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25 November 2008

To: Chairman – Councillor Mrs PS Corney  
Vice-Chairman – Councillor RJ Turner  
All Members of the Planning Committee - Councillors Mrs PM Bear, BR Burling,  
TD Bygott, Mrs JM Guest, Mrs SA Hatton, SGM Kindersley, MB Loynes,  
CR Nightingale, Mrs DP Roberts, Mrs HM Smith and JF Williams, and to  
Councillor NIC Wright (Planning Portfolio Holder)

Quorum: 4

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, 3 DECEMBER 2008 at 2.00 p.m.**

Yours faithfully  
**GJ HARLOCK**  
Chief Executive

**The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.**

Members of the public and parish councils wishing to speak at this meeting must contact the Democratic Services Officer by no later than noon on Monday before the meeting.  
A [public speaking protocol](#) applies.

Planning Applications might be considered in a different order to that published below to assist in the effective management of public speaking. Any revision will appear on the website the day before the meeting.

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<b>AGENDA</b>		<b>PAGES</b>
<b>PROCEDURAL ITEMS</b>		
<b>1. Apologies</b> To receive apologies for absence from committee members.		
<b>2. General Declarations of Interest</b>		<b>1 - 2</b>
<b>3. Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2008 as a correct record. The minutes are attached to the online version of the agenda.		

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND OTHER DECISION ITEMS**

- |            |   |                  |
|------------|---|------------------|
| <b>4.</b>  | <b>S/1863/08/F – Stapleford (11A Church Street)</b>   | <b>3 - 6</b>     |
| <b>5.</b>  | <b>S/0812/08/F - Stapleford (Keepers Cottage, Haverhill Road)</b><br>Appendix 1 is attached to the online version of the agenda.  | <b>7 - 22</b>    |
| <b>6.</b>  | <b>S/1614/08/F – Bassingbourn-Cum-Kneesworth (The Causeway)</b>   | <b>23 - 34</b>   |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>S/1531/08/F - Comberton (Westfield Farm, Royston Lane)</b>   | <b>35 - 40</b>   |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>S/1592/08/F – Comberton (Land at The Valley)</b><br>The June 2008 Committee report is attached to the online version of the agenda.  | <b>41 - 60</b>   |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>S/1840/08/F - Cottenham (Land North of Orchard Close)</b>  | <b>61 - 70</b>   |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>S/1821/08/F &amp; S/1823/08/LB – Ickleton (Caldrees Manor, 2 Abbey Street)</b>   | <b>71 - 76</b>   |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>S/1558/08/O – Fowlmere (Land East of Pipers Close)</b>   | <b>77 - 84</b>   |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>S/1584/08/F- Little Eversden (16 Lowfields)</b>  | <b>85 - 94</b>   |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>S/1655/08/F – Histon (6 Cottenham Road)</b>  | <b>95 - 102</b>  |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>S/1640/08/RM - Linton (Land R/O Newdigate House, Horseheath Road)</b><br>The Appeal decision is attached to the online version of the agenda.  | <b>103 - 110</b> |
| <b>15.</b> | <b>S/1628/08/F- Barrington (Land Adjacent 17 Orwell Road)</b>   | <b>111 - 118</b> |
| <b>16.</b> | <b>S/1598/08/F – Sawston (Former Marley Building Materials Ltd, Babraham Road)</b>  | <b>119 - 128</b> |
| <b>17.</b> | <b>C/6/9/1A – Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (Arbury Park South Bus Stop) and C/6/9/1A – Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (Histon &amp; Impington Bus Stops)</b><br>The plans are attached to the online version of the agenda. | <b>129 - 134</b> |

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

- 18. Appeals against Planning Decisions and Enforcement Action**  
**Contact officers:**  
Gareth Jones, Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities) – Tel: 01954 713155  
John Koch, Appeals Manager (Special Projects) – Tel: 01954 713268

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

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- **Do not** re-enter the building until the officer in charge or the fire brigade confirms that it is safe to do so.

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If someone feels unwell or needs first aid, please alert a member of staff.

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### **Toilets**

Public toilets are available on each floor of the building next to the lifts.

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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**

Since 1 July 2008, the Council has operated a new Smoke Free Policy. Visitors are not allowed to smoke at any time within the Council offices, or in the car park or other grounds forming part of those offices.

### **Food and Drink**

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### **Mobile Phones**

Visitors are asked to make sure that their phones and other mobile devices are set on silent / vibrate mode during meetings or are switched off altogether.

## **ADVICE TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING AND / OR SPEAKING AT THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Is this meeting open to the public?**

Yes. The vast majority of agenda items will be considered in public. In extremely rare situations, the law does allow Councils to consider a limited range of issues in private session without members of the Press and public being present. An example would be a planning enforcement issue in which sensitive personal matters are discussed, or options which, if publicised, could prejudice the Council's position. In every case, the public interest in excluding the Press and Public from the meeting room must outweigh the public interest in having the information disclosed to them.

### **When and where is the meeting?**

Details of the location, date and time of this meeting, and members of the Committee are shown at the top of the front page of the paper agenda. Details of the contact officer can be found at the bottom of that page. Further information, including dates of future meetings, is available on the [Council's website](#).

### **Can I speak? Who else can speak?**

Yes (but only if you have already written to the Council in response to formal consultation). If you wish to speak, you must register with Democratic Services by 12 o'clock noon on the Monday immediately before the meeting. Ring the number shown at the bottom of the front page of the agenda. Speaking to a Planning Officer will **not** register you to speak; you must register with Democratic Services. There are four categories of speaker: One objector (maybe on behalf of a group), the Applicant (or their agent or a supporter), the local Parish Council and the local Councillor (s) if not members of the Committee. Occasionally, the Chairman may allow other speakers – for details, see the [Public Speaking protocol](#) on the Council's website

### **What can I say?**

You can have your say about the application or other matter but you must bear in mind that you are limited to three minutes. You should restrict yourself to material planning considerations: Councillors will **not** be able to take into account issues such as boundary and area disputes, the perceived morals or motives of a developer, the effect on the value of property (including yours), loss of a private view over adjoining land (unless there a parallel loss of an important view from public land), matters not covered by planning, highway or environmental health law, issues such as access, dropped kerbs, rights of way and personal circumstances, suspected future development, or processing of the application. Further details are available in the Council's [Protocol for speaking at Planning Committee](#) meetings. After you have spoken, Committee members may ask you to clarify matters relating to your presentation. If you are not present by the time your item is considered, the Committee will determine the application in your absence – it is not possible for officers to predict the timing of agenda items.

### **Can I give the Councillors written information or photographs relating to my application or objection?**

Yes you can, but **not** at the meeting itself. If you want to send further information to Councillors, you should give them as much time as possible to read or view it. Their [contact details](#) can be obtained through Democratic Services or via the Council's website. You must send the same information to every member of the Committee and to your local Councillors. You can e-mail the Committee at [planningcommittee\(at\)scams.gov.uk](mailto:planningcommittee(at)scams.gov.uk) (replace (at) with @). Any information sent to Councillors should be copied to the Planning Officer dealing with your application.

### **How are the applications considered?**

The appropriate planning officer will introduce the item. Councillors will then hear any speakers' presentations. The order of speaking will be (1) Objector, (2) Applicant / agent / supporter (3) Parish Council (4) local Councillor(s). The Committee will then debate the application and vote on either the recommendations of officers in the agenda or a proposal made and seconded by members of the Committee. Should the Committee propose to follow a course of action different to officer recommendation, Councillors are required to give sound planning reasons for doing so.

## **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The law allows Councils to consider a limited range of issues in private session without members of the Press and public being present. Typically, such issues relate to personal details, financial and business affairs, legal privilege and so on. In every case, the public interest in excluding the Press and Public from the meeting room must outweigh the public interest in having the information disclosed to them. The following statement will be proposed, seconded and voted upon.

"I propose that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item number(s) ..... 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(s) ..... of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.”

If exempt (confidential) information has been provided as part of the agenda, the Press and public will not be able to view it. There will be an explanation on the website however as to why the information is exempt.

### **Notes**

- (1) 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 Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities).
- (2) The Council considers every planning application on its merits and in the context of national, regional and local planning policy. As part of the Council's customer service standards, Councillors and officers aim to put customers first, deliver outstanding service and provide easy access to services and information. At all times, we will treat customers with respect and will be polite, patient and honest. The Council is also committed to treat everyone fairly and justly, and to promote equality. This applies to all residents and customers, planning applicants and those people against whom the Council is taking, or proposing to take, planning enforcement action. More details can be found on the Council's website under 'Council and Democracy'.

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South Cambridgeshire District Council

Planning Committee – 3 December 2008 – Declaration of Interests

Councillor .....

**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

Item no: ..... App. No. .... Villiage: .....

Reason:

**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

Item no: ..... App. No. .... Villiage: .....

Reason:

**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

Item no: ..... App. No. .... Villiage: .....

Reason:

**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

Item no: ..... App. No. .... Villiage: .....

Reason:

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**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

**Item no:** ..... **App. No.** ..... **Village:** .....

**Reason:**

**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

**Item no:** ..... **App. No.** ..... **Village:** .....

**Reason:**

**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

**Item no:** ..... **App. No.** ..... **Village:** .....

**Reason:**

**Personal / Personal and Prejudicial [delete as appropriate]**

**Item no:** ..... **App. No.** ..... **Village:** .....

**Reason:**

Please return the completed form to [ian.senior@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:ian.senior@scambs.gov.uk) prior to the meeting, or leave it with the Democratic Services Officer in the Chamber, or leave it with the Democratic Services Section.



**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1863/08/F – STAPLEFORD**  
**Conversion of Garage to Annex - No 11A Church Street, for Mr J. Field**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2008**

**Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the Officer recommendation is contrary to the response of the Parish Council and at the request of District Councillor Nightingale.**

**Members of Committee will visit the site on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The application site falls within the Stapleford village framework and residential area. Properties in the locality are of varying size and styles. No 11A is an L-shaped pitched roof bungalow accessed from Church Street. There is an existing double garage to the northeast of the dwelling and a gravel hard surface for car parking and turning between the dwelling and Church Street.
2. The full application, submitted on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008, proposes to convert the garage to an annex for relatives. The proposed conversion involves the original garage door being replaced by 2 windows, 3 rooflights added in the rear elevation facing No 1 St Andrew's Close and a new window installed in the west side elevation facing the 2m high boundary fencing. There is no change to the footprint and height of the original garage. The accommodation would comprise a guest bedroom, utility room and shower/wc.

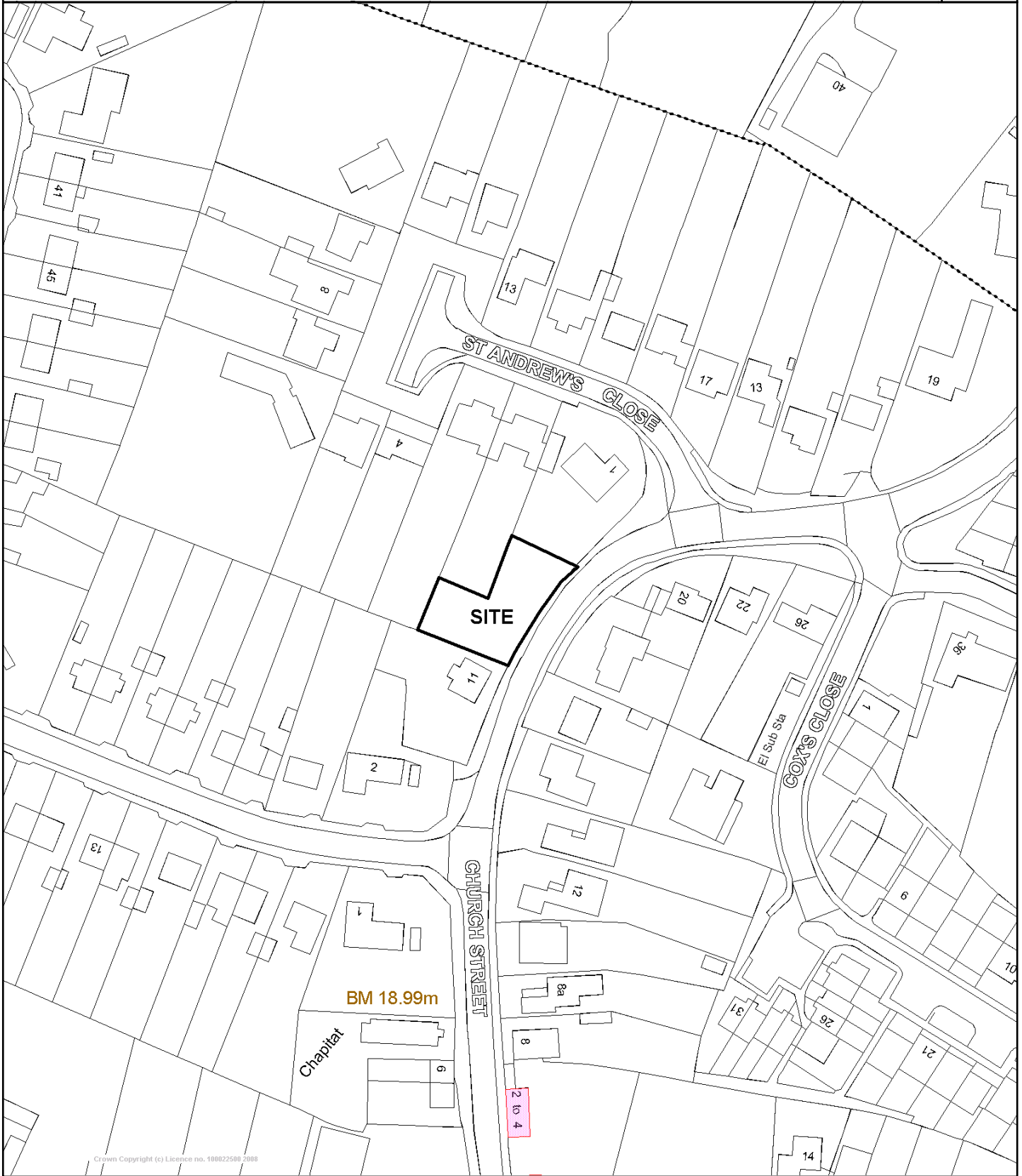
**Planning History**

3. **S/1864/06/F** – planning consent granted for double garage.
4. **S/1232/06/F & S/2005/05/F** – planning consent granted for a bungalow.

**Planning Policy**

5. **Policy DP/2** of the LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007 states that all new development must be of high quality design, and as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development.
6. **Policy DP/3** of the LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007 resists development that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity, village

S/1863/08/F Stapleford



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character, community facilities, and from traffic generated and undue environmental disturbance.

7. **Policies TR/1 & TR/2** the LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007 partly states that the Council will seek to ensure that every opportunity is taken to increase accessibility to non-car modes by any appropriate measures such as restricting car parking and to the maximum levels of an average of 1.5 space per dwelling.

### **Consultations**

8. **Stapleford Parish Council** recommends refusal and states that: “they wish to reiterate their concerns voiced on that occasion (when the bungalow was built) about the dangers of vehicle movements posed by access from the bungalow onto Church Street. The fact that the provision for 2 vehicles is now lost and that there is supposedly parking for 4 vehicles means that this danger is exacerbated.
9. The Council was also very concerned that the plans show what may be construed as a self-contained dwelling. They are concerned that a dangerous precedent is being set in that this will be the second occurrence of change of use being made in this village to gain additional accommodation without the required planning being carried out.
10. Thus the members did not recommend approval for this development. The comments are set out on the blue form but they comprise:
  - a. Change of use removes parking facility
  - b. Insistence that vehicles leaving this site should do so in a forward gear and that reversing onto the highway at this dangerous point be prohibited.
  - c. That the garage should be reinstated and not used for accommodation.
11. Should there be a recommendation for approval from the professional officers the members request that the application be sent to committee with the need for a site visit to inform decision making.”
12. **Local Highway Authority** – comments are awaited.

### **Representations**

13. None received

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

14. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are parking/highway safety interests and whether the structure will be used as a separate dwelling.

#### ***Parking/ highway safety interests***

15. The comments about on-site car parking provision and turning area are noted. Having considered the existing gravel and landscaped area between the bungalow and the road, it is my view that sufficient space could be provided for 2 car parking spaces and on-site turning providing the hard surface is extended to the landscaped area.
16. I accept that the submitted 1:500 block plan showing 4 car parking spaces with turning area on site is unworkable. The applicant’s agent has been advised to submit a revised plan to show on-site turning area with 2 car parking spaces in order to address the parking and highway safety issues.

17. Given that the maximum car parking provision standard is 1.5 space per dwelling, I consider that 2 car parking spaces to be provided for the bungalow and the proposed family annex are acceptable and the proposal could have no adverse impact on traffic and parking conditions nor worsen the existing situation. The retention of on-site car parking and turning areas can be covered by conditions.

***Separate dwelling***

18. The proposed conversion would be a self-contained unit with toilet, utility/kitchen and a guest bedroom. The concern of using the annex as a separate residential unit can be covered by condition to ensure that the annex shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential of the No 11A Church Street.

***Other issues***

19. The proposed external alterations to windows and openings do not have a harmful impact in the street scene or on the character and appearance of the area. Nor would they seriously harm the amenity of neighbours. I expect that the amended plan would show part of the existing landscaped area to be replaced by hard surface in order to provide sufficient space for turning area. I do not consider that the loss of planting would cause serious harm to the visual amenity.

**Recommendation**

14. Subject to receipt of amendment in regard adequate parking and turning space, approve.

**Conditions**

1. Standard Condition 1 - Time limit (3 years) - Reason.
2. The permanent space to be reserved on the site for turning and parking as shown on the amended plan shall be provided before the annex hereby permitted is occupied and thereafter retained as such. (Reason – In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
3. The annex, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as No 11A Church Street. (Reason – To minimise additional traffic generation in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, Development Plan Document, adopted July 2007
- Planning Files Ref: S/2005/05/F, S/1232/06/F, S/1864/06/F and S/1863/08/F

**Contact Officer:** Emily Ip – Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713250

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/0812/08/F – STAPLEFORD**  
**Extensions Following Part Demolition of Existing House at Keepers Cottage, Haverhill Road for Mr J Culbert**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Date for Determination: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

**Notes:**

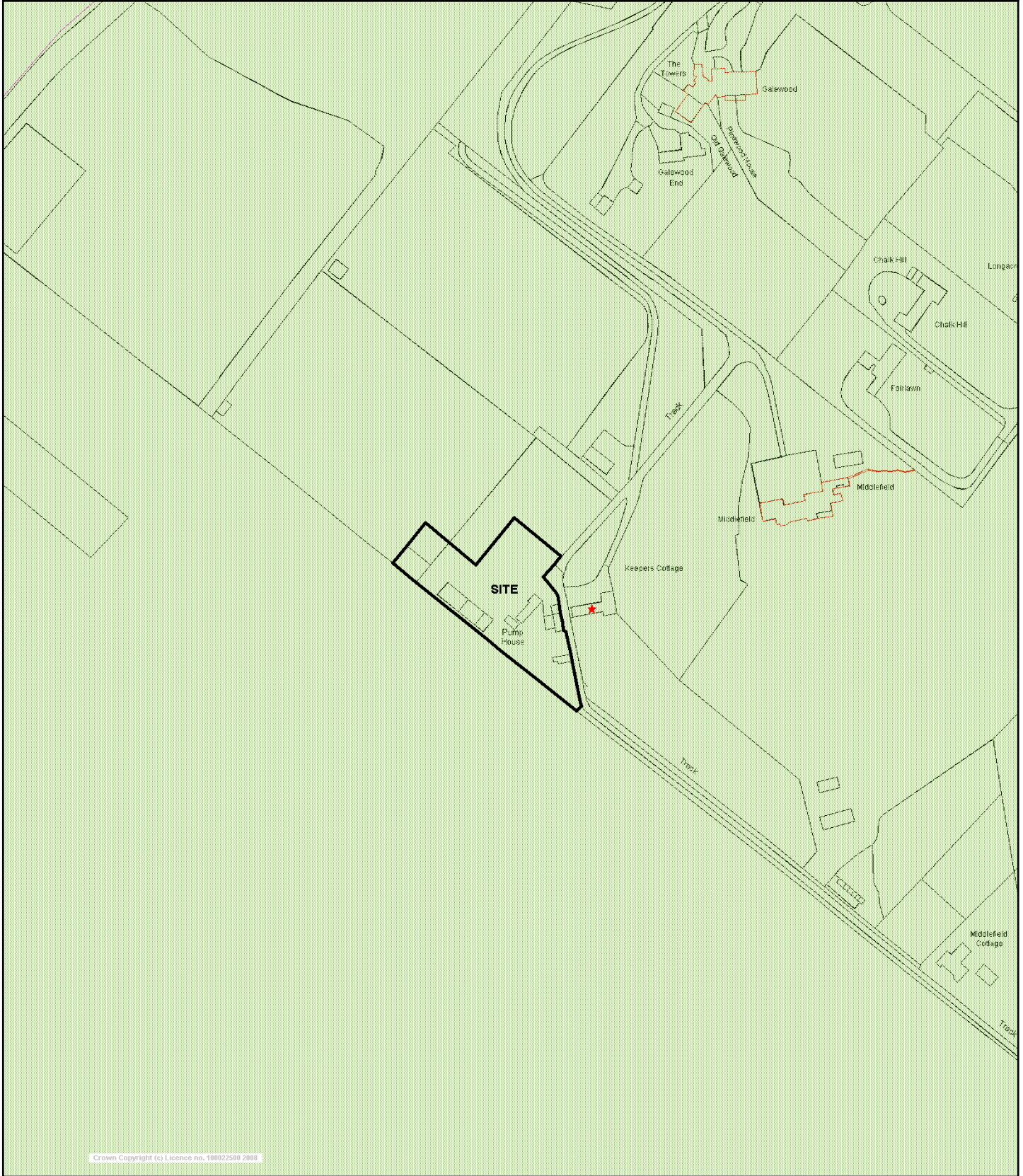
**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the application is a Departure from the Development Plan.**

**Departure Application**

**Site and Proposal**

1. Keepers Cottage is one of an isolated group of dwellings located on the brow of a hill in the countryside and Green Belt to the north of the village of Stapleford. The site is occupied by Keepers Cottage, an early twentieth century brick and tile bungalow designed by Edwin Lutyens that has been significantly extended, predominantly over the last 10 years, together with a range of outbuildings along the south-western boundary of the site. To the east, across the access track, is a two storey property known as The House on the Hill, whilst further to the north-east is Middlefield, a Grade II\* Listed house.
2. The full application, submitted on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008, and amended on 20<sup>th</sup> June and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008, proposes to retain the original dwelling, to demolish the existing extensions, pump house and all outbuildings, and to extend the original dwelling on its north-western side. The extensions would comprise two single storey 3.2 metre high flat roofed wings, linked to the original dwelling with lightweight glazed structures. The ground floor of the western wing would comprise 6 bedrooms and a kitchen, whilst the eastern wing would provide dining and drawing room accommodation, with the existing/original cottage being used as a lounge and study. The proposal also seeks to provide non-habitable accommodation (including a pool, sauna, changing room, gym and plant/storage area) at basement level. The development would enclose an internal courtyard area and, within this courtyard, the ground levels would be cut away to provide a basement garden and to expose the basement accommodation. The change in ground levels would be achieved through terracing arranged on 5 levels leading from the existing ground level to the basement swimming pool. The extensions would be constructed from soft red handmade bricks with a sedum green roof to the eastern wing and a part sedum roof/part roof garden and terrace to the western wing, with the latter element accessed via a glass walled sun room. An existing rooflight in the roof space of the original cottage would be removed.

