate provision was already made by the then open County Council site further along Meadow Road.
4. In addition enforcement appeals have also been dismissed on plots in the area

**Planning Policy**

5. The relevant Development Plan comprises the approved Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.
6. **Policy P5/4** of the Structure Plan says that local plans should make provision to meet the locally assessed need for housing specific groups including Gypsies and Travellers.
7. **Policy P1/2** says, inter alia, that development will be restricted in the countryside unless the proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
8. **Policy 7/4** says that development must relate sensitively to the local environment and contribute to the sense of place, identity and diversity of the distinct landscape character areas.
9. **Policy SE8** of the Local Plan says that there will be a general presumption in favour of residential development within village frameworks and that residential development outside these frameworks will not be permitted.

10. **Policy EN1** relates to Landscape Character Areas, and in respect of this site, it is concerned with respecting, retaining and wherever possible, enhancing the Fens Landscape Character & Natural Area.
11. **Policy HG23** is a specific policy concerned with caravan sites for Gypsies and Travelling show-people. It indicates that proposals for caravans for Gypsies will only be considered when the need for a site is shown to be essential to enable the applicants to exercise a travelling lifestyle for the purpose of making and seeking their livelihood. Where the need is proven 9 criteria have to be met if planning permission is to be granted for such sites. The criteria in summary are as follows:

- (1) The site is reasonably located for schools, shops and other local services.
- (2) The site would have minimal impact on the amenities of existing local residents and adjoining land uses; concentration of sites will be avoided.
- (3) The site would not, either on its own, or cumulatively, have a significant adverse effect on the rural character and appearance, or the amenities of the surrounding area.
- (4) The site can be satisfactorily assimilated into its surroundings by existing or proposed landscaping; an approved landscaping scheme will be required.
- (5) The use of the site would not give rise to unacceptable parking, highway access or service provision problems.
- (6) The site would not adversely affect any buildings of historic or archaeological importance, or sites of wildlife or nature conservation value.
- (7) Where planning permission is allowed, built forms of development will not be permitted except for utility outhouses. Small stables will be considered on their merits depending upon need and the nature of the site.
- (8) The site has adequate infrastructural connections to local services including water supply.
- (9) The use would not detract from convenient, safe and enjoyable use of a public right of way.

12. Also relevant is **Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites and PPG3 Housing**. Circular 1/2006 confirms that the Government is committed to ensuring that members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities should have the same rights and responsibilities as every other citizen and provides updated guidance on the planning aspects of finding sites for Gypsies and Travellers and how local authorities and Gypsies and Travellers can work together to achieve that aim. The policies in this Circular apply throughout England.
13. Advice on the use of temporary permissions is contained in paragraphs 108 – 113 of Circular 11/95, *The Use of Conditions in Planning Permission*. Paragraph 110 advises that a temporary permission may be justified where it is expected that the planning circumstances will change in a particular way at the end of the period of the temporary permission. Where there is unmet need but no available alternative Gypsy and Traveller site provision in an area but there is a reasonable expectation that new sites are likely to become available at the end of that period in the area which will meet that need, local planning authorities should give consideration to granting a temporary permission. Such circumstances may arise, for example, in a case where a local planning authority is preparing its site allocations DPD.

In such circumstances, local planning authorities are expected to give substantial weight to the unmet need in considering whether a temporary planning permission is justified.

14. The fact that temporary permission has been granted on this basis should not be regarded as setting a precedent for the determination of any future applications for full permission for use of the land as a caravan site. In some cases, it may not be reasonable to impose certain conditions on a temporary permission such as those that require significant capital outlay.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document**

15. Consultants CDN Planning began working on this project in April 2006. The first draft Issues and Options 1 is now available for public consultation until 24 November 2006. This initial Issues and Options stage is looking at criteria for site location. A second Issues and Options report will be prepared following representations on the first, and this will specifically identify potential sites within South Cambs for Gypsy/Traveller sites using the criteria already agreed. At this stage we expect the second Issues and Options report to be consulted on in Summer 2007.

### **Consultation**

#### **Parish Council**

16. Willingham Parish Council recommends refusal. This should be a retrospective application as the mobile homes are already on the site. In any event Willingham Parish council is opposed to any further increases in Traveller sites due to the very high number that the village already struggles to accommodate. The questions of proportionality and fair sharing of the load have to been raised on a number of occasions and answers to these questions are still awaited.

#### **17. Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service**

No objections.

#### **18. Chief Environmental Health Officer**

The application has been considered in respect of noise and environmental pollution and it is concluded that there are no significant impacts. It is recommended that if the application is successful, the applicant should be able to comply with the attached site license conditions relating to permanent residential caravan sites.

#### **Traveller's Liaison Officer**

19. This family, whom describe themselves as English Gypsies, contain two brothers whom have spent all their lives in the local area, attending school as children, in the village of Cottenham, where their father is still living. The family include one child, attending school locally and one young adult in the process of completing her studies at a 6<sup>th</sup> Form College in Cambridge. Prior to this site the family had no permanent residence.

#### **Old West Internal Drainage Board**

20. The Board do not object from a drainage point of view.

#### **Environment Agency**

21. Further details required of foul water drainage.

**Representations**

22. Advertised in CEN 07/03/06 – None received.

**Personal Circumstances**

23. The applicants have submitted a statement in support of their proposal. It confirms that they find it very difficult and stressful to be situated in an environment where they have no permanent base to live as Gypsy people. They are settled in a community with which they have long established links, the children have a chance of education and they're registered with the local G.P. The eldest girl is at Long Road Community Collage and her younger sister is at primary school.
24. They apologise for any inconvenience they have caused by moving on to the site in advance of gaining planning permission, but in the circumstances that they found themselves in, they felt that they had no choice if the children were to be able to continue their education, and the family continue in local employment.

**Equal Opportunities Implications**

25. In line with general and specific statutory duties under the Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Council operates a Race Equality Scheme (RES). This was last revised and agreed by the Council in July 2006, with an update of the 2005 - 2008 action plan.
- (a) The Council is committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, whatever their race or background.
  - (b) The Scheme gives priority to actions relating to Travellers as the biggest ethnic minority in the district (around 1.0% of the district's population).
  - (c) Planning is identified as being amongst the services most relevant to promoting race equality.
  - (d) The lead Cabinet Member for Race Equality, Councillor Edwards, is establishing an RES Member Working Group. This will highlight to the Cabinet and GTDPD Member Reference Group findings and recommendations from ODPM Circular 1/2006 and the Commission for Race Equality's "Common Ground" report, which may be appropriate to the Council's strategic approach to Traveller issues and the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document.

**Planning Comments – Key Issues**

26. The key issue is conflict with countryside policies and policy for Gypsy caravan sites with regard to the need to limit impact on the landscape and rural character of the area, and having regard to the special circumstances that are argued here, together with the advice in circular 1/2006 concerning temporary consent while councils such as South Cambs are preparing a Development Plan Document.
27. In terms of the relevant criteria it is reasonably well located for schools shops and other local services. Indeed the children on the site are well established at local schools. The site does not impact on the amenities of neighbours and no letters of objection are on the file. It is seen in the context of the adjacent permitted and unauthorised Traveller sites, and to that extent it does add to the concentration of sites. However, I am not aware of any service provision issue, and the existing authorised sites that adjoin it site already have a significant visual impact.
28. It follows that the applicant's proposal does not in itself have a significant impact on the landscape. If it is granted permission, I am confident that appropriate landscaping



could take place to reduce its impact.

29. There are no highway issues resulting from its use, nor are there any significant conservation, archaeological or wildlife issues.
30. There have been no adverse comments from any of the service providers and it would not adversely in itself detract from the use of a public right of way.
31. The consultation on the options for Traveller site provision within the district are proceeding and it seems to me that this is an entirely appropriate case to be considered for a temporary consent on a without prejudice basis. Such consent would enable the Parish Council's reasonable concerns about the cumulative impact of Traveller sites within the Parish to be properly considered. Since the last meeting, Officers have met with the Parish Council to discuss their general concerns and it was agreed that the Council would look at obtaining "hotspot" pre-emptive injunctions in Willingham to minimise additional sites in advance of the Development Plan Document.

### **Recommendations**

32. That temporary permission, subject to conditions, be granted for 3 years.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Circular 01/2006
- Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment 2006
- Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document

**Contact Officer:** Gareth Jones – Head of Planning  
Telephone: (01954) 713151

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/6364/06/F – CAMBOURNE****Change of Use of Dwelling to Offices at 49 Broad Street, Great Cambourne  
for Kirby Property Management Ltd (Retrospective Application)****Recommendation: Approval****Date for Determination: 13th September 2006****Site and Proposal**

1. The site comprises a detached three storey dwelling at the north end of Broad Street, adjacent to the vicarage and with the Wildlife Trust Offices beyond. To the south are terraced three-storey dwellings and to the rear are more dwellings and flats in a high density courtyard arrangement. The property has three parking spaces in the service road at the front. At present the ground floor and part of the first floor are being used for the lettings business, with two first floor rooms occupied by a single tenant who shares the use of the ground floor kitchen (The applicant has supplied a copy of a Notice Requiring Possession by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006). The top floor is vacant.
2. The application has been amended from the original proposal which was to change the use to a mixed use, with office at ground level and residential above, as a result of advice that parking would be inadequate and the building would not comply with fire escape regulations. It is now proposed to change the whole building to office use, although the upper floors will mainly be used for ancillary storage, staff room and meeting room rather than regularly occupied office space. The application is retrospective, and involves the business of a local property-letting agency previously established elsewhere in Cambourne.

**Planning History**

3. Planning permission was granted for this property as part of the development of the residential area CR03 in 2000. The property was used by Bryant homes as a show home and sales offices, before being sold to the applicant. The applicant withdrew an application in December 2005 for the change of use of the premises to Class A2 use with flat above following discussions around what Use Class should be applied for, and that the proposed flat would not comply with Building Regulations and could not therefore be implemented. The business opened at the property in April 2006.

**Planning Policy**

4. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, policies **Cambourne 1 and 2** and policy **SE7** require development at Cambourne to take place in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide.

**Consultations**

5. **Cambourne Parish Council** recommends refusal: loss of residential accommodation; there is sufficient office accommodation locally and there is no

requirement for additional office accommodation through the loss of residential accommodation; insufficient parking provision will result in loss of amenity to adjoining dwellings; question DDA compliance. Concern was raised that the application was retrospective and neighbouring owners had had a loss of amenities over the period pending the consideration of this application.

6. **Amended plans** – the Parish Council has requested an extension of time to the next meeting of the (Parish) Planning Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> November. “The Committee was unable to consider the application as amended as it arrived after the agenda had been closed and placed on the notice boards. There was an informal discussion and it was felt that we would adhere to our original recommendation.”
7. **Local Highway Authority** – no comment.
8. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – no significant impacts from the environmental health standpoint in terms of noise and environmental pollution.

### **Representations**

9. Applicant’s case (original plans): “The property was formerly occupied as the Marketing Suite by Bryant Homes for a five year period. Our client uses part of the existing building as offices in connection with a property management company known as “Kirby Property Management” and wishes to regularise the existing use. The ground floor comprises a couple of offices, WC, utility room, and a fitted kitchen area, with first floor used as a fax room / stationary cupboard and associated storage. The second floor is vacant. For the avoidance of doubt, this application seeks to regularise the existing use, and although the plans refer to a possible residential option at first and second floor level, this does not form part of this application. No external alterations to the building are proposed. With regard to the provisions of the development plan, it is important to note that a primary objective as outlined under paragraph 5.8 of the adopted Local Plan 2004 is to support existing businesses by applying positive policies towards the conversion / adaptation of buildings to business use. It is also pertinent to note the development plan is supportive of mixed use development.
10. Policy EM8 of the adopted Local Plan is supportive of small scale development in class B1 provided that there would be no adverse impact of residential amenity, traffic conditions, village character and other environmental factors; and the development would contribute to a greater range of local employment opportunities.
11. The proposed change of use seeks consent for a very low key business use. There are only 2 full-time and one part-time employees who occupy the ground floor and the premises will be occupied during standard office hours 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 9.30am to 12.30pm Saturdays. The office will be closed on Sundays. The hours will not coincide with the majority of residents who will be at work during the day.
12. The business is very much internet based and as a consequence movements to and from the site will be kept to a minimum. Very few customers will visit the premises, with an average of 2 customer visits a day, but the nature of the business is such that much of the staff’s interaction with customers is largely restricted to the use of the telephone, internet and email, together with site visits to properties. There is no public access other than by appointment and the property very much retains the appearance of a dwelling – no properties are advertised in the windows.

13. Occasionally, in order to complete a transaction, customers will need to visit the premises. This will be by appointment only. Callers to the property are the occasional landlords and tenants to sign documents or collect keys, etc. This enables customers to be managed to ensure that there is no overlap between visitors arriving and leaving the site.
14. With regard to parking provision, the premises benefits from 3 parking spaces. The location of these spaces are identified on the attached site plan. With regard to the staff parking, it is anticipated that the existing staff will car share 2-3 times a week, in which case only one parking space will be used. Inevitably there will be occasions when this will not be possible but again this can be managed with the customer space, which will remain vacant for much of the week.
15. With regard to the site's context it is important to note that Broad Street accommodates a mix of uses and is sited in close proximity to St Neots Road, as opposed to a small cu-de-sac dominated by houses. Opposite the site on the other side of Broad Street is a development comprising a mix of residential and live/work units, and immediately to the north is a vicarage with sizeable car park. Morrisons supermarket is only 30m to the south east. In this context it is considered that the proposed office, which will generate few movements, will not impact on residential amenity in any material way."
16. The applicant has also submitted a letter and notes of cars parked at 2 hourly intervals over a 2 week period showing a maximum of 2 cars present at any one time and an average of less than 1.
17. Amended Plans – please amend the description to “change of use from residential to office (Class B1(a))”. I attach a set of amended plans which clarify the use of the second floor as ancillary accommodation in association with the office use. I am also pleased to attach a Green Travel Plan for your consideration.
18. **A Petition** signed by 19 local residents objecting to the application states:

“We the undersigned wish to express our objection to the establishment of a property letting business at number 49 Broad Street and change of use of this property from residential to commercial use. The original plan for Cambourne was to designate different land areas for residential, recreation and commercial use. This area of Broad Street was designated for residential use only - there are enough commercial areas on this street and it is essential that this area remains residential as designated to avoid a detrimental change of character of this street. The owner is in clear breach of his transferee's Covenant restricting all residents of Broad Street from “creating a nuisance and carrying on a business from the property”.
19. Since the premises became an Office we have noticed an increase in traffic using the service road, with clients often parking inconsiderably and ignoring private parking notices - some even ignoring the one way system on the service road. There are insufficient parking spaces for this premises to run as a business.
20. We urge the Council to reject the application to change the use of this property from residential to commercial.”