S/0812/08/F Stapleford



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3. The initial scheme has been amended to ensure the building would be sited within the defined residential curtilage of the property. This has involved the following:
  - a. East wing – length reduced by 3.5m to 17.8m and width reduced by 2.5m from 9.5m to 7m;
  - b. West wing – length increased by 3m to 24.2m;
  - c. Windows in west wing lowered to 1.6m above ground level;
  - d. Number of openings in south-east/front elevation reduced and glazing bars removed.

### **Planning History**

4. The site has a long recent planning history. In 1993, the property consisted of the original bungalow, a flat roof extension to one side, a pump house building to the other side, a long range of outbuildings along the western boundary and a range of detached outbuildings on the south side of the dwelling.
5. Under planning ref: **S/1928/93/F**, an application to erect a 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> storey extension on the rear/north side of the dwelling together with the addition of a first floor to the existing bungalow was refused on the grounds that the extension would be out of scale with the existing house and the resultant building would be visually prominent on this elevated site.
6. **S/0524/95/F** – An application for a temporary flat roof extension to the rear of the dwelling was refused on the basis that the design and materials of the extension would be out of keeping with the scale and character of the original dwelling.
7. **S/0658/96/F** – A proposal to add a single storey flat roof extension to the rear of the dwelling together with the change of use of paddock land on the north side of the dwelling to garden land was withdrawn.
8. **S/1483/96/F** – Consent granted for flat roof rear extension. Within this application, the residential curtilage on the north side of the property was shown as an L-shape, wrapping around the north-western side of the long range of outbuildings and including the area currently used as car parking.
9. **S/1940/00/F** - An application to add a chimney to the dwelling was submitted. Whilst this application was being considered, the outbuildings at the front/south of the property were being substantially rebuilt and converted to habitable accommodation and a single storey link constructed between the dwelling and outbuildings. This Authority took the view that the conversion works did not require consent but that the link did. As such, the application was amended and permission was granted for both the chimney and link structure.
10. **S/1819/03/F** – An application to add first floor extensions to the side, rear and front of the dwelling was withdrawn. Officers intended to refuse the application on the basis that the original dwelling has already been significantly extended (by well in excess of 50%) and any further additions would contravene policies relating to the extension of dwellings in the countryside.
11. **S/1203/04/F** – An application to demolish the existing property and outbuildings and to erect a replacement dwelling (approximately 15% larger than the combined volume of the existing dwelling and outbuildings on the site) slightly to the north-west of the existing property was refused at Committee in January 2005, contrary to Officer recommendation, for the following reasons:

- a. The size, height and position of the dwelling, together with the extension of the residential curtilage, was considered to be out of scale and character with the existing dwelling, to materially increase the impact of the site on its surroundings and to harm the openness of the Green Belt. The application was considered to represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, with no very special circumstances demonstrated to justify the development;
- b. Keepers Cottage forms part of the Lutyens designed Middlefield estate. The size and siting of the proposed replacement dwelling was considered to result in the loss of hierarchy between Middlefield, The House on the Hill and Keepers Cottage, and to detract from the setting of the Grade II\* Listed Middlefield.

The application was subsequently dismissed at appeal. The Inspector did not consider Keepers Cottage to form part of the visual setting of Middlefield but did state that the property forms an important part of the historical setting of the listed building. Its demolition would remove part of the original estate structures and its rebuilding on land that was an open field in 1910 would further detract from the original estate layout. On this basis, the Inspector concluded that the proposal neither preserved nor enhanced historical setting of Middlefield. With regards to the impact of the development on the Green Belt, the Inspector stated that the existing buildings on the site are predominantly simple, single storey structures that are not generally visible in any public views. The proposal was considered to dramatically increase the perceived bulk and reduce the apparent openness compared to the existing buildings. It was deemed to be out of character with the existing dwelling and to have a greater impact on the surrounding countryside. The change of use of former open land to garden was also considered to constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

12. **S/1854/05/LDC** – Application for certificate of lawfulness for use of land outside the defined residential curtilage as garden land was refused.

### **Planning Policy**

13. **Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (Green Belts)** states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt, and that such development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Development is classed as inappropriate unless, amongst other factors, it includes the limited extension or alteration of existing dwellings and does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

### **East of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy 2008**

14. **Policy ENV6** requires local authorities to protect the historic environment of the area.
15. **Policy ENV7** states that new development should be of a high quality which complements the distinctiveness, character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.

### **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007**

16. **Policy DP/1** states that development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.



17. **Policy DP/2** requires all new development to be of high quality design and to: preserve or enhance the character of the local area; conserve or enhance important environmental assets; include variety and interest within a coherent design; and include high quality landscaping compatible with the scale and character of the development and its surroundings.
18. **Policy DP/3** states that permission will not be granted for proposals that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on (amongst other issues): residential amenity; from traffic generated; on village character; on the countryside and landscape character; from undue environmental disturbance; on ecological, wildlife and archaeological interests; and on flooding and flood risk.
19. **Policy GB/1** states that there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The supporting text to the policy states that the main purpose of a Green Belt is to keep land open by placing a permanent and severe restriction on inappropriate development. As a result, most types of development can only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances will be regarded as Departures from the Development Plan and will only be permitted where other considerations outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.
20. **Policy GB/2** states that any development considered to be appropriate in the Green Belt must be located and designed so that it does not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt.
21. **Policy HG/6** states that extensions to dwellings in the countryside will only be permitted where (amongst other issues): the extension does not lead to a 50% increase or more in volume or gross internal floor area of the original dwelling; and the proposed extension is in scale and character with the existing dwelling and would not materially change the impact of the dwelling on its surroundings. In exceptional circumstances, material considerations may justify an exception to the 50% criteria – eg – dwellings with a very small original footprint which do not meet modern living standards. Limited extension of existing buildings in the Green Belt is regarded as appropriate development providing it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the original building.
22. **Policy NE/4** states that development will only be permitted where it respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the Landscape Character Area in which it is located.
23. **Policy CH/4** states that permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect the curtilage or wider setting of a Listed Building.

### **Consultations**

24. **Stapleford Parish Council** recommends approval “but with stringent conditions:
  - a. That there are no future permitted development rights;
  - b. That the use of the premises be restricted to domestic/residential purposes within the designated curtilage;
  - c. That strict conditions be in place to limit the disturbance and access during the works;
  - d. That on completion all surplus buildings should be removed;
  - e. That suitable tree screens be introduced to avoid any overlooking or invasion of privacy, especially with regard to the House on the Hill;

- f. That the approval by the professional officers must include English Heritage, Historic Buildings Trust, the Conservation Officer and the Chief Planning Officer of SCDC.

Points

- a. That it was a large development but now was not a total demolition;
- b. Aspects of the local plan are relevant in consideration;
- c. E76 with reference to enhancement and protection;
- d. P1/2 which restricted development unless essential;
- e. HG13 that the development should not exceed 50 per cent of existing;
- f. HG15 referring to total demolition;
- g. GB2 impact with reference to the green belt;
- h. EN28 the setting of the building.

In addition D Cllr Nightingale expressed the view that this will go before the conservation officer and that all buildings are demolished on completion. He also inferred that with the strength of objections from neighbours the matter could be referred to the Chairman's Committee."

With respect to the amended plans, the Parish Council states:

"Approval is subject to the agreement of the District Council's Ecology Officer that no damage would be caused to the chalk surface and no damage would result from surface water run-off. The normal site working conditions should be applied."

25. **The Conservation Manager** commented in respect of the original drawings, stating that Keepers Cottage was originally constructed as a small outbuilding as part of the Middlefield estate, built by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1908. The main house is now a listed building but Keepers Cottage has been separated off from the main estate and is now an independent dwelling. The building has been heavily altered over the years, with a significant number of extensions and outbuildings that combine to obscure the original structure and erode its character. However, the original is of some architectural and historic interest and should be retained, forming the focus to a revised dwelling on the site. The scheme removes all the latter additions, replacing them with new structures that seek to enhance the original building. The new build elements should not 'swamp' the original building. The applicant has adopted an approach whereby the new elements may be considered from the outside as a 'walled garden' with the original building forming a structure attached to the enclosing wall. This is a valid approach and one that has the potential to ensure that the new elements do not dominate the original structure. The success of the approach will be down to the detailing of the scheme. With regards to the submitted design, the north-east elevation has the greatest resemblance to a walled garden, with the new accommodation contained behind a plain brick wall with only a single break to define the new front door. The suggestion of a walled garden is reinforced by the roof being set behind a brick parapet and this should be detailed to reflect the coping on a traditional brick garden wall (ie – possibly with a splayed plinth stretcher brick topped by a half round brick coping). In contrast, the south-west elevation is pierced by 8 openings which weaken the overall concept of the walled garden but in long views these openings will be masked by the hedge. Could the scheme be developed further to reduce the impact of these openings? Eg – it might be possible to develop this wall into a traditional 'crinkle-crankle' wall with openings set into returns in the curving brick wall. The south-east elevation is also compromised by the number of new openings in the 'enclosing' wall and the scheme would be architecturally much stronger if the openings were restricted to the two glazed elements that provide

articulation between the original building and the new elements, though this may not be functionally acceptable. A glass lantern could be introduced over the kitchen that might then allow the removal of openings in the south east wall. The new openings should have a 'crisper' form than the multipaned windows suggested on the drawings. Glazing bars should be confined to the windows on the restored original structure only. Within the walled garden, the design steps down to a lowered basement garden. Drawings are unclear as to the northern extent of the basement and it would be more successful if stepped up in a series of terraces rather than a single retaining wall. The proximity of the excavations in relation to the retained original structure could cause a problem and, before works commence, a method statement and structural engineers report is required to set out how this work is to be undertaken and how the structural integrity of the retained structure is to be ensured during the course of the works. Also, the scheme will require the removal of a significant quantity of sub-soil/chalk from the site. Further information should be sought regarding the quantity of material to be removed, method of removal and final destination for excavated material.

The basic concept behind the proposal is supported but it needs further design development. The scheme has the potential to significantly enhance the setting of the original building and to return it to something approaching its former glory. A number of large scale details would need to be agreed before works commence on site if the scheme is to be approved:

- a. Coping to the parapets;
- b. Jamb, cill and head details of any openings in the outer brick wall;
- c. Method of removing rainwater from the sedum roof areas;
- d. Glass 'lantern' on the western wing;
- e. Zinc and glass roofs;
- f. Bond pattern for the enclosing external wall.

26. **The Landscape Design Officer** states, in respect of the proposal for disposal of spoil, that the drawings will need to be amended to reflect what has been agreed. To achieve the lower levels and more gentle slopes, the area of spoil will have to extend to approximately the edge of the tree line to the north west, ie – around 30m to the right of the turkey oak. The plan should be redrawn at 1:500 scale and a north point included. The dished area around the turkey oak is too small – the spreading of spoil should start a minimum of 4m from the stem. If feature mounding is desired near the entrance gate and adjacent to the picnic area, these areas should be marked with a brief description or cross sections at a suitable scale. The Ecology Officer should be contacted to agree the amount of topsoil included within the spread, vegetation management and seed specifications.
27. Comments from the **Ecology Officer** will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting.
28. **The Environmental Health Officer** raises no objections subject to conditions to protect neighbours from noise disturbance during the construction period.
29. **The Building Inspector** advises that the method statement should meet Officer's requirements to safely retain the existing building whilst enabling a basement to be built in close proximity to it.
30. **English Heritage** stated, in respect of the initial drawings, that the original, modest, single-storey structure has been extended with flat roofs abutting on two sides and a link to a further, sizeable pitched roof annex structure with a free standing blockwork structure adjacent. These, plus a range of outbuildings, do not enhance or preserve

the character of the original building. The proposal will remove all these later structures and consolidate the new accommodation into wings contained behind an enclosing wall. This attempt to suggest that the cottage is attached to a walled garden may be a valid approach to the problem of providing significant accommodation, but it will require great care in its detailing if it is to succeed. However, in terms of the impact on the setting of Middlefield the overall tidying up of the site and opening up of the original structure will be an enhancement. The design needs to be refined and English Heritage would support the Council in resolving details of the scheme. Two issues of concern remain: structural implications for the cottage if excavations are undertaken beside it and the disposal of the excavated material. In a letter from the applicant (sent direct to English Heritage) the applicant appears to suggest that the excavated material will be disposed on site. Since there will be a significant volume of excavated material, details of the ground level and landscaping should be provided at this stage, since this also has the potential to adversely impact on the open countryside and the setting of Middlefield. Given the sensitivity of the site and the potential for harm to the setting of Middlefield, further development to the design should be undertaken and more information on the steps to safeguard the well-being of the existing structure if the excavations are undertaken and proposals for the disposal of the excavated material should be sought.

No objections were raised by English Heritage to the impact of the proposed landscaping/spoil distribution works on the setting of the house or to the method statement/basement excavation works.

31. **The Environment Agency** states that the application falls within Cell F2 of the Flood Risk Matrix and that the Council would therefore be required to respond in respect of flood risk and surface water drainage issues. No objections are therefore raised, but no details in respect of surface and foul water drainage have been submitted. The applicant should be advised of his responsibility to ensure that adequate residual capacity exists within the surface and foul water drainage systems to accept any additional discharge from the development without detriment to either the land drainage regime or water environment.
32. **Natural England** raises no objections in respect of legally protected sites or species.

### **Representations**

30. Letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of Hillstead, The House on the Hill, Galewood House, Galewood End, Middlefield Cottage, and South Hill House. The main points raised are:
  - a. The extension is over 50% of the size of the original dwelling and therefore disproportionate in size to the original. If a departure from the plan, what is the justification for supporting the development in the Green Belt?
  - b. There is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
  - c. The proposal would have a significantly increased impact on the surrounding countryside;
  - d. The perceived bulk and reduction in openness are greater than in the previous refusal;
  - e. The existing buildings are rural and domestic in character. The proposed development is very modern, inappropriate in design and not compatible with the existing or with the historical setting of the Listed Building;
  - f. The building resembles a Travelodge rather than a walled garden;
  - g. The glass sun room would be highly visible and the roof garden would have a substantial impact;

- h. Details of the glass turret, landscaping and scheme for the removal of spoil should be provided before the application is considered;
- i. Any chimneys, flues and air vents required should be shown on the drawings;
- j. By allowing development up to the permitted curtilage, domestic paraphernalia will spread into the countryside beyond the garden;
- k. The application fails to address fundamental objections identified by the Inspector;
- l. In the previous appeal, the Inspector did not accept that the existing accommodation is so sub-standard as to require rebuilding;
- m. The historical setting of Middlefield and original estate layout referred to by the Inspector have not been taken into account in the current application;
- n. Actual elevation heights have been misrepresented;
- o. There should be no business use of the premises. A health and beauty business is registered at the premises;
- p. Chalk to be spread around the site would not support the natural vegetation and would damage the contours of the hill;
- q. Disruption to neighbours during the construction period should be kept to a minimum;
- r. Plans have not been developed in accordance with the Conservation Officer's comments.

Comments relating to the amendments (ie – the method statement and details for the disposal of spoil) are as follows:

- a. Development extends beyond the curtilage with harmful impact on landscape;
- b. Raised level of land will lead to overlooking of adjoining orchard and property;
- c. Unclear where all the spoil will go and where all demolition material will go;
- d. All spoil should be removed from the site;
- e. Spoil proposal would result in loss of natural chalk grassland contrary to Policy CSF/5;
- f. Spoil to be removed is greater than claimed by the applicant. Where will all this spoil go and where will demolition material go?

#### **Representation by the applicant**

- 33. The application has been accompanied by a design and access statement as well as a statement setting out the very special circumstances considered to exist to outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness. The latter is attached in full as an appendix to this report:
  - a. The proposal represents an enhancement to the setting of the Grade II\* Listed Middlefield;
  - b. Removal of the existing extensions and other clutter from around the original cottage will return it to something approaching its former glory;
  - c. The net volume of buildings above ground will be less than at present (by approximately 200 cubic metres) and located in a way that improves the openness of the countryside;
  - d. The spread of the buildings is reduced by 7m east to west and 28m north to south;
  - e. The scheme enables the authority to more easily control future development. The proposed volume is much less intrusive than would be allowed by the present permitted development regulations.

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

- 34. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- a. Whether there are any very special circumstances to set aside the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
  - b. The design and impact of the development upon the openness and rural character of the countryside and Green Belt;
  - c. Impact on setting of Listed Building;
  - d. Neighbour amenity.
35. Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 makes it clear that disproportionate additions to the original property represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt whilst Local Development Framework 2007 Policy HG/6 only supports a 50% increase in the volume or gross internal floor area of the original dwelling. The volume/floor space of the original cottage element amounts to approximately 165m<sup>3</sup>/42m<sup>2</sup> respectively. The proposed extensions (excluding the basement area) would increase the above ground volume/floor space figures to about 1350m<sup>3</sup>/405m<sup>2</sup>. (A further 220m<sup>2</sup> of ancillary/non-habitable floorspace would be provided within the basement area). The proposal clearly results in a disproportionate addition to the original, constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt by definition and contravenes the requirements of Policy HG/6 of the LDF. It is therefore necessary to consider whether there are any very special circumstances in this instance to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.
36. The original dwelling is a single storey brick and tile structure that stands approximately 5.8 metres high to the ridge. The converted outbuildings on the south side of the dwelling have a total ridge height of around 4 metres. To the side and rear of the dwelling are 2.6 metre high flat roof timber extensions whilst on the west side of the property is a 4.2 metre high brick pump house building. Adjacent to the western boundary of the site are a range of timber and tin predominantly open-sided outbuildings. These outbuildings are around 31.5 metres long, 7 metres deep and range in height from 2.8 metres to 3.1 metres. The original dwelling has a floorspace of around 42m<sup>2</sup>. The subsequent additions to the dwelling bring the total floorspace of the habitable/primary accommodation to around 240m<sup>2</sup>. The long range of outbuildings add a further 220m<sup>2</sup> of ancillary accommodation, bringing the total floorspace of existing above-ground development on the site to approximately 460m<sup>2</sup>/1470m<sup>3</sup>. The applicant also has Building Regulations consent to convert the roofspace of the original cottage to habitable accommodation and this has been partially implemented through the insertion of rooflights in the roof space of the dwelling. The proposal seeks to demolish all existing extensions and outbuildings, retaining just the original cottage and a further structure used for garaging. The proposed development would reduce the above ground floorspace and volume of development on the site to around 405m<sup>2</sup>/1350m<sup>3</sup>, a reduction of in excess of 10% of the existing (or more if the converted roof space of the main dwelling is taken into account). (It is worth noting that the floorspace of habitable accommodation on the site would be increased by around 70% and that, if the basement accommodation is included in the total calculations, the proposal would represent in an approximately 35% increase in the combined floorspace of existing habitable and non-habitable accommodation).

***Impact on character of cottage and setting of Middlefield***

37. Following the refusal of the previous application for a replacement dwelling and the subsequent appeal decision, the applicant met with Planning and Conservation Officers in order to explore how the site could be developed. Based on the Inspectors decision, Officers considered it to be essential that the original Keepers Cottage building be retained, rather than demolished, and advised that any application should therefore involve extensions to the original rather than a replacement dwelling. In

these discussions, the Conservation Officer strongly encouraged the applicant to adopt the approach taken in the current application. The approach suggested involved the demolition of all existing unsightly additions to the original and the erection of extensions designed to look like a traditional walled garden, linked to the original cottage with lightweight glazed structures. The Conservation Officer and English Heritage have both commented that the proposal removes extensions that obscure views of the original structure and that are not considered to preserve or enhance the character of the original building. The proposed development, if properly detailed, is considered to result in an enhancement to the character of Keepers Cottage (returning it to something approaching its former glory) and, hence, to the historic setting of Middlefield.

38. In response to concerns raised by the Conservation Officer and English Heritage relating to the detailed design of the extension, the plans have been amended to reduce the number of openings in the south-west and south-east elevations, to lower the window openings in the south-west elevation and to introduce crisper window openings. These alterations, together with conditions requiring the submission of large-scale details as recommended by the Conservation Officer, are considered to overcome these concerns.
39. In addition, a method statement has been submitted for the basement excavation and details for the disposal of spoil submitted. As a result of the method statement, the shape of the basement has been altered to move the walls away from the existing buildings that are to be retained. The Building Inspector is satisfied that the excavation works can be undertaken without compromising/resulting in the loss of the original dwelling. It would be essential, as part of any permission, to ensure the works are carried out in accordance with the method statement. With regards to proposals for the spoil, the applicant has proposed that this be spread over the adjoining land to the north across an area measuring around 100m x 35m, reaching a maximum height of 0.6m above the existing ground level. The top soil would be dragged off, the spoil deposited to form the profile shown in the submitted drawing and the top soil spread back over the area, compacted and returned to a meadow. The Landscape Design Officer is generally supportive of this approach but has requested some minor amendments to the proposal. I am presently awaiting the formal comments of the Ecology Officer. However, I am aware that both the applicant and Landscape Design Officer have spoken to the Ecology Officer and that it is considered the proposals for the spoil represent an opportunity to enhance the ecological value of the land.
40. Based on the strong support received to the proposal from the Conservation Officer and English Heritage, it is considered that the enhancement to the character of the cottage and to the setting of the Grade II\* Listed dwelling at Middlefield represents a very special circumstance required to support the proposal.
41. Given that the proposal has been supported on the basis that the walled garden extension approach is considered to enhance the cottage and the setting of Middlefield, it is essential that the development be completed and carried out in accordance with the approved plans and that all existing extensions and outbuildings be removed, and the rooflights removed from the existing cottage. It would be completely unreasonable to require all buildings to be demolished before works commence on the site as the family intend to remain living in the property whilst the development is taking place. A phased approach to the demolition and new build would therefore be necessary. Planning permissions only normally require developers to commence works within a specified timescale but normally have no mechanism in place to ensure works are completed as per the plans. In this instance, without any controls over the demolition, phasing and completion of the development, the

development could be partially carried out potentially resulting in a development that would be more harmful than the existing structures on site. This scenario needs to be avoided. Officers therefore recommend that a condition requiring details of the phasing and timescales for the progressive demolition of the existing buildings and construction/occupation of the new extensions be agreed before any development starts and the proposals subsequently completed in accordance with the approved schedule.

***Impact upon the openness of the Green Belt***

42. The applicant contends that, by reducing the spread of buildings across the site and by reducing the net volume/floor space of buildings above ground, that the proposal would improve the openness of the countryside and Green Belt. Officers do not, however, concur with this view. Admittedly, the proposal, by removing the existing pitched roof outbuildings on the south side of the dwelling would improve the appearance of the site when viewed from the access track. However, the building would be more prominent when viewed from the land to the north, so it could be concluded that visual harm would be removed from one part of the site but replaced on another part of the site. The development is not considered by Officers to result in *harm* to the character of the countryside or openness of the Green Belt. It is considered to have a neutral impact, rather than to result in an enhancement to the countryside and Green Belt.

***Future control of the site***

43. In pre-application discussions relating to the site, Officers have taken into account the development that could be carried out on site if the applicant were to utilise his permitted development rights. During the consideration of the current application, the permitted development regulations have changed and become far more generous. Under the previous legislation, there were strict controls on the volume/size of extensions that could be added to the original dwelling, meaning that the applicant would not have been able to further extend his property without planning permission but could have constructed 4 metre high pitched roof outbuildings within the curtilage of the property as well as adding rooflights to the dwelling and constructing hardstandings etc.
44. The volume constraints for extensions to dwellings have now been removed within the revised legislation. The most harmful aspect of the new regulations is that (in addition to rights to erect outbuildings/hardstandings etc) it would now be theoretically possible to erect an extension, the same height as the original cottage and with no limit on its length, on its south/front side providing no more than 50% of the curtilage (other than the house) was covered in buildings, as well as to erect further extensions of restricted depth on the other sides of the dwelling. If the permitted development rights that now exist for the property were even to be partially carried out, there is scope for enormous harm to be caused to the character of the countryside and openness of the Green Belt. The applicant has stated that he would be agreeable to householder permitted development rights being removed on the property, thereby enabling the Authority to retain control over any future development on the site. Officers consider this to be an additional very special reason for supporting the proposal. If Members are minded to grant permission for the development, Officers consider it essential, in the interests of protecting the countryside and Green Belt, to remove all household permitted development rights (this would mean that any future flues/chimneys would require permission), as well as rights relating to the construction of means of enclosure and solar panels.



***Neighbour amenity***

45. The proposed development would be a single storey structure set well away from the immediate neighbouring property. Ground floor windows would face into the site and would not result in overlooking of neighbouring properties. The occupiers of The House on the Hill have expressed concern that, by removing the outbuildings on the south side of the dwelling, views from windows in the south elevation of the property would be opened up into their garden area. The applicant has offered to plug-up this gap with additional landscaping and this can be secured by way of a standard landscaping condition.
46. Much concern has also been expressed regarding disturbance during the construction period. In accordance with comments made by the Environmental Health Officer, it is recommended that a condition be added to any permission restricting the hours of use of power operated machinery.
47. Concern has also been raised on the basis that the premises could be used for business purposes. If the premises were to be used for business purposes in the future, and the degree of the business use were such that a material change of use had occurred, planning permission would be required and the implications would then be considered as part of any future application.

**Conclusion**

48. The proposal represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt, by reason of its scale relative to the size of the original dwelling. No other harm, which could not be resolved by the imposition of conditions, has been identified. The enhancement to the character of the cottage and to the setting of the Grade II \* Listed Building at Middlefield is considered to represent very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development.
49. The proposal does not involve the construction of a building with a floorspace of more than 1,000 sq m requiring referral to the Secretary of State under The Town and Country Planning (Green Belt) Direction 2005. However, the Direction indicates that an application to extend an existing building should be referred if it would be inappropriate development which, by reason of its scale, nature or location would significantly impact on the openness of the Green Belt, regardless of whether or not the proposed extension exceeded the above - mentioned threshold. I have concluded in para 42 above that there would not be a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt. For these reasons I do not consider that the application needs to be referred to the Secretary of State.

**Recommendation**

50. Subject to the receipt of an amended plan to resolve concerns raised by the Landscape Design Officer and to no objections being received from the Ecology Officer, delegated powers are sought to approve the application, as amended by drawings date stamped 20<sup>th</sup> June and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008:

Conditions:

1. Standard Condition 1 - Time Limited Permission (Reason 1)
2. No development shall commence until details of the phased demolition of the existing buildings, the removal of the rooflights in the original dwelling and

construction of the extensions, hereby permitted, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This must clearly set out the phasing/timescales for the progressive demolition and occupation of the development, and the development should thereafter not be carried out and completed other than in accordance with the approved schedule (Reason – The application has been approved on the basis that the development in its entirety results in an enhancement to the historic setting of Middlefield, thereby representing the very special circumstances required to support inappropriate development in the Green Belt. If the development is only partially completed, this would seriously compromise the success of the walled garden design approach, contrary to the aims of Policies DP/2, DP/3, CH/4, HG/6 and GB/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007)

3. Sc5 – Landscape (Rc5)
4. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of ten years from the date of the planting of any tree that tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.  
(Rc6)
5. No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development, hereby permitted, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details (Rc13)
6. No development shall commence until large-scale details (minimum scale 1:20) of the following 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:
  - a. The coping to the parapets;
  - b. Jamb, sill and head details of any openings in the outer brick wall;
  - c. Method of removing rainwater from the sedum roof areas;
  - d. Joinery;
  - e. The glass lantern on the eastern wing;
  - f. The zinc and glass roofs;
  - g. The bond pattern for the enclosing external wall.(Reason – To ensure that the development results in an enhancement to the historic setting of Middlefield, in accordance with Policies DP/2, DP/3 and CH/4 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007)
7. Sc23 – Foul water drainage (Rc23)
8. Sc24 – Surface water drainage (Rc24)
9. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended 2008) (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development within the following Classes of Schedule 2 of the Order shall take place unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf:

- a. All Classes of Part 1 (Development within the Curtilage of a Dwellinghouse);
- b. Class A (Erection of means of enclosure) of Part 2;
- c. Classes A and B of Part 40 (Installation of Domestic Microgeneration Equipment)

(Reason – In the interests of protecting the openness of the Green Belt, the character of the countryside and preserving the historic setting of Middlefield in accordance with Policies GB/2, HG/6 and CH/4 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007)

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, doors or openings of any kind, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be constructed in the outer side walls of the extensions, hereby permitted, unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf (Reason – To protect the walled garden appearance of the development, in accordance with Policies DP/2, DP/3 and CH/4 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
11. During the period of demolition and construction, no power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises 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 (Rc40)
12. The basement excavation works shall be carried out in accordance with the method statement dated 7<sup>th</sup> August 2008 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority (Reason – To ensure the basement excavation works would not undermine the original dwelling, in the interests of preserving the historic setting of Middlefield, in accordance with Policies DP/3 and CH/4 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007)

### **Informatives**

1. Should driven pile foundations be proposed, then before works commence, a statement of the method for construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled;
2. During construction, there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.
3. Before the demolition of any of the existing buildings, a Demolition Notice will be required from the Environmental Health Department establishing the way in which the property will be dismantled, including any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains and establishing hours of working operation.

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

Planning Policy Guidance Note No.2 (Green Belts)  
East of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy 2008;  
South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) 2007;  
Planning application references S/0812/08/F, S/1854/05/LDC, S/1203/04/F, S/1819/03/F,  
S/1940/00/F, S/1483/96/F, S/0658/96/F, S/0524/95/F and S/1928/93/F.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1614/08/F – BASSINGBOURN-CUM-KNEESWORTH**  
**Erection of 20 Affordable Dwellings, The Causeway for Circle Anglia**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Date for Determination: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008 (Major Application)**

**Notes:**

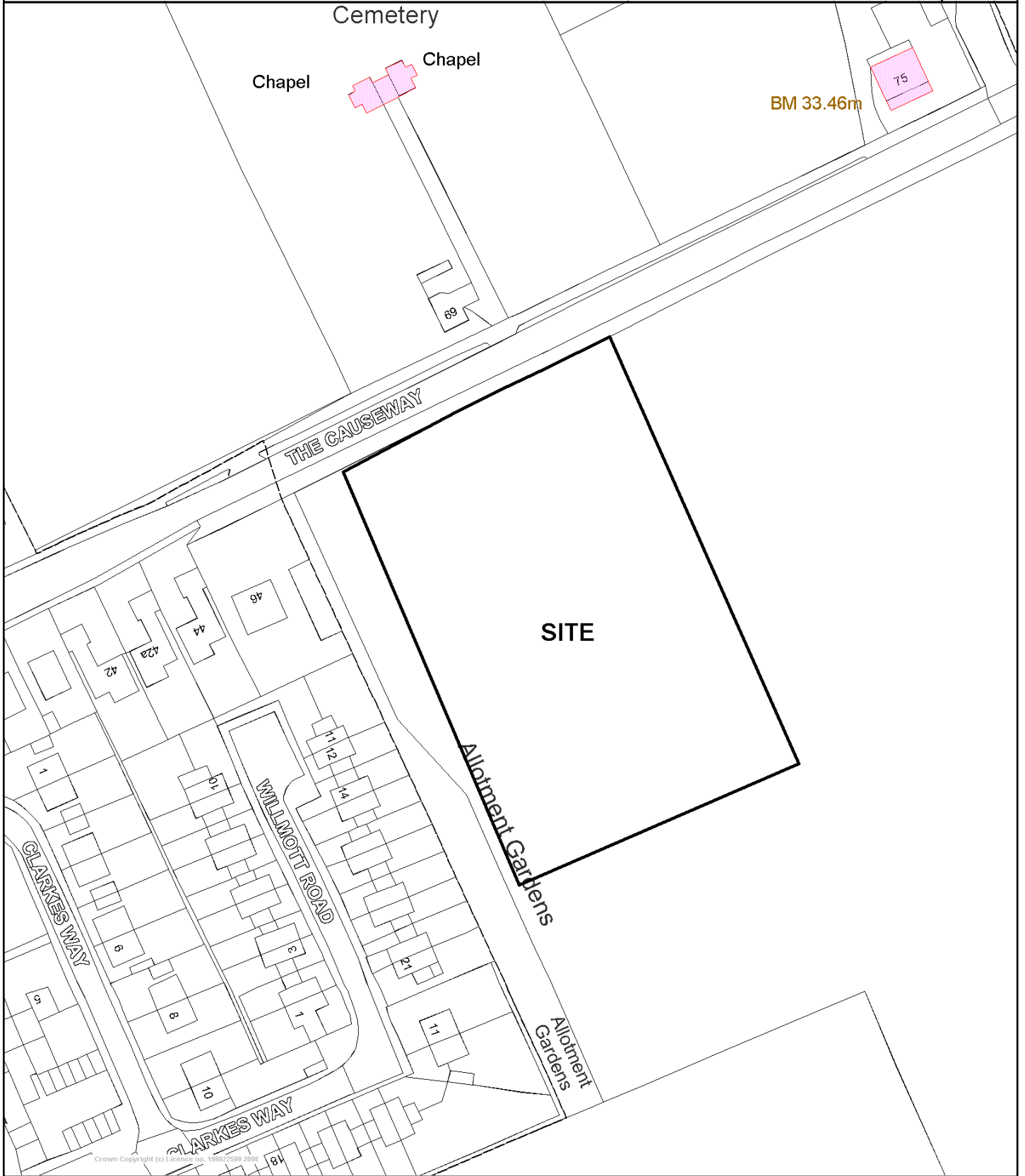
**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the application is for affordable housing on an exception site outside the village framework.**

**Members will visit this site on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008**

**Site and Proposal**

1. This full application received on 18 September 2008 and amended by drawings received 11 November 2008, proposes the erection of 20 affordable dwellings for rent on a 0.67ha area of land to the south of The Causeway at Bassingbourn.
2. The site is part of a larger area of agricultural land on the south side of The Causeway, to the east of properties in Willmott Road, Clarkes Way and a dwelling which fronts The Causeway. The west boundary of the site is currently bounded by a permissive path and the extended rear gardens of residential properties. To the south and east is agricultural land and these boundaries are currently undefined. There is a hedge on the front boundary of the site, with a filed access at the western end. Opposite the site are a residential property and the cemetery.
3. The application proposes a single point of access from The Causeway serving all properties in a cul-de sac development. The development comprises ten 2-bedroom houses and ten 3-bedroom houses, with a maximum ridge height of 8.7m. Materials proposed are red brick and rendered walls with plain tiled roofs.
4. An area of public open space and a local area for play (LAP) are provided within the site. A 5m wide landscaping strip is proposed along the east and south boundaries. The existing hedgerow is to be retained on the front boundary, except at the point of access and a new section planted across the existing field access. A 1.8m high close boarded fence is proposed on the east boundary. The submitted drawing does not make provision for the existing permissive path.
5. The density of the development is 30dph.
6. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.

S/1614/08/F



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Scale 1/1250 Date 17/11/2008

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Planning Committee - December 2008

## Planning History

7. There is no relevant planning history for the application site although planning permission was granted in 2008 for the change of use of a strip of land to the west of the site to additional garden land to properties in Willmott Road (Ref: **S/1557/07/F**)

## Planning Policy

*South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007 and Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007*

### South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007

8. **Policy ST/6 – Group Villages** identifies Bassingbourn as a Group Village and states that residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village framework. Development may exceptionally consist of up to about 15 dwellings where this would make best use of a single brownfield site.
9. **Policy DP/1 - Sustainable Development** states development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form.
10. **Policy DP/2 - Design of New Development** requires all new development to be of a high quality design and indicates the specific elements to be achieved where appropriate. It also sets out the requirements for Design and Access Statements.
11. **Policy DP/3 - Development Criteria** sets out what all new development should provide, as appropriate to its nature, scale and economic viability and clearly sets out circumstances where development will not be granted on grounds of an unacceptable adverse impact e.g. village character and residential amenity.
12. **Policy DP/4 - Infrastructure and New Developments** requires that development proposals should include suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. It identifies circumstances where contributions may be required e.g. affordable housing and education.
13. **Policy HG/1 - Housing Density** is set at a minimum of 30 dph unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment in order to make best use of land. Higher densities of 40 dph will be sought in the most sustainable locations.
14. **Policy HG/2 - Housing Mix.** Affordable housing should be of an appropriate mix to respond to identified needs at the time of the development in accordance with HG/3
15. **Policy HG/3 - Affordable Housing** occupation will be limited to people in housing need and must be available over the long-term. The appropriate mix in terms of housing tenures and house sizes of affordable housing will be determined by local circumstances at the time of planning permission, including housing need and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities. In order to ensure sustainable communities, affordable housing will be distributed through the development in small groups or clusters.

16. **Policy HG/5 – Exception Sites for Affordable Housing** states that as an exception to the normal operation of the policies of this plan, planning permission may be granted for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. The following criteria will all have to be met:
  - (a) The development proposal includes secure arrangements for ensuring that all the dwellings within the scheme provide affordable housing in perpetuity for those in housing need;
  - (b) The number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confined to, and appropriate to, the strict extent of the identified local need;
  - (c) The site of the proposal is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village;
  - (d) The site is well related to facilities and services within the village;
  - (e) The development does not damage the character of the village or the rural landscape.
17. **Policy NE/1 - Energy Efficiency** states development will be required to demonstrate that it would achieve a high degree of measures to increase the energy efficiency of new buildings, for example through location, layout, orientation, aspect and external design.
18. **Policy NE/6 - Biodiversity** requires new developments to aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. The District Council will refuse development that would have an adverse significant impact on the population or conservation status of protected species, priority species or habitat, unless the impact can be adequately mitigated by measures secured by planning conditions. Previously developed land will not be considered to be devoid of biodiversity. The re-use of such sites must be undertaken carefully with regard to existing features of biodiversity interest. Development proposals will be expected to include measures that maintain and enhance important features whilst incorporating them within any development of the site.
19. **Policy NE/9 - Water and Drainage Infrastructure** indicates that planning permission will not be granted where there are inadequate water supply, sewerage or land drainage systems to meet the demands of the development unless there is an agreed phasing agreement between the developer and the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure.
20. **Policy NE/12 – Water Conservation** states that development must incorporate all practicable water conservation measures. All development proposals greater than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or 10 dwellings will be required to submit a Water Conservation Strategy prior to the commencement of the development to demonstrate how this is to be achieved.
21. **Policy NE/17 – Protecting High Quality Agricultural Land** states that planning permission will not be granted for development which would lead to the irreversible loss of Grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land unless the land is allocated for development in the Local development Framework or sustainability considerations



and the need for the development are sufficient to override the need to protect the agricultural value of the land.

22. **Policy TR/1 - Planning for More Sustainable Travel** states planning permission will not be granted for developments likely to give rise to a material increase in travel demands unless the site has a sufficient standard of accessibility to offer an appropriate choice of travel by public transport or other non-car travel modes. The amount of car parking provision in new developments should be minimised, compatible with their location. Developments should be designed from the outset with permeable layouts to facilitate and encourage short distance trips by cycle and walking. Safe and secure cycle parking shall be provided.
23. **Policy TR/2 - Car and Cycle Parking Standards** states car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's maximum standards, to reduce over reliance on the car and to promote more sustainable forms of transport.
24. **Policy TR/3 - Mitigating Travel Impact** requires applications for major residential development to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment.
25. **Policy TR/4 - Non-motorised Modes** states the District Council will use its planning powers by ensuring that all new developments are designed at the outset to facilitate and encourage short distance trips between home, work, schools and for leisure.
26. **Policy SF/10 Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments** requires all residential developments to contribute towards outdoor playing space, formal outdoor sports facilities and informal open space to meet the additional need generated by the development. Where appropriate, provision will involve all or some types of space within the development site. However, an appropriate contribution will be required for 'off-site' provision of the types of space not provided on-site.
27. **Policy SF/11 Open Space Standards** defines the minimum standards for outdoor play space and informal open space.

### **Consultation**

28. **Bassingbourn Parish Council** recommends approval subject to the following conditions:
  - (a) "That houses are retained for local people with a strong connection to the village.
  - (b) The highest building code regulations are used and the design guide adhered to.
  - (c) Parish Council involvement with the Section 106 Agreement
  - (d) Traffic calming introduced on The Causeway to accommodate the development.
  - (e) A hedge is planted inside the development (backing onto Willmott Road) next to the permissive footpath.

The Parish Council were disappointed to see the lack of renewable energy highlighted on the plans for the houses".

29. The **Local Highway Authority** requires visibility splays of 2.4m x 120m to be shown. Visibility splays to individual properties should be shown. A condition should be attached to ensure that the proposed manoeuvring area is maintained free from any

obstruction. It requests that the applicant provides a method statement relating to the process of construction and any effects this may have on the adopted public highway.

It comments that it seeks the provision of a Traffic Regulation Order to extend the existing 30mph speed limit to encompass the entrance to the site and also a footway link, which should be a minimum of 2.0m wide, not 1.5m as shown on the application drawing, from the development to the village of Bassingbourn.

30. **Cambridgeshire Archaeology** comments that its records indicate that the site lies in an area of some archaeological potential to the east of the medieval village core and therefore considers that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation to be secured through a negative condition in any planning consent.
31. The **Ecology Officer** has no objection to the application subject to a condition being attached to secure ecological enhancement via a scheme of nest box and bat box provision.
32. The **Housing Development and Enabling Manager** fully supports the application. The split in property mix is ideal in terms of meeting the local needs that have been identified and is prepared to support any application for Social Housing Grant via the Housing Corporation.
33. The **Affordable Housing Panel** supports the application. The meeting stressed the need for the use of good quality materials.
34. The comments of **Anglian Water** and the **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** will be reported at the meeting.

### **Representations**

35. The occupier of **3 South End** hopes that the scheme will meet with local approval provided that there no overbearing or urbanising road works at the junction and consideration is given to the surface water drainage so that it does not put further strain on the barely adequate existing system.
36. The occupier of **15 Willmott Road** objects to the development. It will disrupt the peacefulness of the area; there will be light escaping polluting the area and also noise pollution.

The site is outside the village framework. Provisions have been made to develop affordable housing within the framework but have not been pursued. Other areas such as Spring Lane have been applied for and refused in terms of size. The proposed development does not seem to have been justified in the application. If it is needed why could it not happen as per the Bassingbourn policy and South Cambs statements and policies?

The surface water drainage system in the village is poorly maintained and there have been many instances of flooding. The application refers to soakaways for surface water. The drains in The Causeway discharge into the River Rhee or Cam and the pipe runs underneath the footpath for some way before it discharges into the river as it exits from The Limes. It is not believed that the river would be able to cope with the additional surface water. The sewerage system has also caused a number of problems in the village, evidenced by blocked sewage pipes and a constant smell of sewage next to the Cemetery entrance and the proposed development will

exacerbate this. If approved what provision would be made to lay new sewage pipes? If permission is granted without this requirement who would be accountable for the inevitable problems?

The application contravenes all policies and statements made by the Council and Bassingbourn policy, what justification is there to seek a development of this nature on agricultural land?

37. The occupier of **11 Willmott Road** objects. Policy Bassingbourn 1 refers to an allocation of 0.76ha (residue) site to the north of High Street. It is part of a larger development which has been completed and therefore access to The Causeway exists. The site is available and abandonment of this partially completed allocation would be a departure from the Local Plan. The policy states that where affordable housing is proposed a legal agreement is required however this is not mentioned in the application. There is a requirement for a range of housing types but no one-bedroom units are proposed.
38. The occupier of **21 Willmott Road** objects stating that the application contravenes many of the policies in the Local Plan 2004 and LDF 2008. The application is outside the village framework and erodes the space between Bassingbourn and Kneesworth. The road layout allows for further development which would further erode this space. There is a reserved site for such a development, why is this not being used? Why is the District Council supporting development outside the village framework contrary to its own policies? There is no legal agreement submitted with the application – should this not be required? Do the houses fit the criteria of affordable dwellings and what restrictions would be placed on who could buy them? There is no survey accompanying the application to justify the need for the development. Would the application be considered if it were not for affordable housing?

The Causeway is already a busy road at peak times and there have been fatalities at the point where this proposed development would enter The Causeway. What proposals are there in place for protecting pedestrians and road users?

There will be overlooking from the development into the bedroom window of No 21 and there is the potential of light pollution from security lighting. In addition there will be noise pollution.

39. The occupier of **19 Willmott Road** objects. The proposal contravenes the policy that requires the separation of Bassingbourn and Kneesworth to be maintained. The policy states that only infill development will be allowed and this application contravenes that policy and proposes development outside the defined framework. The submitted plan shows a hammerhead which has clear potential for access to extend to the east into what could be a subsequent development phase. The nature of the policies which this application seeks to overturn are of a nature that they are a departure from the Development plan and the application should deal with it accordingly. If the Planning Authority intends to support the application then to date it will have failed to comply with this policy.
40. The occupier of **13 Clarkes Way** objects. The site is outside the development framework and there are already sites allocated for development within the framework that have not been completed. If agreed it would be contrary to policy and leave it open for more developments to be agreed outside the village, narrowing the gap between Bassingbourn and Kneesworth, which is again contrary to policy. There are already drainage problems in the village, surely this development will make those

worse. What is determined as affordable housing? How are these calculations made? There are no one-bedroom units which is a breach of policy.

41. The occupier of **46 The Causeway** objects. The site is unallocated and outside the village framework and therefore development is contrary to policies of both the Local Plan 2004 and Local development Framework 2008. Policy Bassingbourn 1 refers to the allocation of 0.76ha (residue) on the northern side of High Street/The Causeway which should be developed before any other similar sized site is considered. That is part of a larger site allocation, the rest of which has already been completed and an access road is in place. The abandonment of this site would be a departure from the Local Plan.

Policy requires that where affordable housing is proposed a legal agreement is required. No mention of this is made within the application.

Policies require a mix of dwellings but there are no one bedroom units proposed.

Policy Bassingbourn 1 refers to the traffic implications arising from the allocated site but no mention is made in this application for such provisions even though the scale of developments are comparable. The policy also refers to the reasons for the village framework boundaries and the need to prevent the coalescence of Bassingbourn and Kneesworth. This application contravenes that policy.

The policy also states that infill development only will be permitted. Not only does the application contravenes that policy but also proposes development outside the village framework and would set a precedent. The site plan shows a hammerhead that could be used to access adjacent land.

The letter refers to paragraphs from the Local Plan 2004 in respect of Housing and Environment, and the obligation to make decisions in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise. The letter points out the need to advertise any departures.