3 letters from local residents object to the application:

1. We object to the above planning application for the following reasons:
  - 1) The original plan for Cambourne was to designate different land areas for residential, recreation, commercial and business use. This part of Broad Street was designated for residential use only. We bought our home in Broad Street considering this to be the case. As part of a managed community (Peverel OM are the managers) we all signed land deeds with the Third Schedule Part A (Restrictions) Item 12.1 which clearly stated: 'Not to use the property or any building erected thereon for any purpose other than as a private dwelling house and not create a nuisance nor carry on upon the same any business or trade'.
  - 2) There are currently many unoccupied commercial premises available in Cambourne for this business (Kirby Property Management) to operate from.
  - 3) **There are only 3 parking spaces** allocated with this property. The business already requires (4) parking spaces to accommodate their own vehicles alone, namely: Mr Proctor's, the two employees and the company's courtesy car.
  - 4) **There is no customer parking space** due to 3) above.
  - 5) **There is no parking space for their (large blue) maintenance vehicle** which arrives most days due to 3) above.
  - 6) **Parking problems will no doubt lead to confrontation** in the road with the misuse of other people designated (owned) parking spaces or with parking of vehicles in front of other people's properties.
  - 7) **Increased traffic movement and congestion over and above residential use**, will no doubt give concern for children playing and also access for the emergency services
  - 8) **Change of character of the street** will occur especially if further advertising signs above or in front of this business are erected.
  - 9) **Further growth of the business is a possibility.**
  - 10) **Extended future opening hours are a possibility.**
  - 11) **The application appears to now omit the possibility of tenants occupying the upper floors of the property** (as was the case with the previous application S/6318/05/F withdrawn 12 December 2005). Albeit there is currently a full time tenant residing in the property with the car belonging to them parked outside the property most nights.

**Finally**

**Observation to date, whilst the business has been in operation (without planning permission) for the last 4 months.**

**Most days there is no customer parking space available with the (3) allocated parking spaces fully occupied with staff cars, and the company's courtesy car and large blue maintenance van being parking in the road in front of the property.**

**There is no daytime parking space available for tenants** who rent accommodation in the property. (Mentioned in 11 above).

**Unauthorised customer and business vehicles are being parked in the road or in other residents (owned) parking spaces** (several photos can be provided.)

**Customers of the business are choosing to enter and exit the Broad Street slip road in the wrong direction** as the business is quickly reached at the exit end of the road.

**The business now advertises itself as operating from 49 Broad Street. The property has now been named 'Kirby House'.**

**We ask the District Council to refuse planning permission to change use of a (5) bedroom residential property in a residential area into business premises on the grounds given above.**

2. We write in our capacity as managers of the St James Mews, Broad Street development (comprising 13 freehold houses and 22 leasehold apartments).

No 49 Broad Street forms part of the above mentioned development and as such, the legal owner of the property is under covenant via the freehold transfer, to ensure no business or trade is operated from it.

Peverel OM Ltd formerly objects to the proposed change of use at the above property as follows:

We are aware that a letting agency already operates from the property and are greatly concerned by the negative impact this is having on vehicle parking at the development. Each property is allocated one parking space and we therefore fail to see how a customer oriented business such as letting and management agency can operate with only one space. Clearly, without adequate parking facilities, we fail to see how the operation of this business will not impinge on other residents.

3.
  - a. This would be in breach of the head lease via Perverel OM.
  - b. There would be parking issues on our private road as spaces are already limited for each property so residents find it necessary to park at the side of this road in front of their houses. The limited parking for number 49 would mean clients using the office would need to park in either our spaces or in front of our houses leaving us with no where to park as we are on a main road.
  - c. This private service road is already busy with residents using it. If clients of the business at 49 are to use this too it will become even more dangerous. We have to walk across it to access our parking spaces so do not need further traffic. I work in the same industry as Kirby Property Management so I can guarantee that there will be a number of clients requiring access to their office.
  - d. We have two houses between us and no 49 making it very close. We believe that having a business running this close would devalue our house

and at least put potential purchasers off buying it. There would be the unattractive signage and the cars/ parking issues which would cause people concern.

- e. From a personal point of view one of the reasons we purchase our house was because the row of town houses has character and is attractive. Signage / a shop or office front and sign written vehicles will destroy the character and make the row look a mess.

21. **A petition** of 20 signatures, (including the applicant, the supermarket manager and occupiers of 6 neighbouring properties as well as other properties in Cambourne) has been submitted by the applicant, under the statement:

22. "We collectively support Kirby property planning application; from observation and our belief we consider Broad Street is a mixed use road; there is always parking available at 49 Broad Street with at least 1 of the 3 spaces always available for any visiting customers; the live/work units opposite have 2 or less parking spaces; the Kirby business has no obvious on-property commercial signage; the property is maintained to a very high show house standard with show gardens adding value to other property; the business does not inconvenience neighbours by noise or any other nuisance; the application does not seek to change the appearance of the property; the success of the application has a wider importance to the residents of Cambourne in that Kirby Property indirectly provides over 125 houses in the locality for people to live; all signatories to this petition have been made aware of Mr Skinner's (47 Broad Street) attempts to interfere with the consultation process by misinterpreting and unduly influencing the views of other less-informed Broad Street residents."

5 letters from local residents / property owners in support of the application:

- a. The property in question has always been commercial and I would argue that Broad Street is a mixed use road - and this is likely to increase over time in line with other towns. So I have no issues and would suggest other neighbours are blowing the issue out of all proportion.

I can see no problem with this low footfall business being allowed to operate here.

I do not also agree with some of the other neighbours regarding parking - as it would seem to me there is always generally space to park in the provided three spaces at 49 Broad Street.

- b. Since planning applications very often only attract letters from individuals who are not happy with this or that. To offer my support is I feel important to bring a balanced sensible perspective

The Kirby business was one of the first established businesses in Cambourne and now occupies a property that been in continuous commercial use since first built.

49 Broad Street was formally Bryants new homes show centre for Cambourne

Kirby's intended use is not obstructive. The business does not rely, nor encourage passing trade. There is no shop frontage or over blown commercial signage. I can see no justifiable reason why this application should not be offered the Councils support.



I would also like to point out the wider picture that Kirby provides many Cambourne residents with houses to live in with a maintenance service. In my view this consideration should be paramount in relation to any neighbours who may object with hysterical claims, that bare no resemblance to the Kirby Property Management that I know.

- c. We would like to show our full support on the application. The outside of the building has not been changed to look like a business premises. In fact the only change to the building is that it has been called Kirby House, which again does not suggest it is actually a business premises. We feel it is a vast improvement on the Bryant sales office that was on the site previously. There is not even noticeably a large amount of clients visiting the premises as I understand that most of the clients are actually met in their own homes or future rental homes.
- d. We support this application and reject the attempts of one campaigning resident to skew the local consensus of opinion. 49 Broad Street has previously been Bryant's offices - since Cambourne first evolved. So we can see no reason why this low impact business should not be granted planning consent for change of use.

We would argue that with a high proportion of rental homes located in Cambourne it is important to support Kirby Property Management in its established direction of providing a much needed service to residents.

Any person who believes Broad Street to be a purely residential road is not facing up to the reality of what the situation actually is. The Broad Street that we live on is the main road into Cambourne is top and tailed by large commercial offices over the Wild Life Trust; and dominated by Morrison's Supermarket at the bottom. There is also a selection of similar live work units set in between.

We are not talking about a cul-de-sac in lower Cambourne here!

- e. Although I am now resident overseas I still own a property in Cambourne viz 83 Broad Street, that I currently rent out. However, as you will appreciate this property is a significant asset to me and I therefore have a vested interest in developments in Cambourne.

I know 49 Board Street, Cambourne well from the days when it was a Bryant Show Centre. I was also in Cambourne recently checking up on my property and saw that Kirby's offices were in a very good decorative order and a definite attribute to the neighbourhood particularly with their attractive garden.

From my visit it is apparent that there is more than adequate parking particularly as most of the residents of this part of Cambourne are out at work during the day. Having an office based business complements the fact that there are not many residents in the vicinity during the day adding to the general security of the area. I cannot envisage any way that the business run by Kirby Property Management can be detrimental to the neighbourhood or the neighbours. I would certainly far rather have them next door to me than somebody who is noisy or inconsiderate or who does not maintain his/her property.

I have had nothing but top class service from Kirby Property Management and I believe that they provide a very valuable service to the Cambourne community in their management of a number of properties

As a result I fully support their application to change the use of the building currently occupied by them as I feel that they do nothing but add value to the area because of their commitment to Cambourne, its up keeping and the services that they provide.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

31. The use of the property is, as applied for, B1(a). The letting agency activity is different from an estate agent (Class A2), not least because the quicker turnaround of properties means that potential lessees simply check for availability online, view properties by meeting a staff member at the property, and visit the offices simply to sign documents, collect keys, etc. People do not browse as they do when buying a property. Other visitors to the application property are landlords setting up agency agreements with the company. At present it would seem a fairly low-key operation, with no visual change to the character of the property from residential.
32. The main issue, therefore, is parking. The property benefits from 3 parking spaces, all at the front, (a result of a previous swap of the garage at the rear with a neighbour's parking space on the service road). As a five bedroom dwelling it could be expected that these spaces would be well used by residents and visitors, especially at evenings and weekends, as would be expected of the neighbouring residential properties. In the current use the spaces would be occupied mostly during the day when a significant proportion of neighbours would be out. It is not considered that at present there is a parking problem associated with the use, and conversely, some residents and visitors to the vicarage, have occasionally been seen to park on the service road. However, officers have been made aware by the applicant that he rents space nearby for staff parking, at a property whose residents do not own cars, but this is not sustainable in terms of being able to require this by planning condition / S106 because future occupiers may of course own cars. The applicant has therefore submitted a Travel for Work Plan, which commits to providing support for staff to use means of transport other than the car (one member of staff to become Travel for Work Coordinator, car sharing, cycle storage, drying and showering facilities, etc). The plan does not show any targets for reduced car use, which would be necessary to ensure success, particularly if the business were to expand in terms of staff numbers. It is considered that a condition requiring an amended Travel for Work Plan, and its rigorous monitoring, should ensure that staff parking does not become an issue for neighbours.
33. In order to control visitor parking, it is necessary to ensure that the business remains a letting agency only, and a single planning unit. This can be achieved by planning condition requiring the building to be used for this purpose only within Class B1(a) (automatically preventing significant visiting customer numbers as this would become class A2), and removing permitted development rights for change of use).
34. In terms of the character of the property, its situation on a busy road, the main road into and through Cambourne, means that cars visiting for short periods in the daytime would not be generally noticeable as unusual, whereas they would be if the property was in a residential cul-de-sac for example. The proposed conditions, particularly hours of use, should ensure this use is as neighbourly as possible.
35. Representations have revealed that the property has a covenant in its deeds preventing commercial use. This is not a planning matter: planning permission does not grant consent other any other legislation, and it will be for the management company involved to decide whether to enforce its own rules. The change of use will also require Building Regulations consent.

36. In answer to the Parish Council's comments, the Council does not have a policy preventing the change of use of dwellings to other uses. Whilst there are other offices in Cambourne, the applicant prefers to own rather than rent and it is only for the planning authority to consider the proposed use in the proposed location on its planning merits. The parking issue has been dealt with above. The change of use will also require Building Regulations approval, which will deal with disabled access. It is unfortunate that the application is retrospective but this must not influence the consideration of the application either way but on its merits, and until such practice becomes an offence in law, it is bound to occur on occasion.

### **Recommendations**

37. Delegated powers to approve, as amended by plans stamped 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006, subject to no additional issues being raised by the Parish Council at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November and subject to conditions dealing with the following issues:
- a. Submission and compliance with Travel for Work Plan
  - b. Use only for the purpose of a letting agency within class B1(a)
  - c. Removal of Permitted Development rights for change of use
  - d. Removal of deemed consent rights under Advertisement Regulations
  - e. Restriction on hours of use
  - f. No outdoor / window advertising of properties

### **Informatives**

#### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:  
Cambourne 1 & 2  
SE7** (Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity
  - Highway safety
  - Visual impact on the locality
3. (Reminder about planning permission not granting consent under any other legislation).

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambourne Masterplan and design guide
- Planning file ref: S/6364/06/F

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/1371/92/O – CAMBOURNE  
Submission of Masterplan Revision 30****Purpose**

To approve an amendment to the Cambourne Master Plan drawing and Housing Schedule to accommodate the A428 road alignment and the planning permissions granted to date.

**Background**

1. The original outline planning permission S/1371/92/O and Section 106 Agreement for Cambourne required the approval of a Masterplan and Design Guide. These are comprised of various documents, some of which are regularly updated. In the case of the Masterplan, the map version of the Masterplan shows the disposition of land uses throughout Cambourne, reflecting the broad principles of the main Masterplan document, and is regularly updated to address modifications, refinements and to accommodate more detailed information, such as the layouts of approved housing schemes. The latest approved map version is revision 24B, approved in July 2005, and the developer has subsequently issued revision 30 for approval. This report details the changes since the last approval, and recommends approval of the latest revision. At this stage these revisions relate solely to the extant permission for 3,300 dwellings, not to any work to accommodate the Local Development Framework additional dwellings.
2. The changes made since the last approval are:
  - a) To add the A428 and Broadway new alignments,
  - b) To add detail on the sports area, burial ground, The Vine School, trailer park, High Street developments and the latest housing areas.
  - c) As a result of the approved changes to the A428/Broadway, location of The Vine School and the Upper Cambourne spine roads, the following changes have been made:
    - d) Northern woods moved south (width and general shape remains unchanged)
    - e) Northeastern woods moved west (width and general shape remains unchanged)
    - f) Location of Village Green moved west
    - g) Upper Cambourne development area moved to the new woodland boundaries
    - h) Village Green increased in size
    - i) Indicative greenways shown to reflect the location of landscape/wildlife features, including the hedgerow beside the “concrete road” between East Gate and the eastern bridleway now shown as a Greenway.
3. The revised development area for Upper Cambourne remains as approved at 49.8 hectares including the school site. The indicative housing parcel boundaries have been removed, because they will be reviewed in any eventual master planning exercise to accommodate the Local Development Framework additional housing numbers and possible consequent new facilities. However, the Design Brief for the first phase within Upper Cambourne (which will not affect or depend upon the LDF outcome) is being sent

out to consultation, with a view to being reported to the Planning Committee in December.

**4. Consultations**

- a) The **British Horse Society** - No objection
- b) The **Environment Agency** - No objection in principle. The Agency must be notified of any changes to landform or increase in impermeable areas.
- c) The Council's **Landscape Design Officer** - Awaited
- d) **English Nature** no comment.