Reference is made to text from the Local Plan 2004 which states that development on Greenfield land outside settlements will only be permitted where it is shown that there are no suitable brownfield sites available. The letter points out the selection criteria for Rural Growth Settlements but even here development should be within village frameworks. Reference is made to the Area of Restraint (Local Plan 2004) and Important Countryside Frontages.

The letter points out that Policy NE17 (Local Plan 2004) states that the District Council will not grant permission for development that would lead to the reversible loss of Grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land unless the site is allocated for development. This is not an allocated site and a site on the other side of The Causeway and further into the village was refused allocation. The site is contrary to DP/7 as the site is outside the village framework.

In respect of Policy HG/5 a similar size development was refused in South End on the grounds that it was not a 'small' development. This proposal is of a similar size.

42. The occupier of **20 Willmott Road** objects. The site is contrary to Policy SE8 as the site is outside the village framework. The plan states that this policy is there to ensure that the countryside is protected from gradual encroachment on the edges of villages and to help guard against incremental growth in unsustainable locations. The application does not acknowledge the need for highway improvements as required in

the Plan. The surface water drainage system in the village is poorly maintained and there have been many instances of flooding, will the drains be able to cope if this development goes ahead? The applicant states that all properties will have security lighting which will result in environmentally damaging light pollution.

43. The occupier of **14 Willmott Road** comments that the development is outside the village framework. There is no specification as to how affordable the dwellings will be. There is no one bedroom accommodation which would be the most affordable to a first time buyer and as required by planning policy. The primary school is already over-subscribed and people moving into the village have not always been able to get a place. There is already land designated for affordable housing in the Parish plan which has not yet been built on, which is infilling and not outside the village framework. Other sites are close to local amenities which would reduce traffic. The District Council has a policy of infill only which would be contravened. The heavily used permissive path to the rear of houses in Willmott Road is missing. No hedging is provided on the boundary with the path which would be needed to prevent the development being unsightly. The existing mature edging along the boundary of properties in Willmott Road is significant environmentally and has produced a moth (Buttoned Snout *Hypona Rostralis*) which is on the Nationally Scarce B list. The plans do not show land recently brought by Willmott Road residents and shows the new development to be 12m away rather than 2m which is actually the case. There will be light obstruction from the new development and this will affect the growth of a hedgerow which adjoining residents have been asked to plant bordering the permissive path. A recently proposed development in South End was refused as it was not considered to be small scale; this proposal is of a similar size.
44. The occupiers of **12 Clarkes Way** are concerned that the submitted plans do not show the true boundary of properties in Willmott Road and Clarkes Way following the purchase of a strip of land and its change of use to garden land. This therefore gives the impression that the development will leave a sizeable gap between the existing gardens and the new ones whereas it would only be 2m, which has to be left due to the location of the public footpath.

The drawings show a roadway that could be extended to enlarge the development at a later stage. Although 20 dwellings does not change the village size significantly this development will set a precedent for further development of this area potentially leading to the joining of Bassingbourn and Kneesworth, which it is believed contravenes one of the village planning policies.

There is no evidence in the application that the need for affordable housing has been proven.

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

45. This application should be considered against the criteria in Policy HG/5 as an exception site for affordable housing. This policy accepts that such development can be outside village frameworks.
46. Policy HG/5 requires that exception schemes should be on 'small' sites. Whilst the policy does not define what is considered to be small, officers have taken the view that schemes of up to 20 dwellings for affordable housing in Group Villages such as Bassingbourn could be considered as small. This scheme is for 20 dwellings.
47. Any site is required to be well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme should be appropriate to the size and character of the village. I

consider that the site meets the this part of the policy as the site is well related to the built-up area of Bassingbourn, being immediately to the east of the village framework and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size of the village as a whole. In my view the site is well related to facilities and services within the village, particularly when compared to other properties along The Causeway.

48. The Housing Development and Enabling Manager supports the scheme. All of the properties are proposed for rent. A Section 106 Agreement will be required to ensure that the properties are brought forward at an affordable rent in perpetuity and that priority of occupation is given to qualifying people from Bassingbourn. Nomination rights will also need to be agreed. A planning condition can secure these matters as part of a scheme prior to commencement of development. The Legal Officer will be instructed to prepare a draft agreement.
49. Although the development will break into what is presently a long stretch of undeveloped land on the south side of The Causeway, east of the village it will not in my view, providing the development is appropriately landscaped, damage the character of the village or the rural landscape. A significant area of undeveloped land would remain to the east. The layout of the development and the provision of the hammerhead could allow access into adjacent land for further development. However any such proposal would have to be considered on its merits against relevant policies at that time.
50. Bassingbourn 1 is a 'saved' policy from the Local Plan 2004. It maintains the allocation for housing of a 0.76ha area of land to the north of High Street/The Causeway, which represents the residue of an originally larger housing allocation from the 1993 Local Plan, the substantial proportion of which has now been developed as Elbourn Way and Kefford Close. If a planning application were to be submitted for the remaining part of the allocated land, and assuming a density of 30dph, it might bring forward in the region of 22/23 units. Policy HG/3 would require that a minimum of 40% of these units should be affordable dwellings, which would represent about 10 dwellings. However as this site is within the village framework there would be no local preference given to the occupation of the affordable dwellings and would not therefore satisfy the proven local need which has been confirmed by the Housing Development and Enabling Manager. The allocation would be unaffected by the determination of this application. In my view the need for an exception site can be supported.
51. Policies Bassingbourn 2 and 3, which are referred to in the letters from local residents and relate to substantial development being dependant on the improvement of the A1198/The Causeway junction and the restriction of development in Kneesworth to infilling, partly in order to maintain the separate identity of the two settlements, are not 'saved' policies. They are not therefore material considerations in their own right in the determination of this planning application although Members will need to have regard to the comments/requirements of the Local Highway Authority in the normal way, along with an assessment of whether the proposed development will damage the character of the village or rural landscape, as required by Policy HG/5. The junction of The Causeway with the A1198 was improved, partly with the benefit of financing from the now developed part of the allocated site on the north side of the road.
52. The Local Highway Authority has not objected to the application, although it requires revisions to the visibility splays and an increase in width of the proposed footpath which would link the entrance to the site to the existing footpath in The Causeway to the west. It states that it would seek to move the existing 30mph sign to the east

edge of the development under its Traffic Regulation Orders. No other highway improvements are sought. Visibility at the proposed entrance to the site is good. Amended drawings have been requested.

53. The Housing Development and Enabling Manager has supported the application in terms of identified local housing need and housing mix/tenure. The provision of one-bedroom dwellings is not normally sought as part of an affordable housing scheme due to the lack of flexibility of such a unit. A Section 106 Agreement will secure that the dwellings are brought forward at an affordable rent and that preference is given to local qualifying persons when allocating the properties.
54. In my view the distance of the new development from existing houses is sufficient to ensure that there is no unreasonable loss of light and overlooking. In coming to this view I have had regard to the recent extension of the gardens to these properties. A condition can be attached to any consent ensuring that no further openings are inserted into elevations of the new dwellings at first floor level facing the adjoining houses.
55. An area of open space and LAP is provided in accordance with the requirements of Policy ST/10. Its provision, maintenance and other required financial contribution to formal play space provision can be secured through the Section 106 Agreement.
56. Although the application is not in a location or of a size which would automatically attract a requirement for a flood risk assessment (FRA) the Environment Agency has advised that, given the comments from local residents about local surface water drainage problems, a FRA should be sought. This had been requested from the applicant. It is likely that any matters raised can be dealt with by a suitably worded condition.
57. Anglian Water has been consulted on the application and its comments on the ability of the existing foul water drainage system to cope with the additional demands that will result from the proposed development will be reported at the meeting. It did not raise an objection to a recent application for a similar number of dwellings in South End, Bassingbourn.
58. The land the subject of the application is classified as Grade 2 agricultural land, however the size of the site is below that where consultation with Defra is required. Policy NE/17 states that the District Council will not grant permission for development that would lead to the irreversible loss of Grade 2 land unless the site is allocated for development or sustainability considerations and the need for the development are sufficient to override the need to protect the agricultural value of the land. In this case I am of the view that the need to provide affordable housing to meet a proven local need should outweigh the loss of a 0.67ha area of Grade 2 agricultural land.
59. The Ecology Officer has not objected to the application subject to a condition requiring the provision of nest boxes and bat boxes. I have forwarded a copy of the letter from the occupier of 14 Willmott Road, which raises the issues of the Buttoned Snout moth, to the Ecology Officer and will report any further comments.
60. The submitted plan does not recognise the recent extension to the garden land of properties in Willmott Road and Clarkes Way, nor the route of the permissive footpath, which currently runs immediately to the east of these gardens. I have requested a revised plan which addresses these issues, and confirms that the permissive path is to remain.

61. Policy HG/5 allows for permission to be granted, as an exception sites for affordable housing outside village frameworks. Therefore provided a proposal meets the various criteria set out in that policy it would not be a departure from the Development Plan.
62. The development will comply with Code Level 3 in terms of sustainable homes. Conditions should be attached requiring schemes in respect of energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy technologies and water conservation strategy.
63. I am of the view that the scheme satisfies the criteria in Policy HG/5 and can be supported.

**Recommendation**

64. That, subject to the receipt of satisfactory amended plans, delegated powers of approval be granted subject to safeguarding conditions.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: S/1614/08/F

**Case Officer:** Paul Sexton – Principal Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713255

**Presented to the Planning Committee by:** Paul Sexton



**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**Ref: S/1531/08/F – COMBERTON**  
**New Detached Garage Building, Extended Garden Wall and New Gates at Westfield Farm, Royston Lane for Mr Fenttiman**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Date for Determination: 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

**Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee as it is considered a departure from the Development Plan and because the Officer recommendation is contrary to that of the Parish Council.**

**Departure Application****Site and Proposal**

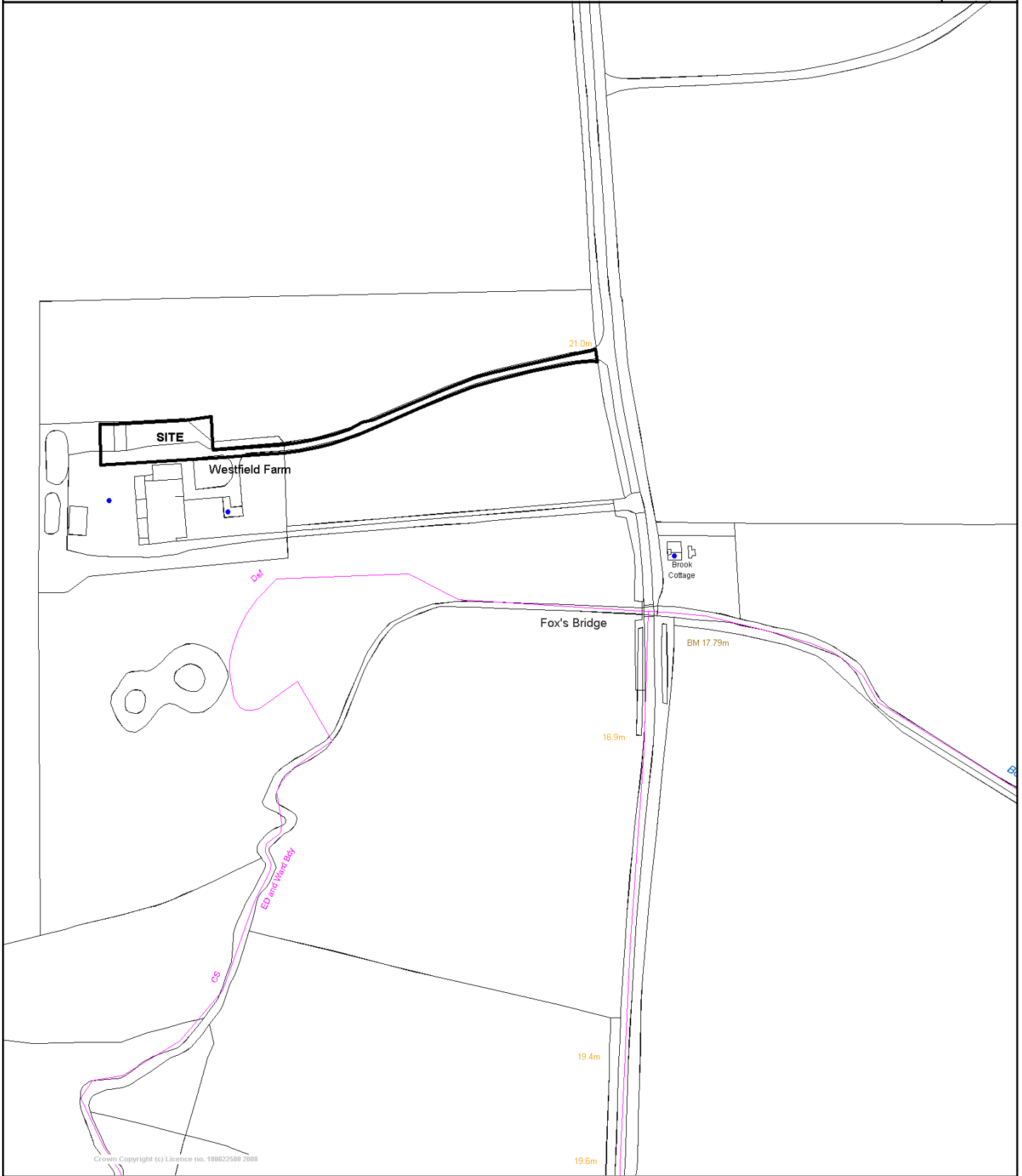
1. The application site is a residential dwelling comprised of converted agricultural buildings and an element of new build. The site lies within the Green Belt and is outside of the Development Framework on the South side of Comberton. There are two accesses to the site from the main road to the east with long drives leading to the buildings, which are situated approximately 200 metres from the road. The land levels on site are relatively flat. The main dwelling is a large two storey L-shaped building and there is a large detached, steel frame agricultural store building to the North West of the main house. The area around the buildings is largely laid to grass, although the area immediately to the front and rear of the main dwelling is compacted earth.
2. The application, received 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008, proposes the erection of a single storey detached garage building to the North East of the main house, the extension of the garden wall to the East of the main house to link with the proposed garage, and the installation of new gates adjacent to the garage. In addition, the existing large agricultural shed to the West of the proposed garage would be demolished.

**Relevant Planning History**

3. **S/1180/08/F** – Application for the erection of a garage, wall and gates was made on incorrect forms. Application has since been withdrawn.
4. **S/1716/04/F** – Planning permission was granted for the conversion and extension of the barn to a residential dwelling following the demolition of the existing dwelling, including swimming pool and tennis court.

S/1628/08/F

S/1531/08/F - Comberton



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Scale 1/2500 Date 17/11/2008

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5. **S/0044/01/PNA** – Approval given for erection of the detached shed to the North West of the current dwelling. Permission given for the extension of the building in 2002 (**S/2009/02/F**) does not appear to have been implemented.

### **Planning Policy**

*South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007:*

6. **Policy DP/1 Sustainable Development** – Development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form. In particular, it should minimise the need to travel and reduce car dependency.
7. **Policy DP/2 Design of New Development** – All new development must be of high quality design and, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, should preserve or enhance the character of the local area.
8. **Policy DP/3 Development Criteria** – Lists the requisites of new development to be provided as appropriate to the nature, scale and economic viability. Permission would not be granted for schemes which would have unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity, from traffic generated or on village character.
9. **Policy GB/1 Development in the Green Belt** – There is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Cambridge Green Belt as defined on the Proposals Map. The main purpose of a Green Belt is to keep land open by placing a permanent and severe restriction on inappropriate development; therefore most types of development can only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with PPG2. Such exceptional circumstances will be regarded as Departures from the Development Plan and will only be permitted where other considerations outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. It is not sufficient justification to override Green Belt policies because a development would be inconspicuous or would not harm the site or locality.

### **Consultation**

10. **Comberton Parish Council** – has recommended refusal on the grounds that the extent and nature of the development would diminish the openness of the Green Belt and represents new residential development altering the character of the Green Belt.

### **Representations**

11. No representations have been received in respect of this application.

### **Planning Comments**

12. The main planning considerations in this case are the impact on the setting of the Green Belt and impact on the visual amenity of the area.

### **Impact on the Green Belt**

13. As the proposed garage, walls and gates are not for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation and are not considered to be a limited extension, alteration or replacement of the existing dwelling, the development represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt as defined by Planning Policy

Guidance 2 – Green Belts (PPG2). Paragraph 3.2 of PPG2 states that "*inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It is for the applicant to show why permission should be granted. Very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.*"

14. The applicant has submitted a statement of justification, which attempts to address the issue of harm by virtue of inappropriate development. They argue that the harm caused by the inappropriateness of the development is clearly outweighed by the benefit to the character and integrity of the Green Belt, which would be derived from the removal of the existing large and unsightly barn from the site and replacement with a significantly smaller and more sympathetic structure. The building to be demolished has a footprint of 170 sq m and a ridge height of 5.25m. The proposed garage has a footprint of 88 sq m and a ridge height of 5.0m.
15. It is considered that the proposed garage, walls and gates would have a more appropriate relationship to the main building than the existing shed, and that the net reduction of footprint and height would benefit the character and appearance of the Green Belt. In addition, as the garage would not extend as far to the North as the existing shed, and by virtue of its significantly smaller footprint it is considered that the openness of the Green Belt would be increased. It is considered that the proposed development therefore meets the demands of PPG2 and local Green Belt policy, and is therefore considered to be acceptable. Very special circumstances have been demonstrated to override Green Belt harm by reason of inappropriateness. A planning condition can require the demolition and removal of the shed, prior to the commencement of the proposed development. In these circumstances it would not be necessary to refer the application to the Secretary of State under The Town and Country Planning (Green Belt) Direction 2005.

***Impact of the visual amenity of the area***

16. The proposed garage, walls and gates have been designed to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the main house. In addition, they are a significant distance from the public domain, and it is not considered that they would cause any harm to the visual amenity of the area. The removal of the large, unsympathetic shed towards the rear of the site is considered to benefit the appearance of the site as a whole in its wider visual context.

***Impact on ecology***

17. The ecological impacts of development on the site have been addressed through previous applications and no further significant impacts would be associated with the demolition or construction proposed in this application.

**Recommendation**

**Conditions approve subject to:**

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 future 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 in the construction of the external surfaces of the building and structures hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.  
(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
3. No development shall commence until the existing shed, shown as 'existing shed demolished' on drawing WS-FP-03, has been fully demolished and the materials removed from the site.  
(Reason – To ensure that the development has no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the visual appearance of the area in accordance with PPG2 and Policies GB/1, DP/2 and DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007
- Planning file references – S/1531/08/F, S/1180/08/F, S/1716/04/F, S/0044/01/PNA and S/2009/02/F

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1592/08/F - Comberton  
Erection of 11 Affordable Dwellings  
at Land at The Valley for Northern Affordable Homes**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008 (Major Application)**

**Notes:**

**This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the application is for affordable housing as an exception to the normal operation of the policies of the Local Development Framework.**

**Site and Proposal**

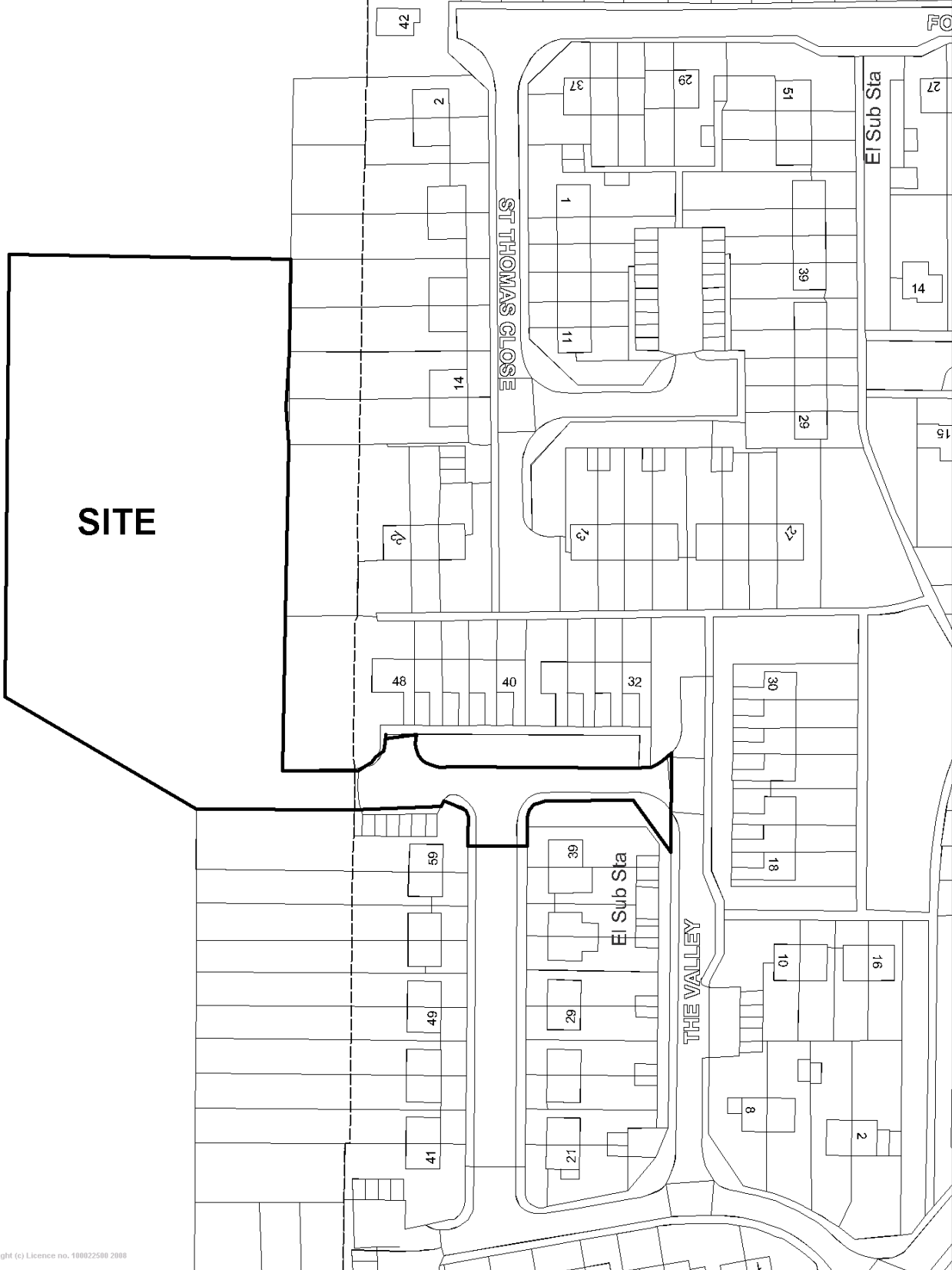
1. The 0.645 hectare site lies at the north eastern part of Comberton and west of gardens to existing dwellings that front St Thomas Close and The Valley. It lies entirely within the Cambridge Green Belt as do the rear portion of gardens to the St Thomas Close dwellings.
2. It forms open fields with no existing boundary definition on its northern, western or southern boundaries.
3. The full planning application, submitted 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008, proposes the erection of a 100% affordable housing scheme for 11 "Intermediate" affordable dwellings at a mix of 4 two- bed and 7 three-bed. The dwellings are to be arranged in a crescent facing an area of open space/children's play area of approximately 1,510m<sup>2</sup>. The dwellings will be arranged in 2 groups of 4 dwelling curved terraces and one terrace of 3 dwellings. The dwellings will be approximately 7.6m high. The density equates to 17 dwellings per hectare (dph).
4. The site lies within flood zone 1 and outside of Comberton Village Framework.