**Considerations**

- 5. As described above, the changes since the last approved version are mainly to accommodate the A428 layout. There has been no overall change in developable area. The possibility of achieving bus and emergency access to the new Broadway is not precluded by this revision.

**Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives**

6. Quality, Accessible Services	By providing consistent and transparent planning guidance
Village Life	By allocating adequate space for facilities and safeguarding the separate character of the Cambourne villages
Sustainability	Space is provided for new woodlands, open space/wildlife corridors, public transport and cycleways.
Partnership	Cooperation with the Cambourne Developer to deliver appropriate development.

**Conclusions/Summary**

- 7. The updated Masterplan is acceptable as a current framework which enables the development of Cambourne to continue in a structured fashion pending further work on master planning to comply with national and local planning policies.

**Recommendation**

- 1. **APPROVE** Masterplan 30 as submitted.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Cambourne Section 106 Agreement dated 20<sup>th</sup> April 1994
- Outline planning permission dated 20<sup>th</sup> April 1994, reference S/1371/92/0
- Local Development Framework Submission Draft January 2006
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambourne Master Plan
- Cambourne Design Guide

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

**UPPER CAMBOURNE ALLOTMENTS & VILLAGE GREEN CAR PARK  
DEVELOPMENT BRIEFING DOCUMENT**

**Purpose**

1. To approve the Upper Cambourne Allotments Development Briefing Document ("the Brief") for Development Control purposes as part of the Cambourne Design Guide

**Effect on Corporate Objectives**

2.	Quality, Accessible Services	By providing consistent and transparent planning guidance
	Village Life	By making provision for village facilities
	Sustainability	The location is close to Upper Cambourne centre. Car parking is shared with the village green. New forest trees and hedge planting is proposed.
	Partnership	Cooperation with the Cambourne Developer to deliver appropriate development. Cambourne Parish Council to administer the facility.

**Background**

3. The Briefing Plan has been prepared by the Cambourne Developers' master planners, Randall Thorp, and has been discussed and amended in accordance with Planning Officers' advice.
4. The site is flat land to the east of The Vine School and north of Great Common Farm. The gardens of residential properties Great Common Farm Cottages abut the east boundary of the southern portion of the proposed allotments, whereas the northern portion lies adjacent to an established copse parallel with The Broadway road to Bourn. Mature woodland surrounding the large telecommunications mast forms the northern boundary, and the newly created bridleway in structural landscaping runs along the northwest side. An established hedge runs north/south across the site, and links to the southern boundary field ditch and hedge which contains some large trees. Public Footpath 2 runs through the adjacent agricultural field along the south side of the hedge, and is not affected by the proposals.

**Consultations**

**Parish Council** – consideration should be given to the following:

- a) The trees around the allotments should be fruit trees.
- b) More secure fencing around the allotments would make it harder to scale.
- c) Water supply should mirror Crow Hill Allotments
- d) Access/turning of delivery vehicles delivering compost etc inside or outside the site.
- e) The access routes around the site should have mesh reinforcement.

- f) There should be a permanent building as in the design guide. The Council awaits the detailed layout plan before commenting on the internal layout of the site.
5. **County Highways** – It is not clear if the access road shown notionally on the draft Briefing Plan is to be offered for adoption as highway maintainable at the public expense. The LHA would not be keen to adopt, as the road does not give access to any dwellings, but only serves a small informal car park and allotments. If the road were to be offered for adoption it would have to be constructed to an agreed highway standard and would require a turning head sufficient to accommodate any HGV which mistakenly sought access to Bourn Broadway.
  6. **County Rights of Way Officer** – welcomes the inclusion of the new bridleway on the plan. Signs should be placed on the right of way and the access road at the point where they intersect. The signs should draw attention to the users of both the access road and the bridleway to each other's existence. The users of the public bridleway would have priority over the users of the access road. Where the access road crosses the bridleway the surface of the bridleway should be improved and strengthened, and there should be granite sets placed either side to slow traffic. There is concern that the visibility splay where the access road crosses the bridleway is adequate for the use, given that it appears to be planted either side with trees.
  7. **SCDC Ecology Officer** - More provision should be made for biodiversity, giving consideration to the following:-
    - a) 1-2 metre wide wildflower grass margin adjacent to at least one boundary,
    - b) nest boxes in boundary trees or pole-mounted if trees are not big enough, including kestrel or barn owl box to eat the furry pests,
    - c) a communal compost area,
    - d) a small pond to encourage amphibians'
    - e) log piles to encourage invertebrates'
    - f) lacewing and ladybird boxes.
  8. The ESL recommendations should be taken forward ie:
    - a) The rubble piles should be hand searched for great crested newts before removal,
    - b) The hedges are both historical and complete, providing connectivity for animals and the potential for breeding birds and thus should be retained.
    - c) Field hedge H34 could be laid to improve its longevity and to reduce the management required once the allotments are complete.
  9. **SCDC Environmental Operations Manager** –Consideration should be given to provide a hard surface to the car park to facilitate ease of cleansing. Also any height barriers that may prevent cleansing vehicles from entering to either cleanse or service any litterbins.
  10. **SCDC Environmental Health Officer** – The allotments should be managed to prevent any bonfires or burning on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing Waste Management Legislation.
  11. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – The car park will, particularly outside school hours, have relatively low levels of natural surveillance, with only site UC07 having the potential to overlook the car park to any effective degree. Therefore the appropriateness of its location may be open to question.



12. Hedging should be kept low for surveillance – low-growing thorny shrubs help to prevent the creation of hiding places. The number of entrances to the car park should be kept to a minimum, and surface treatment should discourage inconsiderate driving. A single access to the bridleway could eliminate the non-vehicular access.
13. As the car park may well be used in conjunction with school, village green or other community events lighting should be by means of column-mounted white downlighters to BS 5489:1996 Code of Practice for Outdoor Lighting.
14. **English Nature** – no comment.
15. **British Horse Society** – If it is absolutely necessary to route the access road across the bridleway it would be helpful to have good signage to warn drivers to be on the lookout for horse riders, pedestrians and cyclists.
16. **Environment Agency** – no reply.
17. **Anglian Water** – no reply.

### Representations

18. One letter of concern from a nearby occupant about the visual impact on the outlook from the garden at Great Common Farm Cottage. Weldmesh fencing would allow intrusion onto the privacy of the rear garden, therefore requesting a boarded fence around the adjacent boundaries of the cottages and farm buildings. Concerned that the “tree and shrub planting” in the Southeast corner would encourage vermin.
19. The right of access to The Broadway on the north side of the cottage should be retained and kept clear of tree and shrub planting.
20. One letter from the managing agent for adjacent land owner, Victoria University of Manchester, pointing out the right of access to Great Common Farm Cottage which must be retained. Also wishing to retain the views from the cottage, thus requesting that the height and proposed structure of the boundary be designed to respect their established rights. Suggest that the opportunity be taken to reroute Footpath 2 out of the farmyard and through the allotments and village green.

### Policy

#### Local Development Framework

21. **Policy SP/4 Cambourne Approved Masterplan and Design Guide** in the Local Development Framework Submission Draft January 2006 (LDF) states “**Development at Cambourne will accord with the approved Masterplan and Design Guide (and approved revisions thereof).**” The supporting text summarises the guiding principles of the Masterplan and Design Guide to conserve village character, community, rural character, ecology and energy”.
22. **Policy SP/3 Cambourne** states “**Development in the remainder of Cambourne will be at residential densities such that the overall net density of Cambourne as a whole is approximately 30 dwellings per hectare. Revision of the**

**approved Masterplan and Design Guide will be required to reflect higher densities. A second Section 106 agreement will be required prior to the granting of planning permission to secure additional facilities and developer contributions required as a result of the development. Development will remain within the village framework.”**

The allotments site lies outside the village framework defined in the Proposals Map Development Plan Document, to which **Policy DP/7 Development Frameworks** relates. The policy allows for development related to (among other things) horticulture and outdoor recreation which need to be located in the countryside.