**Relevant Recent History**

5. An application for 24 affordable dwellings on a slightly larger site was withdrawn in December 2007 following officer concerns in relation to the scale, layout and design of the dwellings.
6. An application for 19 affordable dwellings on a slightly larger site was refused at the June 2008 Planning Committee meeting (report attached as appendix 1) for the following reasons:

"The scale of the proposal at 19 dwellings, and its location, served from an existing cul-de-sac, is such that traffic movements along The Valley and its

S-1592-08-F



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December 2008 Planning Committee



approach roads will be significantly increased exacerbating existing congestion problems. The additional vehicle movements and increased congestion will unacceptably harm the amenities of local residents both of The Valley and of the wider area such that it outweighs the need to provide affordable housing in this location. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2007 in that, respectively, it is not compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale in relation to the surrounding area and that the development would have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity from traffic generated.”

### **Planning Policy**

#### *Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 2003*

7. **Policy P6/1 - Development Related Provision** states development will only be permitted where the additional infrastructure and community requirements generated by the proposals can be secured.
8. **Policy P9/8 - Infrastructure Provision** identifies a coordinated approach to securing infrastructure improvements required to support development for the Cambridge sub-region. A programme encompassing for example, transport, affordable housing and education, amongst others is identified.

#### *South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007*

9. **Policy ST/6 – Group Villages** identifies Comberton and states that residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village frameworks of Group Villages, as defined on the Proposals Map.
10. Development may exceptionally consist of up to about 15 dwellings where this would make the best use of a single brownfield site.
11. **Policy GB/1 – Development in the Green Belt** states that there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Cambridge Green Belt as defined on the Proposals Map.
12. **Policy GB/2 – Mitigating the Impact of Development in the Green Belt** states that any development considered appropriate within the Green Belt must be located and designed so that it does not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt. Where development is permitted, landscaping conditions, together with a requirement that any planting is adequately maintained, will be attached to any planning permission in order to ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.
13. **Policy DP/1 - Sustainable Development** states development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form.
14. **DP/2 - Design of New Development** requires all new development to be of a high quality design and indicates the specific elements to be achieved where appropriate. It also sets out the requirements for Design and Access Statements.

15. **DP/3 Development Criteria** sets out what all new development should provide, as appropriate to its nature, scale and economic viability and clearly sets out circumstances where development will not be granted on grounds of an unacceptable adverse impact e.g. residential amenity and traffic generation.
16. **DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments** requires that development proposals should include suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. It identifies circumstances where contributions may be required e.g. affordable housing and education.
17. **Policy HG/1 - Housing Density** is set at a minimum of 30 dph unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment in order to make best use of land. Higher densities of 40 dph will be sought in the most sustainable locations.
18. **Policy HG/2 - Housing Mix Affordable** housing should be of an appropriate mix to respond to identified needs at the time of the development in accordance with HG/3
19. **Policy HG/3 - Affordable Housing** occupation will be limited to people in housing need and must be available over the long-term. The appropriate mix in terms of housing tenures and house sizes of affordable housing will be determined by local circumstances at the time of planning permission, including housing need and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities. In order to ensure sustainable communities, affordable housing will be distributed through the development in small groups or clusters.
20. **Policy HG/5 - Exceptions Sites for Affordable Housing** states
  1. As an exception to the normal operation of the policies of this plan, planning permission may be granted for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. The following criteria will all have to be met:
    - (a) The development proposal includes secure arrangements for ensuring that all the dwellings within the scheme provide affordable housing in perpetuity for those in housing need;
    - (b) The number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confined to, and appropriate to, the strict extent of the identified local need;
    - (c) The site of the proposal is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village;
    - (d) The site is well related to facilities and services within the village;
    - (e) The development does not damage the character of the village or the rural landscape.
  2. In the case of sites within the Cambridge Green Belt, before planning permission is granted for such development, the District Council will have to be assured that no alternative appropriate sites can be found for the scale and type of development proposed and that the scheme fulfils all the criteria set out in the Council's policies, including those relating to the impact of new development on local surroundings.

21. **Policy NE/1 - Energy Efficiency** states development will be required to demonstrate that it would achieve a high degree of measures to increase the energy efficiency of new buildings, for example through location, layout, orientation, aspect and external design.
22. **Policy NE/3 - Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development** states all development proposals greater than 10 dwellings will include technology for renewable energy to provide at least 10% of their predicted energy requirement.
23. **Policy NE/6 - Biodiversity** requires new developments to aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. The District Council will refuse development that would have an adverse significant impact on the population or conservation status of protected species, priority species or habitat, unless the impact can be adequately mitigated by measures secured by planning conditions. Previously developed land will not be considered to be devoid of biodiversity. The re-use of such sites must be undertaken carefully with regard to existing features of biodiversity interest. Development proposals will be expected to include measures that maintain and enhance important features whilst incorporating them within any development of the site.
24. **Policy NE/9 - Water and Drainage Infrastructure** indicates that planning permission will not be granted where there are inadequate water supply, sewerage or land drainage systems to meet the demands of the development unless there is an agreed phasing agreement between the developer and the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure.
25. **Policy NE/12 – Water Conservation** states that development must incorporate all practicable water conservation measures. All development proposals greater than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or 10 dwellings will be required to submit a Water Conservation Strategy prior to the commencement of the development to demonstrate how this is to be achieved.
26. **Policy TR/1 - Planning for More Sustainable Travel** states planning permission will not be granted for developments likely to give rise to a material increase in travel demands unless the site has a sufficient standard of accessibility to offer an appropriate choice of travel by public transport or other non-car travel modes. The amount of car parking provision in new developments should be minimised, compatible with their location. Developments should be designed from the outset with permeable layouts to facilitate and encourage short distance trips by cycle and walking. Safe and secure cycle parking shall be provided.
27. **Policy TR/2 - Car and Cycle Parking Standards** states car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's maximum standards, to reduce over reliance on the car and to promote more sustainable forms of transport.
28. **Policy TR/4 - Non-motorised Modes** states the District Council will use its planning powers by ensuring that all new developments are designed at the outset to facilitate and encourage short distance trips between home, work, schools and for leisure.
29. **Policy SF/10 Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments** requires all residential developments to contribute towards outdoor playing space, formal outdoor sports facilities and informal open space to meet the additional need generated by the development. Where appropriate, provision will involve all or some types of space within the development site. However, an appropriate contribution will be required for 'off-site' provision of the types of space not provided on-site.

30. **Policy SF/11 Open Space Standards** defines the minimum standards for outdoor play space and informal open space.
31. **Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 2 – Green Belts**  
Paragraph 3.4 states (in part): The construction of new buildings inside a Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for limited affordable housing for local community needs under development plan policies according with PPG3 (**now PPS 3**)
32. **Planning Policy Statement 3 - Housing** - encourages Local Planning Authorities to release sites solely for affordable housing, including using a Rural Exception Site Policy. These should only be used for affordable housing in perpetuity.

### **Consultation**

33. **Comberton Parish Council** recommends approval. It states:

“The Parish Council notes that this application is for 11 dwellings and that this is a considerable reduction in the proposed number of dwellings as the first application was for 26 dwellings.

Given this and mindful of the identified need for affordable housing in Comberton the Parish Council supports in principle the application. It welcomes in particular the provision of 2 parking spaces per dwelling and the additional parking spaces that will be provided for residents of The Valley to use. Further clarification is required on the exact number that will be enabled via the access road. The Parish Council has some concern at the small size of the rooms in the properties and recommends that the housing should meeting environmental targets in terms of the size of the rooms, their heating and insulation. The Parish Council has expressed concern regarding drainage at the site before and reiterates this concern.

If approved by the District Council the permission should be subject to a S106 Agreement and the Parish council wishes to be a co-signatory on this. As is usual the Parish Council expects that all its reasonable legal costs associated with the S106 agreement should be covered by the applicant.

The S106 should ensure the homes are in perpetuity for those with strong connections to Comberton and are to remain affordable. The mix of housing is also important and the District Council needs to ensure that the homes are the correct mix of both rental and also shared equity as identified in the recent housing needs survey undertaken by Cambs ACRE in partnership with the Parish Council.

While it is expected that the housing association, which will take on the housing, will also take on responsibility for the public open space and play equipment provided by the applicant the Parish Council expects the S106 to include a sum of money to be spent at the Parish Council's discretion for recreation provision elsewhere in the village.

Arrangements need to be made for the street lighting on site. Care should be taken with the type allowed as this site is adjacent to open countryside and also arrangements need to be secured with CCC to take on ownership and ongoing maintenance responsibilities.

The Parish Council reserves the right to name the roads within the development.”

34. **Affordable Housing Panel:** The panel will meet on 25<sup>th</sup> November. Its findings will be reported verbally at the meeting.

35. **Housing Development and Enabling Manager:** Comments are awaited.

36. **Environmental Protection Team Leader:** Comments are awaited, however, commenting in relation to S/0558/08: "In the past I have had recourse to respond to complaints in respect of drainage overflowing at a development called Thornbury Comberton. This site is close to the location of the proposed development. I understand there is a high water table in this area and that problems associated with drainage have been identified in the past that has to be resolved by re-routing part of the drainage infrastructure.

Consequently, I recommend that if the application is successful, consideration be given to the provision of drainage and that Anglian Water be consulted in respect of the proposed development. I would also recommend that a condition be applied to any consent granted that requires the developer to ensure that the drainage to the site is capable of being effectively conveyed to the main sewer in such a manner so as not to cause foul waste to materialise at any residential property."

37. **Cambridge Archaeology Assistant Archaeologist:** Notes that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential and states that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological work, to be secured through the inclusion of a negative condition in any planning consent.

38. **Anglian Water:** "We are obliged under the Water Industry Act 1991 to provide water and wastewater infrastructure for domestic purposes for new housing and employment developments within our area when requested to do so. To effect this the applicant will have to make a request to us under the appropriate section of the Water Industry Act."

"The foul flows from the development can be accommodated within the foul sewerage network system that at present has adequate capacity. If the developer wishes to connect to our sewerage network they should serve notice under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991. We will then advise them of the most suitable point of connection."

"The foul drainage from this development will be treated at Haslingfield Sewage Treatment Works that at present has available capacity for these flows."

39. **Environment Agency:** Confirms that standing advice in relation to flood zone 1 <1ha apply. These provide advice to the applicant in relation to good practice towards sustainable surface water management.

Additionally where soakaways are proposed for the disposal of uncontaminated surface water, percolation tests should be undertaken and soakaways should be designed to appropriate standards.

Additional advice for the applicants is given that can be included as informatives on any planning permission.

40. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer:** Comments are awaited.

41. **Local Highway Authority:** Comments are awaited.

42. **Ecology Officer:**

"The following enhancement opportunities exist and should be taken forward:

1) bird box provision in 50% of dwellings

2) protection of existing hedge to rear of St Thomas Close - can we prevent the developer from erecting a close board fence which often requires the thinning out of hedgerows.

I welcome the overall proposals for native hedging to enclose this development.

It has been reported previously that a nearby garden pond provides habitat for the great crested newt. Natural England has previously expressed a view on this matter and should be re-consulted.

I accept the fact that the garden pond near to the site is providing a breeding site for great crested newts, especially if it has been surveyed by the local amphibian group. However, the fact that the plot of land proposed for the development itself is active farmland leads me to believe that by removing cultivation and ultimately providing more garden land it will actually result in a habitat gain for the local newt population - subject to strict protection measures being put in place during the construction phase and no unnecessary barriers being permanently erected (such as fencing/walls that go flush to the ground and kerbing where not entirely necessary - does the adoptable highway have to have kerbing?).

In this particular case I am satisfied that it is appropriate to use a condition requiring further survey work and subsequent mitigation scheme given that the population of newts is low, the development site is not actually on the known newt habitat and furthermore that the development site is currently active farmland where newts are likely to be transient and less likely to come to harm. The greatest risk to any great crested newts is likely to be during the construction phase when materials may be stored on the development site.

A license to disturb the habitat of great crested newts will most likely need to be secured by the developer. The license will require further ecological assessment of the pond and the production of a detailed mitigation scheme. We will need to secure the scheme of mitigation via an appropriate condition. Further habitat measures can be included within the landscaping of the scheme. No development or site preparation or clearance will be allowed to commence until such scheme has been approved by NE and myself.”

43. **Landscape Design Officer** comments:

“I have no objections to this layout. The proposed planting will provide a suitable edge to the development and utilising the open space to act as a buffer is to be commended. I should like to see a detailed landscape plan in due course. My only suggestion would be that the planting around the roadside parking should be set approximately 2m back from the kerb of the parking bays so that a verge of grass can be maintained, enabling car passengers to get out of the cars easily, while still allowing the planting to have some depth. The suggested permissive footpath towards the recreation ground is an excellent idea and would help to connect this part of the village better. I assume that the proposed shrub planting to define the parking areas at the entrance to the development will be maintained by the housing association. If it is to be adopted by the parish council then it might be better for it to be naturalistic planting that will accommodate a more relaxed level of maintenance. Given that the recreation ground is close by for ball games, the play area could contain hazel copse and slight changes of levels to provide some informal play opportunities for younger children. I should like to see a management plan as part of the landscape condition so that the long term objectives of the planting can be achieved and the regular and occasional maintenance required is

set out for future managers and contractors, and possibly the parish council. I am happy to discuss this with the applicant's landscape architect in due course."

44. **Strategic Sustainability Officer** comments are awaited

45. **Countryside Access Team – Cambridgeshire County Council** states:

"The Countryside Access Team have no comments to make on the development, but note that the developer intends for there to be a permissive path from one corner of the development to the recreation ground. The Team recommends that this be formalised by way of Permissive Path Agreement with the County Council. This will serve the dual purpose of allowing the path to be shown on the County Council website as a Permissive Path, ensuring that public will know where they can legitimately walk AND protect the landowner from a future claim for a definitive path over the route."

46. **SCDC Legal Officer** comments are awaited.

52. **Representations**

47. 29 letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of nearby dwellings. The following points of objection were made:

- (a) The Valley is already a very congested area. Changing it from a cul de sac to a through road will put pedestrians at risk particularly children and particularly at travel to/from school times.
- (b) (Existing traffic problems identified by the Local Highways Authority will be exacerbated by increasing the volume of through traffic and need for parking.
- (c) Children will not be able to play outdoors due to safety concerns with the extra traffic.
- (d) Increased risk of accidents from increasing the number of vehicles on the roads particularly at the start and end of the working day and at weekends.
- (e) Further congestion will make it extremely difficult for the emergency services to access properties.
- (f) Additional wear and tear on the road which is already in a poor condition.
- (g) The additional parking spaces to be provided for residents in The Valley will not make any difference.
- (h) The Valley is simply not wide enough to accommodate through traffic.
- (i) The proposed shared surface arrangement for The Valley will make matters worse as it will blur the distinction between footpath and road and will encourage higher vehicle speeds. It will significantly increase danger to pedestrians and especially children.
- (j) Additional vehicles will also impact on a wider area as cars will have to travel through the rest of the estate and use Harbour Avenue which is itself already congested.
- (k) The site is not well related to facilities, services and bus stops within the village.

- (l) The development will not stop at 11 dwellings. The applicants will want to apply for more in the future.
- (m) The assessment of local need is out of date.
- (n) The site and gardens to existing properties regularly flood. The development will mean that neighbour gardens will flood more frequently. The slope of the site will exacerbate this.
- (o) Alternative sites have not been fully been explored. Better sites exist.
- (p) The site is Green Belt and no development should be allowed to take place.
- (q) Detract from the character and setting of the village.
- (r) Village infrastructure cannot cope with the additional dwellings. The Village College is at capacity and the surgery has a full quota of patients and would struggle to take on more.
- (s) The existing sewerage system will not be able to cope with the additional dwellings.
- (t) Children will have to be driven to school rather than walk as at present due to the additional traffic and safety hazards.
- (u) The site does not pass the tests in HG/5. It is not well related to the village in the same way that existing housing in this location is not. The housing would not be integrated with existing housing and the community. The scale is inappropriate for a Group Village. It is not well related to existing facilities.
- (v) The footpath will be ploughed and is effectively useless.
- (w) Insufficient parking has been provided for the new dwellings.
- (x) Loss of view of fields and loss of property values.
- (y) 14 Great Crested Newts living in a pond in the garden to No. 53 and also newts may exist in the garden of No. 48.
- (z) Development too large in scale. SCDC policy states "In order to ensure sustainable communities, affordable housing will be distributed through development in small groups or clusters, typically of 6 to 8 units."
- (aa) Comberton Parish Council identified only a need for 8-10 affordable homes.
- (bb) Increase in children taking short cuts through the fields increasing litter and vandalism and spoiling privacy of gardens.
- (cc) 97 out of 98 people at a public meeting into the previous planning application voted against supporting it.
- (dd) The traffic assessment was not done at the busiest times of the day i.e. when the Meridian School and Comberton Village College students use the junctions.



- (ee) Comberton has no gas supply and the energy options are therefore limited. Oil tanks may be unsightly, be an inconvenience and present a hazard where families with young children are concerned. A Section 106 agreement to provide for improved infrastructure to the village should be required. It should provide for a contribution to the funding of a public transport shuttle link to the Madingley Road Park-and-Ride site and contribution to the provision of a mains gas supply to the village.

### **Planning Comments - Key Issues**

48. The key issues are:

Green Belt  
Size and numbers  
Need  
Impact on neighbour amenity  
Impact on the Cambridge Green Belt  
Alternative sites  
Highway safety and parking problems  
Design and layout  
Housing model

### ***General issues***

49. The proposal follows a refused application, a withdrawn application, a public consultation exercise by the applicants, meetings on site and at the Council offices with the Parish Council, Planning Officers, the Local Highway Authority, Housing Development Officers, the Local Member and local residents attending and a public meeting held in Comberton. The numbers of dwellings has reduced from 24 to 19 and now to 11.

### ***Cambridge Green Belt***

50. The proposal lies within the Green Belt. Notwithstanding that Policy HG/5 is an exception to the normal operation of the policies of the LDFDCP. The starting point for consideration is whether or not the proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
51. As detailed above it is not inappropriate if development is for "limited affordable housing for local community needs". Limited is not defined but it must relate to the impact of such development on the purpose of including the land within the Green Belt. Of key relevance is the impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
52. Any built development will have some impact on openness. The proposed dwellings will clearly result in the loss of openness of approximately 0.6ha of Green Belt land adjacent to the village. The issue is whether or not this can be considered as 'limited'.
53. The present edge to the village is clearly visible from the surrounding countryside and particularly from the village recreation ground that lies to the south west. It is not well planted due largely to the obvious and understandable desire of the occupiers of St Thomas Close and The Valley to gain views of the open countryside to the west of their rear garden boundaries. This results in clear views of the back gardens of these houses with all of their associated residential paraphernalia. The scheme has been carefully designed to ensure that views from the surrounding Green Belt of this part of the village edge are made softer by overcoming the problem of westerly facing gardens, by largely

keeping the mass of the development away from the Green Belt boundary (whilst also keeping a good distance away from existing dwellings) and through significant new planting along the north, west and south boundaries. The impact of the end gables of the houses on plots 1 and 19 in the previous scheme has been reduced as the built form is now set further away from the western boundary of the site.

54. In addition, the location of the site to the west and north of existing gardens helps to limit the excursion into the Green Belt
55. Paragraph 4.19 of the LDFDCP states that the District Council will operate the 'exception' sites policy with caution for sites that are within the Green Belt.
56. I consider that in balancing the inevitable loss of openness of the Green Belt with the improvement to the setting of the village and the visual quality of the Green Belt in this location that the development can reasonably said to have a 'limited' impact.
57. I conclude that the development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt.
58. Policy GB/2 states that appropriate development must be located and designed so that it does not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt. Again I consider the proposal achieves this objective.

#### ***Size and numbers***

59. Policy HG/5 requires sites to be 'small'. The previous withdrawn application proposed 24 dwellings. The previous scheme was for 19 which I considered met the "small" criteria. This scheme is on a reduced site of approximately 0.6ha and is intended to accommodate just 11 dwellings. No definition of 'small' in the policy context exists. At HG/5c the scale of the scheme is required to be appropriate to the size and character of the village. I believe it to be in character for reasons given below. In relation to scale, I believe it is in scale. I considered the first scheme of 24 dwellings to be too large and advised that to be in scale a scheme would have to consist of less than 20 dwellings. My assertion is largely based on the Group village status of Comberton where within the village on suitable sites up to 15 dwellings could be permitted.
60. 11 dwellings is actually 4 fewer than might otherwise be permitted on a market scheme within the village. With regard to the balance necessary between restraint policies and the significance the Council and the Government places on the need to provide affordable homes and specifically to the need for 51 dwellings for local people that has been identified in Comberton I consider the scale of the development to be wholly appropriate.

#### ***Need***

61. 'Exception' sites are limited to the people in need within specific villages such that this site is being considered to meet the needs of Comberton. Affordable housing that comes forward within the normal housing policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) is restricted to those in need but not necessarily from within that village.
62. A recent Housing Needs Survey found that there were 51 households in need of affordable housing in Comberton.
63. 43 applications for affordable housing (as of 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008) have been made. Of these, 21 have a current Comberton address and 22 though not currently living in Comberton nevertheless have a Comberton connection. All qualify for affordable housing.

64. I note the Parish Council is now supporting this scheme. In the scheme for 19 dwellings it had requested that phasing be considered to ensure that the need was real before all 19 dwellings were constructed. Now that the Parish is in support and the numbers have been reduced significantly I do not consider there to be any need to consider this further.

***Neighbour amenity***

65. From the representations received there is clearly a lot of concern regarding the impact of these dwellings on the existing residents of The Valley.
66. Many have commented on the existing poor availability of parking provision and the problems of cars parking on footpaths etc. I have seen photographs showing how cars are being parked haphazardly up on kerbs and on green spaces once all available spaces on driveways have been filled and following a number of site visits I have seen the problems for myself. It appears that many residents are not using their garages for parking and in some cases, it has been alleged, households may have up to 5 cars per dwelling. This certainly appears to be a significant issue for the existing residents in terms of inconvenience (also regarding safety which is dealt with later).
67. Residents are concerned that attracting yet more cars will only exacerbate the problems.
68. There appear to be no controls to ensure that existing garages are used for the parking of cars and most garages are rather small. The planning system cannot retrospectively attempt to resolve these issues. I am therefore only concerned that the new dwellings, if approved, will not exacerbate this situation.
69. In this regard, the scheme provides an adoptable 6m wide shared surface highway with a turning head, one dedicated space per dwelling and 11 unallocated visitor parking bays resulting in 2 spaces per dwelling (a slight increase from 1.9 in the previous refused application). Occasional short term parking will be available on the highway and clear of if in front of parking bays 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8. Many of the visitor parking bays are located at the south eastern corner of the site making them more available for existing residents of The Valley if necessary.
70. In addition to the above the applicants have agreed, at their expense, to undertake highway improvement works along one section of The Valley by converting the existing road and footpath arrangement to a 7m shared surface which should alleviate some of the more haphazard parking, for example up on kerbs, that is currently occurring and generally improve the situation. This follows advice from the Local Highway Authority and can be secured through a S106 agreement.
71. In conclusion I consider the proposal complies with the Council's car parking standards and will not exacerbate the current parking problems in The Valley. Indeed I consider the proposal will improve matters with the change in surface and there may be some use of the additional spaces within the scheme by residents of The Valley.
72. With regard to any potential overlooking, the new dwellings will have their rear elevations in excess of 30m from the side elevation of the dwelling granted permission adjacent to No. 48, approximately 40m from the side elevation of No. 22 St Thomas Close and between 50-65m away from the rear elevations of Nos. 2-16 St. Thomas Close.