23. **Policy NE/6 Biodiversity** aims to achieve the objective of protecting and enhancing biodiversity.
24. **Policy NE/15 Lighting proposals** aims to ensure the minimum lighting compatible with public safety and security, and reduce the impact of light on highway users and residential and rural amenity.
25. **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004** (Local Plan).
  - EN5** – retention of natural features, new planting appropriate to the character of development, its landscape setting and the biodiversity of the locality.
  - EN12** – retention of features and habitat types of nature conservation value.
  - Cambourne 1** – Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan
  - Cambourne 2** – Development in accordance with Cambourne Design Guide
  - SE2** – Rural Growth Settlements
  - SE7** – Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide.
  - TP1** – Promotion of sustainable transport choices.
26. The **Cambourne Master Plan Report 1995** identifies this area for allotments; the **Cambourne Design Guide** describes the aim for the allotments as “planned to operate successfully and easily, generate social activities, be attractive and contribute to the diversity of the settlement.” Car parking at 1 space per 5 plots, robust fencing and visibility from public areas are specified. “A communal building is necessary. As a minimum this will provide storage for communal equipment, a kitchen and toilets. Additional space for a shop is desirable, to provide a facility for ‘gardening’ members as well as plot holders, thereby widening the potential membership. A water standpipe close to each plot is also essential.” The Cambourne **Section 106 agreement** under “Other Parish Provision” requires provision of the land, to be suitably free-draining, properly graded and seeded, and serviced with mains water.

**Considerations**

27. The Briefing Plan shows the context of the site, close to the School and Village Green and adjacent to an adoptable highway. The Village Green car park is shown having “water bound rolled stone surface for approximately 20 spaces”, although there would be space if needed in the allocated area for approximately twice that amount. Cycle racks are to be “provided by others”; adequate space for this would remain in the irregular shaped areas of the parking land. Although two points of vehicular access are shown, this does not appear to be a necessity for the parking layout. Non-vehicular access to the bridleway is shown at the south side, but might usefully also be provided adjacent to the allotments entrance.

28. The allotments entrance area has adequate space for dedicated car parking, cycle racks, areas for deliveries, composting and storage as well as a site building and toilet facilities. The connection of water, electricity and foul drainage within the site, as well as the provision of the facilities building are stated as being “by others”. However, the Briefing Plan will guide any developer of the site with regard to what should be developed on it, rather than specifying the delivery mechanism. The Notes to the plan state “Temporary toilet facilities to be provided prior to completion of permanent allotment building”; preferable wording would be “on handover and pending completion”.
29. Hedge H34 runs to the east of the area shown for parking and facilities; the Notes state “This hedge to be retained and managed by laying in the approved style for Cambourne. Hand dig to be used to create gaps for allotment access track”. This track loops in a double circuit to serve all parts of the site, so that there would be two points of breach of the hedgerow. Land drains are retained, diverted or created to flow to the surrounding existing ditch system. New planting is proposed along the north side of the Village Green car park, and a small area of recent planting which would be remove to create the allotments entrance will replaced by planting in the car park area. The allotments are to be fenced with 1.8 metre high green Weldmesh, plus rabbit fencing. On the northeast and east sides where no hedge exists new hedge planting is proposed. New shrub and tree planting to continue the line of the roadside copse by The Broadway will need to make allowance for the vehicular right of access to Great Common Farm Cottages. A further area of new planting adjacent to Great Common Farm barn will secure the allotment boundary from the public footpath and any intrusion where surveillance is minimal.
30. The Briefing Document proposes allotments in accordance with the Cambourne Masterplan, and accords with all of the Design Guide requirements apart from the issue of individual facilities on plots, for which a size limit and standard design are suggested. This can be dealt with at planning application stage. The suggested provisions and measures meet the Council’s adopted policies in the Local Plan and Local Development Framework insofar as a village facility would be provided which would be well located for the purpose, allows good access by a variety of transport, can develop community activity and be operated in a safe and secure way. Plentiful opportunities will be afforded to enhance the environment and biodiversity, and proposals for these measures should be incorporated in the planning application. The issues of facilities delivery and developer provision may be re-addressed in a new planning application for Upper Cambourne to comply with the Local Development Framework.
30. The Briefing Plan provides useful guidance, which accords with other adopted policy, to ensure that the eventual planning application for this area will meet the needs of Cambourne with regard to allotment users and those affected by their use of the land, and proper provision of parking for potential users of the Village Green.

### **Recommendation**

31. **APPROVE** the Upper Cambourne Allotments and Village Green Car Park Briefing Plan as part of the Cambourne Design Guide.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Local Development Framework Site Specific and Development Control Policies of the Development Plan Document Submission Draft January 2006

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004

Cambourne Master Plan

Cambourne Design Guide

Outline planning permission S/1371/92/O Section 106 agreement.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee1<sup>st</sup> November 2006**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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**S/1772/06/F - FULBOURN****Single Storey Side Extension and Rear Conservatory, 24 Geoffrey Bishop Avenue,  
for Mr and Mrs Blades****Recommendation: Approval****Date for Determination: 06/11/2006****Site and Proposal**

1. No.24 Geoffrey Bishop Avenue is a detached bungalow with the site area of 487.11sqm. The property has a flat roofed attached garage, which is slightly set forward of the bungalow. The garage is attached to the adjacent neighbour's garage at No.22. The property has a driveway in front of the garage with a reasonably large landscaped front garden. Geoffrey Bishop Avenue is a narrow cul-de-sac set off Dogget Lane, the land opposite the site is a landscaped strip of land and the vicinity is well treed.
2. The application received on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2006 proposes the demolition of the existing garage and porch with the replacement by a single storey side extension, which will provide an additional bedroom, kitchen and bathroom. There is also a proposal for a conservatory at the rear of the site linked to the breakfast room. The side extension would measure 3.8m in width and 10 metres in depth. The conservatory would be 4m wide and project 3.4m from the rear of the bungalow.

**Planning History**

3. None

**Planning Policy**

4. **Policy HG12** of the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004**, states; that planning permission for the extension and alteration of dwellings will not be permitted where, amongst other criteria:
  - a) The proposal would harm seriously the amenities of neighbours through undue loss of light or privacy, being unduly overbearing in terms of mass, or would adversely affect the surrounding properties by virtue of its design, layout, location or materials;
  - b) There would be an unacceptable visual impact upon the street scene.
  - c) There would be an unacceptable loss of off-street parking or garden space within the curtilage.
5. **Policy P1/3** of the **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003** states that a high quality of design will be required for all new developments.

### **Consultations**

6. **Fulbourn Parish Council** – Refuse on the following grounds:
  - a. Fulbourn Parish Council does not approve to this application as it would have a detrimental impact on the garage of No.22, the neighbouring property. This garage at present shares a party wall with No.24.
  - b. No.24 proposes to demolish their garage but has not made the provision in this application for the neighbour. Therefore this application contravenes the 1996 Party Wall Act.
  - c. Various residents in the area are concerned at the impact this application may have on the parking.
  - d. The Parish Council requests a site visit to ascertain the impact of this application.

### **Representations**

7. Owner of No.22 Geoffrey Bishop Avenue has the following concerns:
  - a. My family and I have no objection to the plans as they stand.
  - b. Our only concern is how the demolition of the garage at No.24 will leave the retaining wall and roof of our garage.
  - c. It has been mentioned to us verbally that it is part of the builder's plans to take this into consideration.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

8. The proposal would involve the demolition of the existing single storey garage and porch. The garage projects forward of the main building line by approximately 2.5m and its removal would be an improvement to the appearance of the bungalow when viewed from the street. The proposed extension would involve a hipped roofline projecting away from the south elevation with the extension being the full depth of the existing property. The extension would be built 0.30m off the boundary with No.22 and the plans show the retention of the wall for the garage of No.22. No.22 has a kitchen door and windows facing the proposal, however the existing garage would screen the majority of the extension along with a shed, which is located at the rear of the garage.
9. The proposal would see the loss of the garage parking space, although the driveway would be adequate to accommodate 2 spaces thus meeting the required 1.5 parking spaces requirement. Therefore despite the Parish Councils concerns over lack of off street car parking the development would meet the standard parking requirements. Whilst the plan shows the retention of the garage wall of the neighbour's property (No.22) the works to this during the demolition process would fall under the Party Wall Act 1996 legislation, and would not be a material planning concern. The requirements of the Party Wall Act are included as an informative on all planning permission decision notices. The grant of planning permission does not override such legislation.

### **Recommendation**

10. Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission. (Reason - To ensure that consideration of any further application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
2. No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used for the external walls and roof have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. (Reason - To ensure that visually the development accords with neighbouring buildings.)

#### Informatives

1. In consideration of the neighbouring property at No.22 Geoffrey Bishop Avenue, the applicant should adhere to the Party Wall Act 1996, in relation to the demolition of the garage and the retention of the neighbouring wall.

#### Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - Policy **HG12** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
  - Policy **P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity
  - Parking
  - Visual impact on the locality

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Application file ref: S/1772/06/F

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

1<sup>st</sup> November 2006

**AUTHOR/S:** Head of Planning Services

**KEY ACTIONS FOLLOWING THE RECEIPT OF THE MAJORS AND CPA AUDIT REPORTS**

**Purpose**

1. To consider the implications of the key actions that are needed to be taken to address the findings of the two audits of the planning processes.
  - (a) ODPM (now Department for Communities and Local Government - DCLG)
  - (b) Audit Commission's Environment inspection

The Audit Commission's report included 5 recommendations that we are now taking forward as key actions. The recommendations within the DCLG audit, which are by their very nature relatively detailed, will be subsumed within these key actions.

**Background**

2.
  - (a) The Council was made a Standards Authority in respect of Major applications in December 2004. The Council was tasked with raising its performance from determining 39% of major applications within 13 weeks in 2004/05, to 57% by the end of 2005-2006. The Council achieved and indeed bettered this target reaching a figure of 62%. Nevertheless, the Government's protocol necessitated an in depth assessment of the development control section including processes and practices. A copy of the report is attached as appendix 1 and a summary of the recommendations, as appendix 2. Appendix 3 is the accompanying letter from Baroness Andrews of the DCLG, and in this letter she confirms her belief that SCDC is making "excellent" progress and adds her personal congratulations on the progress we have made.
  - (b) In July 2004, the Audit Commission published a Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) category for South Cambridgeshire as "fair", and a progress assessment in December 2005 found that performance on key indicators had declined but that the decline had been halted. In May 2006 the Audit Commission inspected the Council's planning services again. A copy of the inspection report is attached as appendix 4. The inspection focussed on the development control, planning policy, conservation and planning administration.  
It's important to note that the Inspectors emphasised that in the period between the 2004 CPA inspection and the 2006 planning inspection the Commission has introduced new key lines of enquiry and methodology. The effect of these changes was said by the Inspectors to significantly "raise the bar".  
Notwithstanding this and the significant effects of capping on the sections concerned, the Council's planning service was still rated as "fair"
  - (c) However both reports raised concerns about the Council's capacity to meet future challenges. The Audit Commission report rated the Council's prospects for improvement as "uncertain". The DCLG's report included the

comment “it is not clear that this improvement can be sustained” and that the main reason is the financial position of the Council.

- (d) The five key recommendations of the Audit Commission inspection are extracted in appendix 5, and the proposed key actions in response are contained in the action plan at appendix 6. For information, I have attached as appendix 7, a copy of a slide presentation given to all planning staff in respective of these reports.

## **Considerations and options in Respect of the Key Actions**

### **2. Capacity issues**

#### **(a) Review skills available/required**

- (i) The reports are very positive about the quality and commitment of planning officers, and that this is recognised both internally and externally. Further, it recognises that the service is encouraging high quality development and that specialist advice is available. The development of Council staff is positive, as is innovative action such as that which created the post of Majors Champion.
- (ii) However, concerns are raised about the Council’s ability to recruit and retain experienced staff. Members will be aware that the experience profile of the section has declined as staff leave, and new staff recruited. Further, there are areas where we do not have in house skills, and this makes us reliant on outside providers such as the County Council for highways advice, and the environment Agency for drainage. In addition, ideally we should have access to urban design advice in-house and there’s a general need for training in this area given the scale and nature of the Council’s development agenda. Recent changes in legislation requiring design and access statements have also highlighted the need for increased knowledge of disability issues.
- (iii) The Major Development Manager has already reviewed the resource needed within ther team, and this work needs to be built on with the production of a workforce plan to review the skills available and those required. This should be linked to a service recruitment strategy.

#### **(b) Senior Management Capacity**

- (i) Concerns are raised about the loss of the Development Services Director given the centrality of planning services to the Council’s corporate priorities and the significant challenges relating to major growth in the area. The capacity of other senior officers within the service is already stretched, and there is a general lack of project management skills within the service.
- (ii) The new Management Team will need to have regard to these issues in implementing the Council’s transformation project

#### **(c) Alternative Service Delivery Approaches**

The reports recognise the value to the service of partnership working that is already in place. We are already working with the City Council to deliver affordable housing and 'Park and Ride' services. The approach currently being pursued with respect of the Southern Fringe and Cambridge East needs to be developed

(d) ***Identify Alternative Funding to Support Key Posts***

- (i) The Council needs to consider all sources of funding. This could for example include use of money from applicants to fund for example a monitoring officer and use of charges for legal agreements to fund a legal officer. Additionally, we could look at charging for services such as pre-application negotiations.
- (ii) An officer working party should be set up to consider all additional sources of funding

3. **Improve User Focus**

(a) ***Establish Engagement with Users***

- (i) User satisfaction is below average in comparison with other authorities. The group surveyed are applicants only. This is based on a Government survey generated questions. In response to this we have targeted improving communication with applicants through IT as the way forward i.e. that was the area of greatest concern.
- (ii) In addition we have written to all local agents and generated a list of those interested in being part of a Local Agents Panel/forum. Pressure of work has prevented the meetings taking place. In response to the Audits, this panel should now be constituted.
- (iii) In addition, the wider public's satisfaction should be surveyed to identify other areas where service delivery could be improved.

(b) ***Householder Advice and Guidance***

- (i) While the general quality of the advice and guidance is complimented, it is suggested that it is not as accessible to the general public as it could be. Accordingly we are already looking at the web site to improve this aspect, and at the availability of leaflets targeted at this section of the Council's service users. The South Cambs news can also be used to generate the required improvements.