73. Such distances are more than adequate to ensure that the privacy of all existing residents is not adversely affected. In addition the proposed site layout plan shows that additional planting along the existing rear and side boundaries of these dwellings, i.e. the eastern boundary of the site, is to remain and be strengthened with new planting. This can be required as part of a landscape scheme to be submitted post decision. I consider such planting is unlikely to result in material darkening problem to existing gardens due to the length of the gardens.
74. The separation distances are also such that the scheme will not result in any overbearing impact or any material loss of light.

***Alternative sites***

75. Comberton is surrounded by the Green Belt with only a few small areas of 'white land' outside of the village framework that do not lie within it. None of these areas could accommodate the scale of development proposed.
76. PolicyHG/5 states that for sites proposed within the Green Belt that before planning permission is granted the District Council will have to be assured that no alternative appropriate sites can be found for the scale and type of development proposed. The need for 51 dwellings will not be met within the village as there is insufficient land available for market schemes such that 40% of such schemes amount to 51 dwellings.
77. Since Comberton is surrounded by Green Belt land with only modest areas of 'white land', that could not accommodate 11 dwellings, there is no option but to develop in the Green Belt in order to provide for the scale of the need for 100% affordable housing for people with a local connection.
78. Moreover if this proposal goes ahead it will still be necessary to develop additional land within the Green Belt if the full need is to be met.
79. The Parish Council has previously identified a number of possible alternative sites which I have asked the applicants to assess. The full assessment is contained within the applicants' Planning Statement at para 3.26-3.45 and at Appendix 6.
80. It appears to me that there may be additional sites that could accommodate a small number of dwellings and it is likely that these will be required in addition to the application site. Other sites that may be suitable are not known to be available at this time such as land east of Bush Close/south of Swaynes Lane and there may be potential access issues to resolve. If this land were to become available it may be a consideration for an additional site perhaps of a similar scale.
81. The assessment demonstrates that it will be difficult to accommodate the need for 51 dwellings in Comberton. If this scheme for 11 dwellings goes ahead then it is likely that additional sites accommodating similar or larger numbers will be required.
82. I conclude that there are currently no alternative sites outside of the Cambridge Green Belt that can accommodate the scale and type of development proposed and further that there are limited sites within the Green Belt that could also accommodate the level of need in Comberton. I am satisfied that there are no better sites and that this site is appropriate and necessary if the need is to be met in the future.

***Highway safety and parking problems***

83. The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been involved throughout the pre-application stage including a representative visiting the site with residents and members of the Parish Council, and giving a presentation and answering residents' questions at a public meeting.
84. The LHA comments are awaited but it did not consider the earlier proposal for 19 dwellings would result in any material reduction in highway safety. It has stated that the parking problems in The Valley are unfortunate but very similar to many situations within Cambridge City. I consider that parked cars make manoeuvring more difficult and slow vehicle speeds. It was accepted that the existing arrangements of vehicles parking on pavements is somewhat undesirable but will not be made worse by this proposal though there would be a benefit to changing the worst affected section to a shared surface with the applicant's agreement.
85. I note the previous comments of the LHA. Members will be updated at the meeting but I anticipate it will not be objecting to the proposal, subject to conditions, and as before, would consider that the traffic assessment can be accepted as demonstrating that the roads junctions will be able to cope with the proposed increase in vehicular movements.

***Proximity to services***

86. The site lies less than 500m from the village school such that children can walk to school. Many of the representations state that this is a common practise amongst existing residents at the moment. It is also within easy reach of other services within the village including a convenience store, newsagent, post office, pub, nursery school, doctor's surgery and village hall. I accept that other areas of the village are closer to such facilities but I remain of the opinion that the site is well related to facilities and services within the village.
87. There is an hourly bus service with stops within 550m.
88. Whilst there are no services in the immediate vicinity the site is within a similar distance to the centre of the village as the considerable number of existing houses in this location.

***Character of the village or rural landscape***

89. The character of this part of Comberton is typical of a 60s/70s planned estate with regular lines of houses set in a predominantly perpendicular arrangement.
90. The proposal retains this regularity but by introducing a slight curve adds interest to the streetscape.
91. Views from the surrounding countryside, including from the village recreation ground, should be enhanced due to the planned additional planting that should create a softer edge to the village in this location. This is improved over the previous scheme as mentioned above.

***Open space***

92. A scheme of this number and mix should provide a Local Area of Play (LAP) of 96m<sup>2</sup>, informal children's play space of 96m<sup>2</sup> and 96m<sup>2</sup> of informal open space in accordance with the Local Development Framework Open Space in New Developments

Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Draft April 2008 (OSSPD). The play area shown is approximately 1,241m<sup>2</sup>, well in excess of the requirement, and will be available to the occupiers of the new dwellings but also to the children of residents in the locality. Its position in relation to the dwellings gives excellent natural surveillance. The applicants intend to put in place their own measures for maintenance using a management company. The equipping and maintenance can be controlled through conditions and a S106 agreement.

93. In addition to the above the scheme will, according to the OSSPD, result in an additional 24 people being resident in Comberton requiring an additional need for outdoor sports facilities. Since 11 dwellings lies below the threshold for requiring such facilities on site a contribution will need to be made to the Parish Council of approximately £8,488 for provision and £2,165 for maintenance, secured through a S106 agreement.

***Mix***

94. Policy HG/2 states that affordable housing should be of an appropriate mix to respond to identified needs at the time of the development. The Housing Development and Enabling Manager had previously confirmed that the mix in the earlier scheme was appropriate to the housing need. Members will be updated at the meeting with regard to the current proposal.

***Density***

101. This is approximately 17dph which is lower than the minimum 30dph referred to in Policy HG/1. However, my previous view was that any more than 19 dwellings on this site would start to move away from the criteria in HG/5 for 'exception' sites and could have a greater impact on the surrounding Green Belt. The site could be reduced in size to increase the density but in view of the considerable planting required along all site boundaries I do not consider there is much scope for this. I do not consider it necessary to increase the density further by site area reductions as this may impact on the visual quality of the surrounding Green Belt.

***Education contributions***

95. These are not sought as part of an exceptions housing proposal.

***Design and layout***

96. The design of the houses is simple in concept and the layout focuses on the natural surveillance of the play area. It is a regular arrangement reflecting the regularity of existing housing in the vicinity but with the added interest of the slight crescent shape. Scope has been built in for significant planting to help assimilate the site into its surroundings and to provide a soft edge to the village. The two parking courts are small and located close to existing properties in The Valley to provide additional parking for those residents if desired.

***Housing model***

97. Essentially the applicants buy the land, build the dwellings then transfer them on a shared ownership basis to qualifying persons to recover costs. Profit is gained from rent on the retained equity share portion. To ensure that a mix of tenures can be achieved they will also transfer to a RSL on the same basis for the RSL to then let to persons in need. This of course relies on a RSL being willing to take them on.

98. The Housing Development and Enabling Manager comments are awaited but previously clearly had concerns regarding the applicants' model. One concern is that local RSLs have been unwilling to enter into any formal agreement with Northern Affordable Homes (NAH). There would have to be a mix of tenure and since NAH will not provide any for rental directly the success of the scheme depends on RSLs.
99. The shared ownership is on a fixed 60% basis with no staircasing which is against Housing Corporation guidelines and it does not allow people to come in at a lower stake.
100. Clearly such issues need to be resolved before planning permission can be granted.

***Tenure mix***

101. As before, an approximate 60/40 split in tenure between rental and shared ownership is required such that 7 of the dwellings will be for rent and the remaining 4 shared ownership.

***Renewable energy***

102. The applicants have submitted a renewable energy statement with the application. This states that they recognise the need to provide for 10% of the energy requirements on site but that "...given the nature of the scheme, providing 100% affordable housing, it is very difficult to see that the overall costings for the project will allow for the use of significant amounts of renewable energy sources to be incorporated." They go on to suggest that information regarding renewable energy will be passed on to future occupiers to enable them to make informed decisions on their options for incorporating renewable energy generation in their properties.
103. I do not find this approach acceptable and suggest that if Members are minded to approve the application a condition requiring a scheme to be submitted, agreed and carried out is necessary.

***Water conservation***

104. In accordance with Policy NE/12 a Water Conservation Strategy will be required prior to the commencement of any development. This can be required as a condition of any planning permission granted.

***Flood Risk***

105. The site lies within Flood Risk Zone 1 and not within an area of medium or high flood risk. However, I note the comments of the Chief Environmental Health Officer regarding the earlier proposal and local residents. At the earlier Affordable Housing Panel meeting the Parish Council also confirmed that there are indeed issues in relation to drainage and foul sewage disposal. The PC did not agree with Anglian Water that there is sufficient capacity within the existing system. I consider it likely that the problems with foul sewage are as a result of technical or maintenance problems that will need to be resolved by Anglian Water as it has confirmed that capacity exists. I note that Anglian Water has a duty to provide the necessary infrastructure.
106. A condition to ensure that adequate measures for surface water drainage are put in place should satisfy the Environment Agency Standing Advice for such developments. This is confirmed by the Environment Agency comments.

***Construction traffic***

107. Times and routes of traffic can be controlled through the use of a planning condition if Members are minded to approve the application. The Parish Council has previously stated:
108. “Meridian Primary School’s hours are 9am to 3.30pm – traffic is particularly busy in the Harbour Avenue area from 8.30 to 9 am and 3.15 to 4pm and we recommend that construction traffic should not be allowed to drive through the Village during these hours.
109. We recommend that this traffic should not use the Harbour Ave / Barton Rd junction at any time because of safety concerns outside the School and to avoid the 2 bends near the School and also the acute turn from the west end of Harbour Ave into the Valley. Comberton Village College hours are 8.20am to 2.50pm making Barton Road particularly busy immediately before and after these times.
110. Construction traffic should not start so early as to disturb residents’ sleep and a “Good Neighbour” policy of no construction traffic on Saturday afternoons, all day Sunday and bank holidays is requested. There should be no weekend working on site”.

***Biodiversity***

111. I note the previous comments of the Ecology Officer. Other than comments in relation to the suggested footpath the matters can be secured through an appropriately worded condition. Any change to this position as a result of any revised comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

***Street lighting***

112. It will be important to ensure that a scheme of street lighting, that will be necessary along the adopted highway, will be sympathetic to the location of the site adjacent to the Green Belt, as specifically referred to by the Parish Council. This can be considered by means of an appropriately worded condition.

***Permissive path***

113. The applicants are proposing that a permissive path to the centre of the village be created to enable the new residents greater access across surrounding fields to the centre of the village. This is not a formal part of the planning application but would add something to the connectivity of the site to the centre of the village. I understand the land owner would not be prepared to allow a public right of way to be created. I note the comments of the Countryside Access Team which can be passed on to the developer.

***Conclusions***

114. There is clearly strong local residents opposition to this proposal but I consider it does not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it complies with the requirements of Policy HG/5 of the LDFDCP. I believe there to be a significant need for affordable housing for those with a Comberton connection and I am not convinced that there are any alternative sites that are either better or available.
115. I do not consider there to be any material highway safety concerns or neighbour amenity issues. Flood risk will have to be carefully considered through the submission



of an appropriate drainage scheme and appropriate landscaping will be key to the success of the scheme.

116. I have concerns that the applicant's model does not appear to be satisfactory to local RSLs and that the fixed equity approach will result in problems with affordability and staircasing. These issues must be resolved before development can commence. I believe that an appropriately worded condition can ensure that a scheme of affordable housing be submitted and agreed, in consultation with the Housing Development and Enabling Manager, that will most likely take the form of a Section 106 agreement, that can address these concerns. If no such solution can be found the proposal would not go ahead and the permission would die after the 3 year implementation condition expired.

**Recommendation**

117. Approval subject to conditions to ensure affordability in accordance with required tenure split and policy in perpetuity, open space infrastructure provision, scheme for the equipping and maintaining of the children's play space, Grampian condition to ensure highway improvements to The Valley prior to commencement, submission of a full landscape scheme, landscape implementation, renewable energy scheme, water conservation strategy, materials – walls roofs and hard surfaces, retention of car parking spaces, street lighting, drainage and foul sewage disposal, boundary treatment, archaeology, keeping front gardens open, routes and time restrictions for construction traffic, highway conditions recommended by the LHA and biodiversity.

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

- Planning Application Files Ref S/1592/08/F and S/0558/08/F
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2007
- Local Development Framework Open Space in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Draft April 2008

**Contact Officer:** Nigel Blazeby – Development Control Team Leader  
Telephone: (01954) 713165

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1840/08/F - COTTENHAM  
Erection of Twelve Dwellings at Land North of Orchard Close  
For Hundred Houses Society**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Date for Determination: 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009 (Major Application)**

**Notes:**

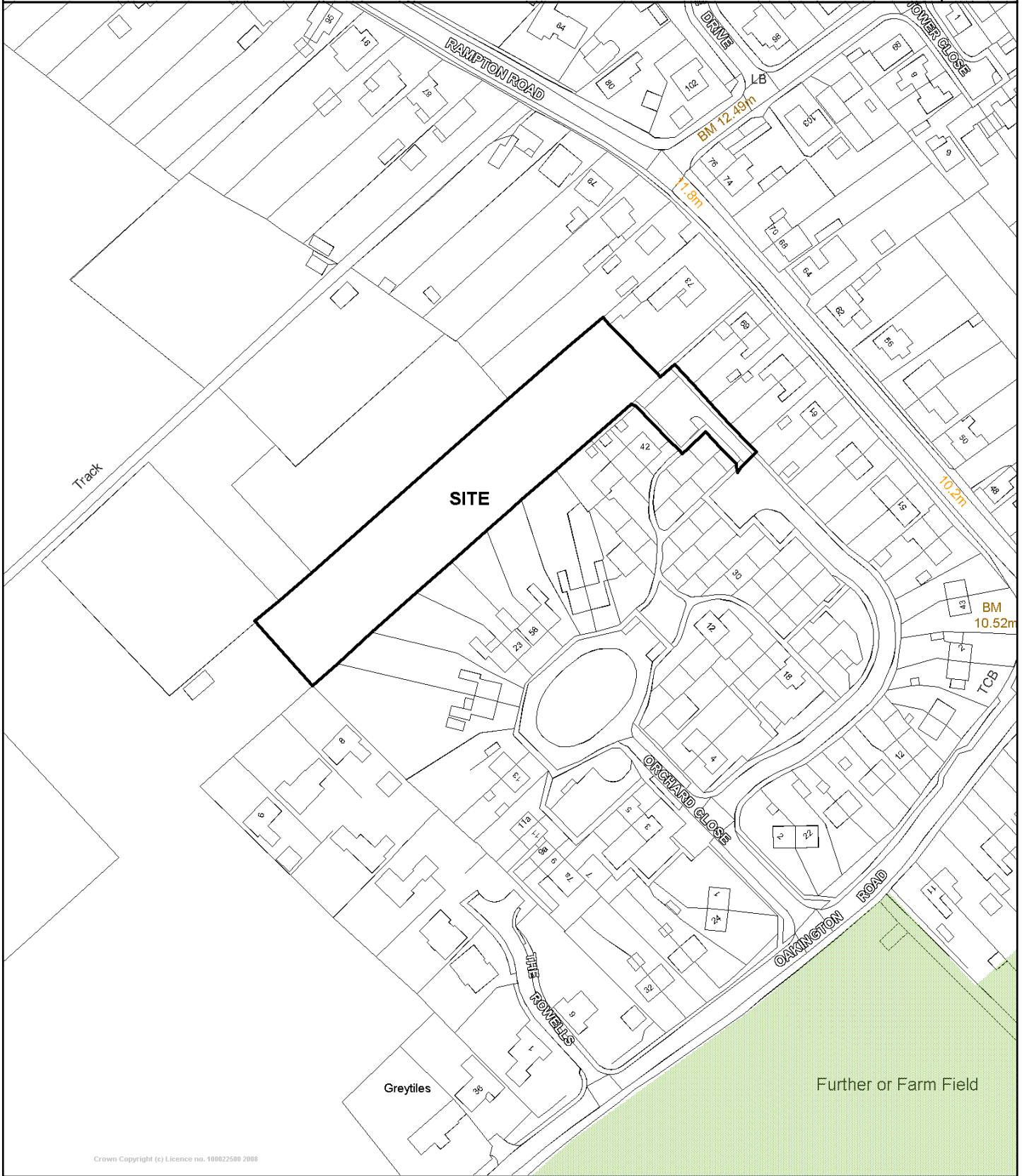
**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because it is for affordable housing on an exception site outside the village framework.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The application site, measuring 0.46 hectares, is a field to the north of Orchard Close on the western side of the village. It comprises an existing roadway serving a small car parking area and an arable field. There are gardens adjoining to the southeast, northeast and the northwestern end of the site. Orchards and fields beyond the site to the northwest and southwest bound the remainder of the site. The site is accessed via the car parking court off Orchard Close. A small number of trees mark the car park edge and a field hedge to the northwestern boundary. A post and rail fence marks the southwestern boundary.
2. This full planning application received on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008, proposes the erection of twelve affordable homes at a gross density of 26.09 dwellings per hectare (dph). The net density is approximately 33.3 dph. The mix proposed comprises:
  - 6 no. 2-bedroomed bungalow/houses;
  - 4 no. 2-bedroomed flats;
  - 1 no. 3-bedroomed house and;
  - 1 no. 4-bedroomed house.

The application is accompanied by a Design Statement, Disabled Access Statement, Water Conservation Strategy Statement, Sustainability Appraisal, Renewable Energy Statement, Health Impact Statement, Affordable Housing Statement, Sewage and Utilities Assessment and Tree Report.
3. Access will be via the existing point off Orchard Close and will require the alteration of the existing access point and re-provision of 7 resident parking spaces. 23 car parking spaces to serve the development are proposed,

S/1840/08/F Cottenham



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excluding the 7 that are to replace some of the 10 spaces lost from the existing parking court, resulting in an overall total of 30.

4. The application is due to be discussed at an affordable housing panel. The outcome of the meeting will be reported by way of an addendum to this report.

### **Planning History**

5. The existing residential development at Orchard Close extended a post-war scheme of housing, approved in the 1970s under planning permission ref. **S/0846/74/O**.
6. Planning application ref. **S/0686/08/F** sought full permission for the erection of thirteen affordable homes. It was considered at the Planning Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2008. Members determined to refuse the application on grounds including: the adverse impact on existing properties and residents, lack of amenity / play areas, and the proposed Plot 2 being out of character with the area. If supported by independent consultation, additional reasons for refusal were to be drainage concerns and highway safety (including the loss of car parking). The Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service were to be asked for their views about access for emergency vehicles and their response might have formed the basis of another reason for refusal. This application was however, withdrawn following meetings with officers, the Parish Council and local residents before a decision notice was issued.

### **Planning Policy**

#### **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007**

7. **Policy ST/5 – Minor Rural Centres** identifies Cottenham and states development and re-development of up to thirty dwellings will be permitted within village frameworks. For larger schemes of over 9 houses section 106 agreement may be used to secure contributions towards appropriate village services.
8. **Policy DP/1 - Sustainable Development** states development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form.
9. **DP/2 Design of New Development** requires all new development to be of a high quality design and indicates the specific elements to be achieved where appropriate. It also sets out the requirements for Design and Access Statements.
10. **DP/3 Development Criteria** sets out what all new development should provide, as appropriate to its nature, scale and economic viability and clearly sets out circumstances where development will not be granted on grounds of an unacceptable adverse impact e.g. residential amenity and traffic generation.
11. **DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments** requires that development proposals should include suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. It identifies circumstances where contributions may be required e.g. affordable housing and education.
12. **Policy DP/6 - Construction Methods** states where practicable, development, which by its nature or extent is likely to have some adverse impact upon the local

environment and amenity during construction and/or is likely to generate construction waste should, inter alia:

- (a) Recycle construction waste.
  - (b) Prepare a "Resource Re-use and Recycling Scheme" to cover all waste arising during the construction.
  - (c) Be bound by a "Considerate Contractors Scheme" or similar arrangement, including restrictions on hours of noisy operations.
13. **Policy DP/7 - Development Frameworks** states redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks will be permitted, provided that:
  - (a) Retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character.
  - (b) Development would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historic importance, and the amenities of neighbours.
  - (c) There is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development.
14. **Policy HG/1 - Housing Density** is set at a minimum of 30 dph unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment in order to make best use of land. Higher densities of 40 dph will be sought in the most sustainable locations.
15. **Policy HG/3 - Affordable Housing** occupation will be limited to people in housing need and must be available over the long-term. The appropriate mix in terms of housing tenures and house sizes of affordable housing will be determined by local circumstances at the time of planning permission, including housing need and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities. In order to ensure sustainable communities, affordable housing will be distributed through the development in small groups or clusters.
16. **Policy HG/5 - Exceptions Sites for Affordable Housing states:**
  1. As an exception to the normal operation of the policies of this plan, planning permission may be granted for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. The following criteria will all have to be met:
    - (a) The development proposal includes secure arrangements for ensuring that all the dwellings within the scheme provide affordable housing in perpetuity for those in housing need;
    - (b) The number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confined to, and appropriate to, the strict extent of the identified local need;
    - (c) The site of the proposal is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village;
    - (d) The site is well related to facilities and services within the village;
    - (e) The development does not damage the character of the village or the rural landscape.
17. **Policy SF/6 - Public Art and New Development** states in determining planning applications the District Council will encourage the provision or commissioning of

publicly accessible art, craft and design works. The Policy will apply to residential developments comprising 10 or more dwellings.

18. **Policy SF/10 - Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments** states all residential developments will be required to contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space (including children's play space and formal outdoor sports facilities) and Informal Open Space to meet the additional need generated by the development in accordance with the standards in **Policy SF/11**.
19. **Policy SF/11 - Open Space Standards** states the minimum standard for outdoor play space and informal open space is 2.8ha per 1000 people, comprising:
  - (a) Outdoor sport 1.6ha per 1000 people.
  - (b) Children's Playspace - 0.8ha per 1000 people.
  - (c) Informal Open Space - 0.4ha per 1000 people.
20. **Policy NE/1 - Energy Efficiency** states development will be required to demonstrate that it would achieve a high degree of measures to increase the energy efficiency of new buildings, for example through location, layout, orientation, aspect and external design.
21. **Policy NE/3 - Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development** states all development proposals greater than 10 dwellings will include technology for renewable energy to provide at least 10% of their predicted energy requirement.
22. **Policy NE/6 - Biodiversity** requires new developments to aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. The District Council will refuse development that would have an adverse significant impact on the population or conservation status of protected species, priority species or habitat, unless the impact can be adequately mitigated by measures secured by planning conditions. Previously developed land will not be considered to be devoid of biodiversity. The re-use of such sites must be undertaken carefully with regard to existing features of biodiversity interest. Development proposals will be expected to include measures that maintain and enhance important features whilst incorporating them within any development of the site.
23. **Policy NE/9 - Water and Drainage Infrastructure** indicates that planning permission will not be granted where there are inadequate water supply, sewerage or land drainage systems to meet the demands of the development unless there is an agreed phasing agreement between the developer and the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure.
24. **Policy NE/12 - Water Conservation** states that for development of more than 1000m<sup>2</sup> or more than 10 houses all practicable water conservation measures will be required to be submitted in a water conservation strategy.
25. **Policy TR/1 - Planning for More Sustainable Travel** states planning permission will not be granted for developments likely to give rise to a material increase in travel demands unless the site has a sufficient standard of accessibility to offer an appropriate choice of travel by public transport or other non-car travel modes. The amount of car parking provision in new developments should be minimised, compatible with their location. Developments should be designed from the outset with permeable layouts to facilitate and encourage short distance trips by cycle and walking. Safe and secure cycle parking shall be provided.