(c) ***Information for Non-IT Users***

The general population is particularly IT literate, and this is demonstrated by the huge number of hits on the planning areas of the website. As above, the use of more targeted leaflets and the South Cambs News should address this issue.

(d) ***Review Committee Arrangements***

- (i) While Parish Council representatives can speak at Planning Committee, the public and applicants cannot. It is suggested that it

would significantly improve the Council's service if they could. Officers have already obtained details of best practice from elsewhere and will be assessing their impact and possible local application.. In

- (ii) It is suggested that a small working group of officers and members is set up to advise the Planning Committee on the best way on this and more general aspects of the Committee such as when it meets.

(e) ***Ensure Standards Meet User Needs***

The agents' panel and wider survey of service users can be used to explore wider satisfaction with the service. From this a service charter setting out what users can expect can be developed building on the numerous existing service commitments such as the enforcement protocol. Service First customer service standards are about to be introduced.

4. **Direct Resources at Priorities and Need**

(a) ***Identify Activities, Outcomes & Resources***

- (i) The service is already committed through the corporate performance plan to maximise delivery against corporate priorities and objectives and national priorities.
- (ii) Moving forward to next year's plan, it will need to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that it is in line with these objectives and priorities

(b) ***Clear Outcome Focussed Targets***

Understandably, resources are being targeted towards meeting the needs of the growth agenda. However this has to be balanced against the needs of the existing community and work such as the conservation appraisals and ensuring quality developments in villages throughout the District must be maintained. It follows therefore that more attention needs to be paid to this area of the service's delivery needs to given when the next Performance Plan is prepared.

5. **Systematic Value For Money Approach**

(a) ***Use Cost Information to Drive up Performance***

- (i) The Premier Division of local authority planning services(a national benchmarking and best practice group)has taken the initiative with The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy to try and achieve more meaningful comparisons between Authorities. The existing figures are accepted even by the Inspectors themselves to be of little relevance since they are based on so many variables such as the degree of on-costs and grant available. It is suggested that if these discussions are successful that they are reported back to Cabinet through the Portfolio Holder.
- (ii) The Premier Division is also revising its comparative data, and once this exercise is completed, it is suggested that the data be included with the quarterly performance figures reported to the Planning Committee

(b) ***Use Comparative Data***

For comparative purposes, the Inspectors chose a family of other authorities. Unfortunately a significant number of these either chose to not submit their data to CIPFA (the vehicle for generating comparable statistics for Local Government) or are so small with negligible development to negate any useful comparison. Of those that can be compared, it is clear that, for example, with regard to the actual cost of Development Control, the Council provides one of the most cost effective services.

(c) ***Use Benchmarking***

The Council already uses both the County Group and the Premier Division to drive up-performance. So, for example, when the delegated reports were introduced they were based on existing practice within the Premier Division, and I have suggested earlier within this report that we base any protocol on public/applicant speaking at Committee after a trawl of existing best practice. Conversely, good practice has often gone the other way, so other Authorities within the County Group and Premier Division have adopted South Cambridgeshire District Council's system of Chairman's delegation and protocol on affordable housing involving the relevant Parish Council.

6. **Committee/Councillor Capacity**

(a) ***Clarify Roles***

(b) ***Review Delegation Agreement***

A review has already been carried out and it would be premature to carry out a further one without assessing its impact. The early signs are that there has been a reduction in the number of applications going to committee. It would be appropriate to review the situation at the end of the year.

(c) ***Mandatory Training***

Discussions have already taken place with the Chairman of Planning Committee and the Member responsible for training to identify a resource to provide what's necessary, and it's hoped that a training program can be agreed by the Autumn.

**Summary Options**

- (i) For each of the above there are different options. Members' agreement will therefore be necessary at each stage. However, some actions will be required if the Council is to continue to perform its planning function.

**Implications**

7. Financial	Current funding of the posts within the relevant sections is drawn from Community Charge, Planning Delivery Grant, Planning application fees and Cambridge Horizons. The key actions may have financial implications, but at this stage they cannot be identified.
Legal	Both the Audit Commission and the DCLG have powers that can significantly effect the delivery of the planning service within South Cambs
Staffing	If the long term financial challenges are not met, staff resources would not be sufficient to discharge the Council's statutory functions
Risk Management	If the Council does not address the Audit Commission recommendations, they would take further action. Ultimately, Government could put in place alternative means of delivering the planning service. Failure to meet targets could result in a significant loss of income currently provided by the Planning Delivery Grant
Equal Opportunities	The Council works hard to apply planning law and policy fairly and consistently to development across the district. This is embedded in the Council's policy on Traveler issues, which also highlights the commitment to "uphold the rights of all local residents and Travelers to live peacefully and safely, with mutual respect for the rights of others". If as a result of the key actions, we fail to meet this target, then we could be subject of an investigation by the CRE

### Consultations

9. None, other than internal officer discussions with the Planning Portfolio holder and the Chairman of the Planning Committee.

### Equal Opportunities Implications

10. In line with general and specific statutory duties under the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Council operates a Race Equality Scheme (RES) in order to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote race equality and good race relations. This was last revised and agreed by the Council in July 2006, with an update of the 2005 - 2008 action plan. The Council is committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, whatever their race or background. The Scheme gives priority to actions relating to Travelers as the biggest ethnic minority in the district (around 1.0% of the district's population). Statistics from the 2001 Census also show that, whilst only 2.9% of the district's population is made up of black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, there are three wards (Girton, Milton and Teversham) where the BME population is two or three times as much."  
The Council needs to ensure that in going forward on the key actions, regard is had to its statutory duties in this area.

### Conclusions / Summary

11. The key actions arising out of the project plan will need to be addressed and this will include the following:
- (a) A revised workforce plan be produced
  - (b) A service recruitment strategy be prepared

- (c) The transformation plan needs to address the capacity of senior management
- (d) An officer working group be put in place to identify alternative areas of funding
- (e) A local agents panel/forum be established
- (f) A wider satisfaction survey of service users be carried out
- (g) Householder advice be made more accessible through the web and through other means including leaflets and use of the South Cambs News
- (h) Introduce Service First Standards
- (i) Establish an officer/member working party to recommend on revised Committee arrangements including public/applicants speaking
- (j) Ensure Service Plan properly addresses maximising service delivery of corporate priorities and objectives
- (k) Report results of Premier Division on comparative costs to Cabinet
- (l) Report benchmarking comparisons within Premier Division to Planning Committee
- (m) Review delegation protocol at the end of the year
- (n) That the conclusion of both reports about the financial uncertainties threatening service delivery be made part of the Council's case in respect of next year's Council tax

**Recommendations**

That the above summary conclusions be adopted as an action plan to address the key actions required in response to the audit reports

**Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives**

12..	Affordable Homes	The reports recognise that the authority is already a leading authority when it comes to providing affordable housing. However. The key actions will help maintain this position.
	Customer Service	Satisfaction levels of applicants need to be improved, and that of the wider public surveyed.
	Northstowe and other growth areas	Resourcing to address this challenge needs to be addressed
	Quality, Accessible Services	The key actions will result in improvements
	Village Life	The key actions will result in improvements
	Sustainability	The key actions will result in improvements
	Partnership	The key actions will result in improvements

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Moving Forward performance Plan 2005

- BMG research Report BVPI Planning Survey May 2004
- Planning and Development Stats 2004 CIPFA
- Audit Commission Report Environment Inspection SCDC July 2006
- Best Value Standards Report 2005/06 Evaluation of SCDC June 2006

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