26. **Policy TR/2 - Car and Cycle Parking Standards** states car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's maximum standards, to reduce over reliance on the car and to promote more sustainable forms of transport.
27. **Policy TR/3 - Mitigating Travel Impact** requires applications for major residential development to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment.
28. **Policy TR/4 - Non-motorised Modes** states the District Council will use its planning powers by ensuring that all new developments are designed at the outset to facilitate and encourage short distance trips between home, work, schools and for leisure.

### **Consultations**

29. The consultation period is due to expire on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Therefore a number of responses are awaited and will be reported by way of an addendum to this report.
30. **Cottenham Parish Council** – comments awaited.
31. **Drainage Manager** – comments awaited.
32. **Local Highway Authority** – comments awaited.
33. **Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** – comments awaited.
34. **Landscape Design Officer** – comments: 'This is a much improved layout, reducing the impact of the development on its neighbours. I should like to see a landscape plan in due course. Around the houses I should like to see some herbaceous planting as well as shrubs to give a low maintenance but garden feel to the development. The curved wall at the entrance could be clothed in Boston ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*) to soften its appearance during the summer'.
35. **Community Safety Department** – comments awaited.
36. **Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue** – Adequate provision must be made for fire hydrants. This can be secured by of a condition. Access and facilities should be in accordance with the Building Regulations Approved Document B5, Section 16.
37. **Cambridgeshire County Council** – comments awaited. (No education contributions are sought if all houses are affordable).
38. **Housing Development and Enabling Manager** – comments awaited.
39. **Arts Development Officer** – comments awaited.
40. **Ecology Officer** – comments awaited.
41. **Building Control** – comments awaited.



## **Representations**

42. Cottenham Village Design Group – comments:
- 'This is a village edge development where it will be important to protect and enhance the external view of the village. We support the intention to include a native hedgerow/buffer on boundaries exposed to open farmland although find the application lacking details of this planting and note that no drawing showing this external elevation has been provided.
43. We find the proposed buildings to be acceptable in this location although feel that more could be done to acknowledge their Cottenham context. A development of this size will have some impact on the local community; consideration should be given to providing some contribution to local infrastructure costs.
44. *'L/3: New developments on the village edge should give high priority to landscape design and management of light pollution, to protect and enhance the external view of the village. Do not form a stark edge to the village, or spoil the outside view by neglecting the backs of gardens or buildings. Shelter and contain the edge using appropriate native broadleaf species. Achieve well-designed compositions using hedge and woodland screens. Maintain dark skies in the countryside at night by minimising light spillage from new development.'* (Cottenham Village Design Statement p.6)
45. *'L/1: Landscape design criteria should form a key aspect in the layout, form and urban design qualities of new developments.'* (Design Statement p.6)
46. *'6/6: New developments should acknowledge their Cottenham context and avoid pattern-book designs. Respect local characteristics and context of the particular site. Use good quality materials - whether modern or traditional - which are appropriate to Cottenham.'* (Design Statement p.19)
47. *'C/2: Developers, planners and public authorities should take relevant local advice concerning facilities (including education, sport, culture and entertainment) to be provided as a result of new development.'* (Design Statement p.2)
48. The consultation period does not expire until 8th December 2008, additional responses will be included in an addendum or reported verbally.

## **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

49. The key issues in assessing this application are affordable housing, design, layout, public open space, drainage, access, car parking, cycle parking, biodiversity, landscaping, public art, energy efficiency and renewable energy provision and infrastructure.

### ***Affordable housing***

50. The tenure mix will be secured through a condition requiring a scheme to be submitted (usually a section 106 agreement). The applicant has indicated that it is willing to enter into an agreement. As an exception site the dwellings will be occupied by families with a tie to Cottenham and not to meet the wider, district, need.

51. It is officers' view that the site is well related to the village framework, being adjacent to it and within easy reach of its services with a short walk to these. The development of this land will not seriously harm the character of the village or rural landscape, being away from public view points and due to its lack of significant contribution to the landscape currently. The proposal appears to accord with Policy HG/5 in those regards.

***Design and layout***

52. The scheme has been designed to address as much as possible concerns raised in relation to the previous application. Plots 1 and 2 are away from the existing rear garden of no. 73 Rampton Road and are bungalows. An area is also being set aside for a garden extension to no. 73 for garden land. This was intended to be occupied by a two bedroom bungalow in the earlier scheme.
53. The scheme no longer contains chalet bungalows, minimising the visual impact upon both Rampton Road and Orchard Close residents.
54. The dwellings are sited to avoid overlooking and have reasonable distances between dwellings. Distances from the back of 2 storey houses at The Rowells and Orchard Close are between 30 – 50 metres, while back-to-front distances between bungalows (plots 1 and 2) and Orchard Close are 21 metres on back-to-side or front.
55. The density is acceptable for an edge of village location and meets minimum requirements.
56. The designs are modern in style and subject to appropriate materials will not be out of keeping with the area.

***Public open space***

57. No provision has been made for a play area on site. This is due to the very linear nature of the site, which makes it difficult to accommodate on site. No direct reference has been made to off-site provision, although the supporting documents refer to the applicant's willingness to enter into a section 106 to secure any necessary infrastructure improvements. It does however note that these have not been worked in the costings and therefore confirmation is being sought as the precise details of this commitment in order to ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided to meet the needs of the development. Policies SF/10 and SF/11 do not make exemptions for affordable schemes.

***Drainage***

58. Members were concerned, in considering the previous scheme that reports of poor drainage infrastructure had been received. This matter has been investigated further and the supporting documents with the application set out the proposals.
59. Foul drainage is to connect to the existing system at the point it cuts across the Orchard Close estate road, and therefore will not add to the sewage flow running through the back gardens of nos. 22-46 (evens) Orchard Close. The existing sewer is 150mm in diameter. While the comments of Anglian Water and the Council's Drainage Manager are awaited it is considered likely that this will overcome the concerns previously about drains backing up.

60. A water conservation strategy accompanies the application. It proposes that surface water drainage will be dealt with by way of locally sited soakaways for roof and surface water. Parking and paved areas around dwellings will drain directly onto gardens and planted areas. Each dwelling is also to be provided with a water butt that has capacity to store 180 litres of rainwater. Dwellings are to be fitted with water meters, toilet cisterns shall be dual-flush types, showers shall have flow restrictors to below 9 litres /min and all basin taps will be the type with restricted spray fittings.

***Access and car parking***

61. It is understood that the access has been revised to address highway concerns in relation to the earlier scheme. An update on this will be reported by way of an addendum.
62. In relation to car parking levels within the proposed scheme, a maximum of 21 spaces are required to serve the development. 10 spaces are being lost to accommodate the access road. The proposals provide 7 spaces for existing residents, a loss of 3 spaces overall. The provision to serve the development itself is 23 spaces. This is an over provision of 2 spaces. Balancing the two totals is not particularly helpful but does suggest that overall the equivalent of one space is lost. On balance the level of provision is considered acceptable, given local concerns in relation to the earlier scheme and loss of car parking.
63. Cycle parking is to be accommodated, in accordance with policy, in sheds within gardens or purpose built store for flats.

***Public art***

64. No reference is made within the application to the provision of public art. Policy SF/6 only encourages the provision or commissioning of publicly accessible art, craft and design works on residential developments comprising 10 or more dwellings. As the applicant has not costed for such provision, it is unlikely to be offered. An addendum to the report will address this, as the applicant's response is required.

***Biodiversity and Landscaping***

65. Comments are awaited in relation to biodiversity, however on the earlier application nothing arose that could not be overcome with planning conditions.
66. There was some concern relating to loss of trees and impact on the boundary hedge. This application is accompanied by a tree report. One acer tree is to be removed, as it is not possible to accommodate the road and retain it and the replacement parking. All other existing planting is accommodated within the scheme. As per the Landscape Design Officer's request landscaping conditions can be applied.

***Energy efficiency and renewable energy production***

67. Building Control's comments are awaited, however the application is accompanied by a sustainability appraisal and a renewable energy statement. These indicate that the dwellings will be built to at least level 3 of the code for sustainable homes and is likely to meet level 4.

68. The requirement under policy NE/2 for 10% of the energy requirement to be met through renewable energy sources is to be met through the installation of roof mounted, flat plate, solar collectors for heating water. Of some concern is that the commitment to this is weak. The statement suggests that this will only be incorporated if funding from the Housing Corporation for the scheme is available. The agent has been informed that this is a requirement of all developments and that it would be a condition of planning permission. A scheme will therefore be required to be submitted.

**Recommendation**

69. Subject to the nature of outstanding representations; appropriate safeguarding conditions; and a Section 106 to secure the affordable housing provision and public open space contributions, Delegated Approval is sought.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies DPD 2008
- Planning File Refs: S/1840/08/F, S/0686/08/F and S/0846/74/O
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings.

**Contact Officer:** Mrs Melissa Reynolds – Team Leader (East Area)  
Telephone: (01954) 713237

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1821/08/F & S/1823/08/LB - ICKLETON**  
**Garden Room at Caldrees Manor, 2 Abbey Street for Mr J Gildersleeve**

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as recommended by the Local Councillor.**

**Members will visit this site on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008.**

**Listed Building & Conservation Area**

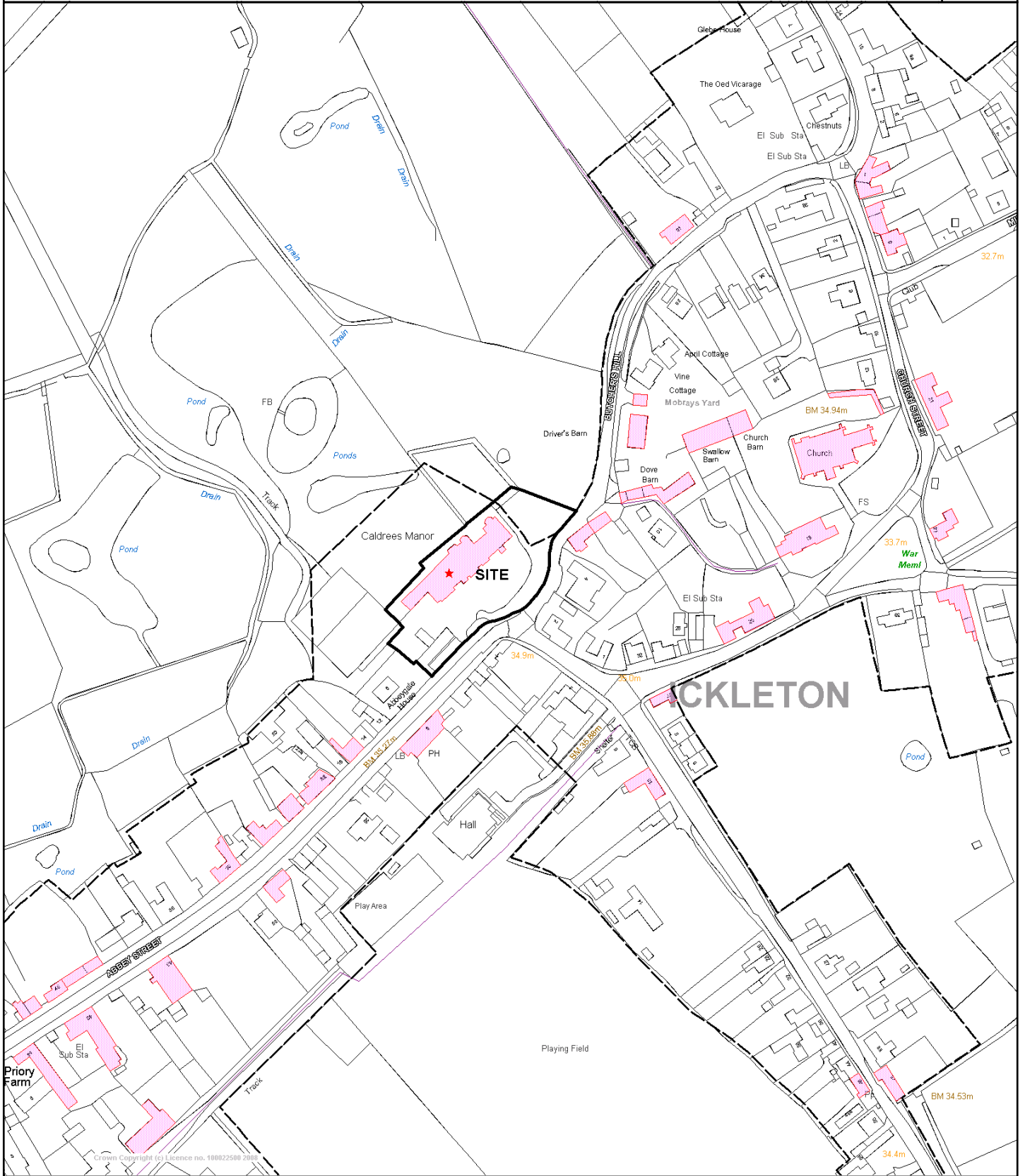
**Site and Proposal**

1. The application site is situated within the Ickleton Conservation Area and within the village framework. Caldrees Manor is a Grade II Listed Building of 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> Century origin. Situated on the north side of Abbey Street at the junction with Frogge Street and Butcher's Hill, the dwelling sits back from the street scene behind trees and a boundary wall of approximately 3 metres in height. The two-storey building is largely constructed of gault brick with a red plain tiled roof and has been altered over time both internally and externally.
2. On the rear elevation there is a conservatory of modern design and construction. Added in 1987 (S/0896/87/LB & S/0895/F) it is of no architectural merit and is not considered to enhance the listed building. Located in a recess between flat roofed bays, it sits below a first floor balcony. A conservatory has been located in this position since the early 20th century.
3. The applications, received 26<sup>th</sup> August 2008, would see the removal of the existing conservatory and the erection of a frameless glass garden room. With a floor area of 55.6 square metres, the proposed garden room would sit on a similar footprint to the existing conservatory. It would be the same height and project no further than the existing into the rear garden. Constructed entirely of clear glass, the rear elevation of the listed building would be visible through it.

**Planning History**

4. **S/0895/87/F** – Extensions including granny annexe – approved 13<sup>th</sup> July 1987
5. **S/0896/87/LB** – Part demolition and extensions – approved 13<sup>th</sup> July 1987

S/1821/08/F - Ickleton



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December Planning Committee

## Planning Policy

### *National Planning Policy*

6. **Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment** - Paragraphs 3.12 to 3.14 - In judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question. They may comprise not only obvious visual features but the spaces and layout of the building and the archaeological or technological interest of the surviving structure and surfaces. Listed buildings do vary greatly in the extent to which they can accommodate change without loss of special interest. Some listed buildings are the subject of successive applications for alterations or extension; in such cases it needs to be borne in mind that minor works of indifferent quality, which may seem individually of little importance, can cumulatively be very destructive of a buildings special interest.

### *South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007*

7. **Policy DP/1 “Sustainable Development”** – only permits development where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development. The policy lists the main considerations in assessing whether development meets this requirement.
8. **Policy DP/2 “Design of New Development”** – requires all new development to be of a high quality design and (amongst other issues) be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, form, design and materials.
9. **Policy DP/3 “Development Criteria”** – sets out what all new development should provide, as appropriate to its nature, scale and economic viability and states that permission will not be granted for proposals that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on (amongst other issues) village character.
10. **Policy CH/3 “Listed Buildings”** – requires that applications for planning permission, including applications for extensions to Listed Buildings, will be determined in accordance with legislative provisions and national policy (currently in PPG15).
11. **Policy CH/5 “Conservation Areas”** – requires new development in or affecting a Conservation Area to be determined in accordance with national policy (PPG15), namely to preserve or enhance the character of the area.

## Consultation

**Ickleton Parish Council** – Approval, no comments.

12. **Conservation Officer** – The application was discussed at the Conservation & Design Team Meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008. The following comments were made;

“The existing extension was constructed in 1987 (S/0896/87/LB & S/0895/87/F) and is therefore of no architectural merit. The photograph dating from 1972 in the Design & Access Statement shows a smaller lean-to conservatory with a central three-sided bay with a lantern. During pre-application discussions the Team advised that this design would be the most appropriate form of replacement as it would be traditional in form, design and materials. As an alternative a simple glazed veranda or a freestanding garden room was suggested.

It is appreciated that the proposed conservatory is simple in form but the design concept of a modern “frameless” structure is not considered to be an appropriate addition to this listed building. The proposal would result in an incongruous addition that would harm the character and appearance of the 19th century rear elevation.

In addition there is no automatic right to replacement and whereas the existing conservatory is of no merit the proposed replacement is not considered to be an enhancement by virtue of its form, design and materials”.

### **Representations**

13. The local member has requested that the application be considered at Planning Committee.

“The application may be considered controversial in conservation terms for the following reasons:

- (a) The proposed new structure is modern in design and the main building is old.
- (b) The existing structure (which it is intended to replace) is also modern – it was obviously approved when it was erected.
- (c) The old and new can coexist in a conservation-friendly way as evidenced by the variety of other architectural styles which may be seen on this building.
- (d) The relative merits of the new intended structure as compared to the existing.

My own view is that the new planned construction has merit, and I would like the applicant to have the opportunity for the application to be considered by the Planning Committee, with a site visit.

I would declare a personal interest in that I know the applicant slightly – in the same way that I know many residents in my ward, but this interest is not prejudicial”.

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

14. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- (a) Harm to the special character and appearance of the listed building;
- (b) Impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

#### ***Harm to the special character and appearance of the listed building***

15. The application site comprises a 19th century Grade II Listed Building. Erected in 1987, the existing conservatory on the rear elevation is not considered appropriate by way of design or materials and is of no architectural merit. The Council has no objection to the removal of the existing conservatory.
16. Pre-application discussions between the applicant and the Conservation Officer established that the officer considers the most appropriate replacement would be one based upon the design of an earlier conservatory visible in a photograph provided by the applicant in the design and access statement. A lean-to structure with a central three-sided bay with a lantern, this would be traditional in form, design and materials. Also suggested as an alternative for the site was a simple glazed veranda or a free standing garden room. The applicant, however, is of the view that it is important to let the building evolve through time and therefore proposes a 21st century clear glass frameless construction.



17. Although the footprint of the proposed garden room is similar to that of the conservatory to be removed, the form, design and materials of the proposal are not considered to be appropriate for such an addition and would cause harm to the special character and appearance of the 19th century listed building. Although the design is simple the proposal would appear incongruous against the listed building.
18. Despite there being no objection to the removal of the existing conservatory, there is no automatic right to replacement. The current proposal would be to the detriment of the listed building and is therefore not considered in this case to be an appropriate replacement.

***Impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.***

19. Caldrees Manor is a significant building within the village of Ickleton and makes a strong visual statement within the Ickleton Conservation Area. The proposal is considered to be to the detriment of the listed building and therefore subsequently, due to its inappropriate scale, form, design and materials, the proposed garden room would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

**Recommendation**

20. Refuse
  1. The proposed garden room extension will cause harm to the special character and appearance of the 19th century rear elevation of this gault brick listed building by virtue of its scale, form, design and materials. The proposed replacement of the existing modern conservatory is not considered to enhance the rear elevation and will be to the detriment of the historic plan form. In terms of design, the addition of a flat roofed “frameless” glass structure proposed garden room is considered to be inappropriate and would result in an incongruous addition that would compromise the special character and appearance of this listed building. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy CH/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007 and paragraphs 3.12 – 3.14 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 15.
  2. The listed building makes a strong visual statement within the Conservation Area. Due to its inappropriate scale, form, design and materials the proposed garden room will neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CH/5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007.

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

- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007
- Planning File Ref: S/0896/87/LB & S/0895/F

**Contact Officer:** Tamara Shaw – Appeals Assistant  
Telephone: (01954) 713171

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1558/08/O - FOWLMERE**  
**Affordable Housing at Land East of Pipers Close**  
**for Chartism Housing**

**Recommendation: Refuse**

**Date for Determination: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

**Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as it is an exceptions site for affordable housing**

**Members will visit this site on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008**

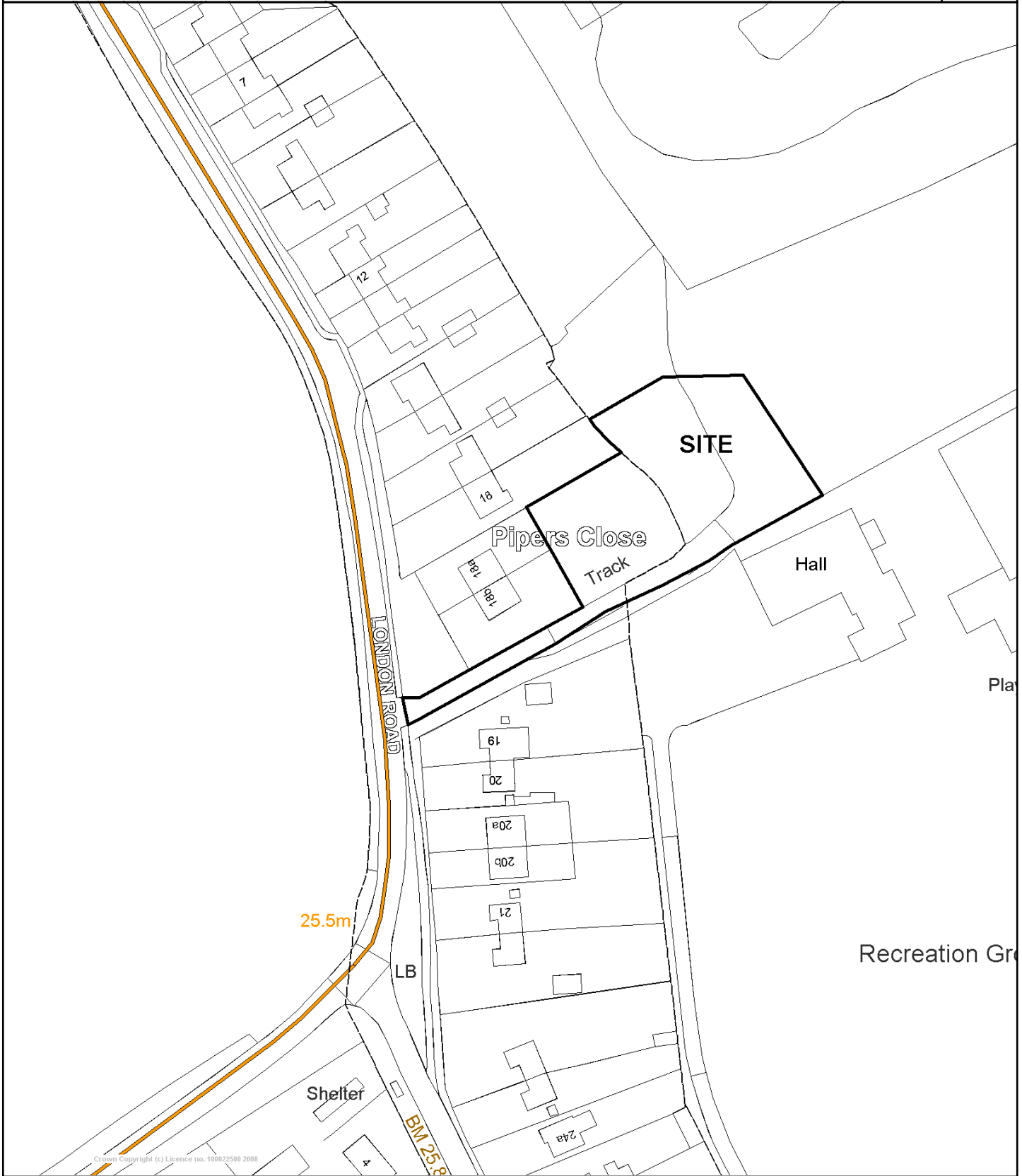
**Site and Proposal**

1. The site, with an area of 0.237 hectares, is located at the southern end of the village of Fowlmere, along London Road/Pipers Close. The village framework runs to the rear of the Pipers Close dwellings. The proposed access to the development is within the village framework, whereas the majority of the site lies outside this framework and within the Cambridge Green Belt.
2. To the south of the site, also within the Green Belt, is Fowlmere village hall. Its access is located to the southern edge of the village framework. It has a separate one-way exit that runs adjacent to the proposed access onto London Road. The square area of land to the rear of 18a and 18b Pipers Close, which is within the application site, is currently garden to no. 18 Pipers Close. The land to the east is currently garden land to no. 4 Chapel Lane, and contains a number of trees that are protected by a group Tree Preservation Order. The land further east also has trees, and then becomes a meadow.
3. The application, received on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008, seeks outline consent for affordable housing on the site. All matters are to be reserved, except means of access. An indicative layout has been provided to show a proposed layout for five dwellings. However, there is no written confirmation that the scheme would be for five only. No information is given as to the size, mix and tenure, which the applicant states would be to the strict extent of identified local need and clarified at the reserved matters stage. There would be no market housing, and the development should be considered as an exceptions site.

**Planning History**

4. **S/1764/78/O** – Planning permission was refused and dismissed at appeal for a bungalow and garage on land to the rear of nos. 17-18b Pipers Close on grounds of the principle of development and the practicality of the access.

S/1558/08/F



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Planning Committee - December 2008

5. **SC/1293/72/O** – Planning permission was refused for two dwellings on land to the rear of nos. 6-17 Pipers Close on grounds of creating piecemeal development in the countryside.

### **Planning Policy**

6. **Policy ST/6** (Group Villages) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007 classifies Fowlmere as a Group Village, where residential development up to a maximum size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within village frameworks.
7. **Policy DP/1** (Sustainable Development) of the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (LDFDCP) 2007 states development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form, and should make efficient and effective use of land by giving priority to the use of brownfield sites.
8. **Policy DP/2** (Design of New Development) of the LDFDCP 2007 states all new development must be of high quality design and, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, should preserve or enhance the character of the local area.
9. **Policy DP/3** (Development Criteria) of the LDFDCP 2007 states all development should provide affordable housing, appropriate access from the highway network and outdoor play space. It adds planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity and village character.
10. **Policy DP/4** (Infrastructure and New Developments) of the LDFDCP 2007 notes planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements for the improvements or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
11. **Policy DP/7** (Development Frameworks) of the LDFDCP 2007 states that outside village frameworks, only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted.
12. **Policy GB/1** (Development in the Green Belt) of the LDFDCP 2007 states there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Cambridge Green Belt. Paragraph 3.4 of PPG 2: Green Belts classifies limited affordable housing for local community needs as appropriate development.
13. **Policy GB/2** (Mitigating the Impact of Development in the Green Belt) of the LDFDCP 2007 states any development considered appropriate within the Green Belt must be located and designed so that it does not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt. Where development is permitted, landscaping conditions, together with a requirement that any planting is adequately maintained, will be attached to any planning permission in order to ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.
14. **Policy HG/1** (Housing Density) of the LDFDCP 2007 seeks residential developments to make best use of sites by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment.

15. **Policy HG/2** (Housing Mix) of the LDFDCP 2007 states residential development will contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes and affordability to meet local needs. Affordable housing should be of an appropriate mix to respond to identified needs at the time of the development.
16. **Policy HG/5** (Exceptions Sites for Affordable Housing) of the LDFDCP 2007 states as an exception to the normal operation of the policies, planning permission may be granted for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. Criteria relating to securing the units as affordable, the number, size, mix and tenure of the dwellings, the character of the village, and relations with facilities and services should be met, with particular reference to local need.
17. In the case of sites within the Cambridge Green Belt, before planning permission is granted for such development, the District Council will have to be assured that no alternative appropriate sites can be found for the scale and type of development proposed and that the scheme fulfils all the criteria set out in the Council's policies, including those relating to the impact of new development on local surroundings.
18. **Policy NE/6** (Biodiversity) of the LDFDCP 2007 states new development should aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity, and opportunities should be taken to achieve positive gain through the form and design of development.
19. **Policy SF/10** (Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments) states all residential developments will be required to contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space (including children's play space and formal outdoor sports facilities) and Informal Open Space to meet the additional need generated by the development in accordance with the standards in **Policy SF/11**.
20. **Policy SF/11** (Open Space Standards) states the minimum standard for outdoor play space and informal open space is 2.8ha per 1000 people, comprising:
  - a) Outdoor sport 1.6ha per 1000 people
  - b) Children's Playspace - 0.8ha per 1000 people
  - c) Informal Open Space - 0.4ha per 1000 people

### **Consultation**

21. **Fowlmere Parish Council** – Recommends refusal. The Parish meeting was very well attended by residents. The scheme is speculative development outside the village envelope. The Parish unanimously agreed to not support the scheme, especially as the organisation is not a registered Housing Association. The entrance to the site is untenable and sub-standard, opening to a very dangerous bend on a main road that provides access in and out of the village. The proposed site, behind existing housing, would have an adverse affect on neighbouring properties. The Parish Council has no indication as to what the development entails.
22. **Housing Development and Enabling Manager** – Has requested further information from the developer regarding the organisation, and the proposed tenure and mix of dwellings. Not enough information has been provided to support the application from an affordable housing perspective and it is therefore difficult to provide a recommendation. Currently, I cannot support this application, although there is a need for some form of affordable housing in Fowlmere through a registered social landlord, who is registered with the Housing Corporation.

23. **Landscape Assistant** – Has stated there is insufficient detail to make a proper assessment of the application. Details are required of trees affected and their quality. A 5m buffer is usually provided around developments in the Green Belt and this would leave gardens of an unviable size with this layout.
24. **Local Highways Authority** – Details of the access must be provided at the outline stage. The applicant will need to demonstrate that they can achieve an acceptable access to avoid future difficulties if planning permission is granted and the access proves to be unacceptable in highway engineering terms. Requests vehicle-to-vehicle visibility splays of 2.4m by 70m, and an access width of 5m for the first 10m to allow vehicles to pass. The use of the access by the Hall and the potential conflicts inherent with this must also be resolved. The plan also shows no provision for off-street car parking. Requests a condition regarding pedestrian visibility splays.
25. Any comments from the Trees and Landscape Officer and the results of the Affordable Housing Panel will be reported verbally at Planning Committee.

### **Representations**

26. 18 Pipers Close – Objects in the strongest possible way not least because the writer owns part of the land marked for development and no permission has been sought for this work. The writer holds the deeds for the square plot of land adjacent to 18a and 18b Pipers close and has no intention of selling this land for development.
27. 4 Chapel Lane – Owns a significant part of the development. There has not been an approach by the developer to consider a scheme or to selling the land. The writer only found out about the plan through a neighbour. The land would be crucial for both building and access as it sits in the centre of the current plan. The scheme cannot progress without agreement of land owners.
28. 19 Pipers Close – No specific objection at this time. Any proposals which include using the village hall exit road as part of the development would have to be discussed with the writer, as the legal owners of this road. A further letter has been received, querying the land ownership. There are also concerns about future extension of development, leading to a strong objection.
29. Brook Farm, Chapel Lane – Questions whether Chartism Housing is a registered housing association or social landlord. Part of the land is a neighbours garden area. The site could lead to more development in the adjacent meadow and the village infrastructure could not cope. The access is on a dangerous bend, and is too narrow and cannot be widened. The applicant makes reference to excellent public transport, but the village only has a small bus service, so residents would rely on cars. It is understood that the Parish Council is actively seeking appropriate sites.

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

30. The main issues regarding the application are the principle of development, the impact upon the Green Belt, the impact upon the protected trees, the impact upon the occupiers of neighbouring properties and the safety of the access.

#### ***The principle of the development***

31. The site lies outside the village framework, and therefore housing development would only be acceptable in this location if it formed an exceptions site for 100% affordable

housing as stated in the LDFDCP. Although little information regarding mix and tenure has been submitted, the applicant is applying for such affordable units and therefore the proposal meets this criteria. I note the comments from the Housing Development and Enabling Manager regarding the project. The scheme is to be discussed at an Affordable Housing Panel on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008, and the contents of this meeting will be reported verbally at Planning Committee.

32. Concerns have been raised as to the status of the applicant. Chartism Housing is not a registered Housing Association, and is not registered with the Housing Corporation. Further details have been requested, and will be reported verbally to the Planning Committee.

***Impact upon the Green Belt***

33. From the advice given within Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts, the development is not inappropriate development by definition, if it relates to limited affordable housing for local community needs under development plan policies. The five purposes of the Green Belt, to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another, to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and to assist in urban regeneration, would all still form part of the decision making process.
34. Given the location and the size of the proposed development, I do not consider the proposal would harm the aims and purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt. The indicative layout, however, does not show any space for any planting, particularly along the north and east boundaries, usually required to ensure any impact upon the Green belt is mitigated. However, landscaping is again another matter not to be considered at this stage. A scheme of five dwellings would represent development at 21 dwellings per hectare, including the access. However, the applicant has not specified the amount of development. Given the limitations of the site, it may be reasonable to accept a slightly lower density in this location. Nevertheless the application should specify the amount of development.
35. The village of Fowlmere falls at the edge of the Cambridge Green Belt. The land to the east of the village is within the Green Belt, whereas the land to the west is not. The application does not contain an analysis of whether there are alternate appropriate sites for the scale and type of development proposed, as required by Policy HG/5.

***The impact upon the protected trees***

36. Tree Preservation Order (TPO) C/11/17/029/01 protects a group of trees to the side and rear of 18b Pipers Close and to the rear of 16-18 and 18a and 18b Pipers Close. Following a site visit, it would appear the trees to the side of 18b, and that within the garden of 18 Pipers Close no longer exist. However, the trees to the rear of the dwellings remain, and are located within the application site. The indicative layout shows two of the dwellings within this area, and presumably the accesses to the dwellings also.
37. It is therefore likely that the trees will be seriously affected by the proposal. The comments from the Trees and Landscape Officer regarding the TPO trees have yet to be received, but would be reported verbally at Planning Committee.



38. I note the comments from the Landscape Assistant. Although landscaping is not to be considered at outline stage, it is usual to provide a 5m buffer around developments in the Green Belt as required in Policy GB/2, thus softening the impact of the development upon the surrounding land. Such a belt would significantly affect the area of land available for the housing. Although the proposed plan is only an indicative illustration, the rear gardens would be required to provide the land for this belt. This significantly reduces the amenity available to potential occupants of the scheme

***The impact upon the occupiers of neighbouring properties***

39. A scheme for five dwellings would significantly increase vehicle traffic along the access, which runs to the side of no. 18b Pipers Close and its garden. The facing elevation is blank and the bungalow is approximately 7m from the access. The garden would run alongside the access. However, I do not consider that there would be a serious increase in noise to the occupiers of this property. The vehicle movements along the track would not therefore harm the amenity of the occupiers of this dwelling. No additional harm should result to the occupiers of no. 19 Pipers Close, which is located adjacent to the existing village hall exit road.
40. The indicative layout shows dwellings located to the rear of the garden of no. 18 Pipers Close. This property has a large rear garden. There are currently trees screening the garden from the development site. This screening would remain if the trees are retained. Alternatively, site boundary conditions could ensure any impact upon this garden is reduced. Occupiers of this dwelling may be able to see the proposed dwellings, but no serious harm would result.

***The safety of the access***

41. The access shown on the proposed plan is an indicative access, although the Design and Access Statement states that means of access is to be determined. The proposed access shown is the only realistic access to the site, and therefore its suitability should form an important part of this application. The applicant has provided no visibility splays or small scale plan of the access. London Road is a 30mph road. I note the comments from the Local Highways Authority with regards to required visibility splays and the width of the access. No details are provided with the application. Visibility to the north appears satisfactory on site, although no plan has been provided to demonstrate this. Visibility to the south is less clear given the road junction located approximately 55m from the proposed access and the tight bend in the road. The usual required visibility splay of 90m has not been demonstrated, and may not be possible in this direction. The applicant has therefore failed to demonstrate that the junction onto London Road would be safe.
42. The access would run parallel with the exit road from the village hall. It is currently overgrown and therefore access is not currently available. The plan, at a scale of 1:1000, shows the width to be approximately 4m, which would not allow vehicles to safely pass each other on this section of the access. The Local Highways Authority requires this width to be 5m to allow safe access from London Road. This cannot be achieved within the red line of the application, and would therefore cause serious highway safety concerns to users of the access and London Road. No clarification has been provided to show that the access does not compromise the adjacent exit from the village hall.

**Other matters**

43. I note the concerns from the occupiers of adjacent dwellings regarding ownership of the land. The applicant has submitted ownership certificate A to state it owns all the land. They have also provided confirmation of a land transfer, although no associated map is provided. The owners of no. 18 Pipers Close and no. 4 Chapel Lane also claim to have the relevant ownership documents. Either way, the matter of ownership is not a material planning consideration. The issue of future development adjacent to the proposed site is also not a matter to be considered at this point.

**Recommendation**

44. Subject to comments from the Trees and Landscape Officer, and the Affordable Housing Panel scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008, REFUSE for the following reasons:
1. The application contains insufficient information to satisfy the requirements of Policy HG/5 of the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies, adopted 2007, particularly in regard to the number, size, design, mix and tenure meeting an identified local need and in regard to whether there are any alternative appropriate sites to accommodate the scale and type of development proposed.
  2. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that appropriate vehicle-to-vehicle visibility splays are achievable on the junction of the proposed access road with London Road. There are particularly concerns that the visibility southwards would fall below the recommended distance. The width of the access would also not allow two vehicles to pass, therefore causing potential conflict between the users of the access and the users of London Road. The application would therefore be contrary to Policy DP/3 of the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies, adopted 2007.

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

- Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (adopted July 2007)
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts (published January 1995 and amended in March 2001)
- Planning Files Ref: S/1558/08/F, SC/1293/72/O & S/1764/78/O

**Contact Officer:** Paul Derry – Senior Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713159

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and  
Sustainable Communities

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**S/1584/08/F- LITTLE EVERSDEN**  
**Erection of Two Dwellings following Demolition of Existing House at 16 Lowfields**  
**for West Peak Developments Limited**

**Recommendation: Approval subject to Highway Concerns**

**Date for Determination: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**Notes:**

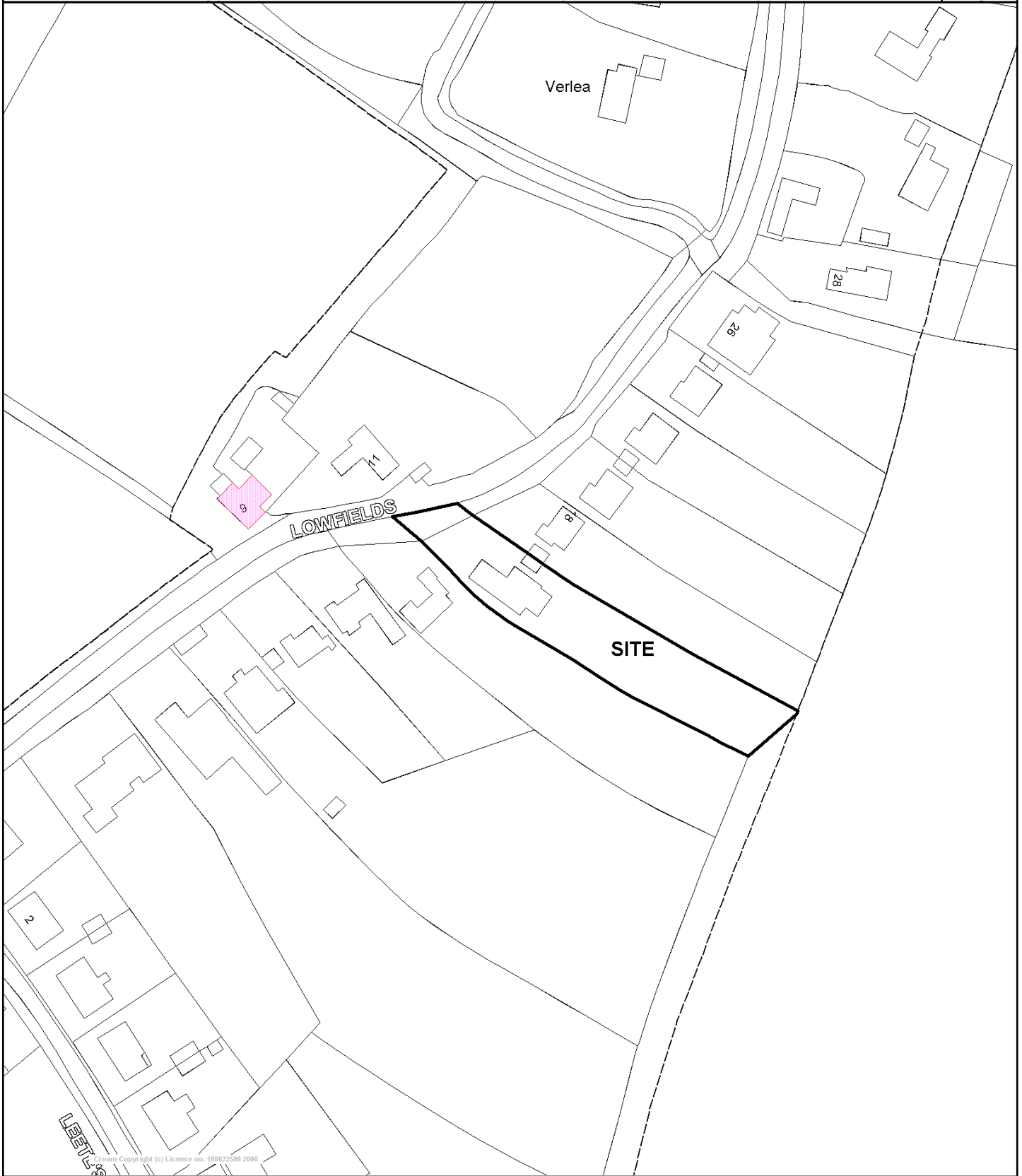
**This Application has been referred to the Planning Committee for determination by the Chairman's Delegation Meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2008.**

**Members will visit this site on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The site comprises 1345m<sup>2</sup>. The front of the site is occupied by an existing two-storey dwelling and is located in the village framework for Little Eversden. Green Belt land is to the east and north west beyond No. 11 Lowfields. There are residential properties to the north east and south west. The rear garden measures approximately 60m in length from the rear of the existing house and abuts Green Belt land. The property to the north east, No.18 Lowfields, is a bungalow that measures approximately 6 metres to the ridge with a first floor in the roof, only evident from the rear elevation. The property to the south west is a two storey dwelling measuring 6.2 m to the ridge. This dwelling measures approximately 1.7 m from the (assumed) shared boundary at its closest point and 3 m from the proposed development at its closest point. Other properties in the immediate area are a variation of single and two storey units of varying style and design.
2. Entrance into Lowfields is from the main road that runs through Little Eversden. Lowfields is almost single width in some areas and, though covered in tarmac, it takes on a rural character that peters out into a track into the countryside.
3. The application received 12<sup>th</sup> September 2008, as amended by plans franked 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008, proposes the demolition of the existing detached property and replacement with two semi-detached two storey units. The unit to the north (unit 1) of the application proposes a 2 bedroom property comprising 161m<sup>2</sup> of floor space and the other unit to the southwest (unit 2) a 4 bedroom property comprising 190m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. The height to the ridge of unit one measures 6.2 m and the ridge height of unit 2 measures 6.5 m at their highest points.
4. The density of the scheme equates to 14 dwellings per hectare.

S/1584/08/F



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Scale 1/1250 Date 19/11/2008

Centre = 537623 E 253604 N

Planning Committee December 2008

### Planning History

5. Application reference **S/0802/08/F** was submitted in May 2008 for the demolition of the existing dwelling and replacement with two detached, two storey 3 and 4 bedroom units. The application was withdrawn before determination following negative feedback from officers.

### Planning Policy

*South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies adopted July 2007:*

6. **Policy ST/7 'List of Infill Villages'** sets out the requirements for new dwelling in infill village frameworks. Development in such villages will be restricted to not more than two dwellings comprising (relevant to the application site) b. The redevelopment or sub-division of an existing residential curtilage,
7. **Policy HG/1 'Housing Density'** aims to ensure that residential developments make best use of land by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment.
8. **Policy HG/2 'Housing Mix'** 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 DP/2 'Design of New Development'** sets out the criteria for new development. It states, in part, that all new development must be of high quality design and should preserve or enhance the character of the local area and be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area.
10. **Policy DP/3 'Development Criteria'** sets out specific criteria that all development should meet. It states that planning permission shall not be granted where the proposed development would have an adverse impact on residential amenity or village character
11. **Policy DP/7 'Village Frameworks'** sets out the requirement for new dwellings to be located within village frameworks
12. **Policy TR/2 'Car and Cycle Parking Standards'** sets out the criteria for car and cycle parking standards for all new developments across the district
13. **Policy SF/10 'Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments'** states all residential developments will be required to contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space (including children's play space and formal outdoor sports facilities) and Informal Open Space to meet the additional need generated by the development in accordance with the standards in **Policy SF/11**.
14. **Policy SF/11 'Open Space Standards'**. The minimum standard for outdoor play space and informal open space is 2.8 hectares per 1,000 people, comprising:
  - (a) Outdoor Sport - 1.6 hectares per 1,000 people
  - (b) Children's Playspace - 0.8 hectares per 1,000 people
  - (c) Informal Open Space - 0.4 hectares per 1,000 people

## Consultation

15. **Little Eversden Parish Council** – Recommends that the scheme is refused.

'The small adjustments made to this unsustainable development in no way reduce the Councils opposition. Shoe horning a pair of semi-detached houses on to this very restricted and unsuitable located site results in the northern one lying permanently in the shadow of the southern, gives both a very narrow garden and still results in a serious parking problem in the front garden and no possibility of parking on the road or in a garage. It is requested that a site visit by the Planning Committee be arranged so that, amongst other considerations, the layout of the road at this site can be fully appreciated'.

16. **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** – Has no objection, though recommends that any consent granted be conditional to limit the impact upon neighbour amenity through the hours of operation of power operated machinery and the construction of foundations.

17. **The Local Highways Authority** – Comments have not yet been received following the amendment at the time of writing the report and shall be reported verbally to Committee. Initial comments received 23<sup>rd</sup> October requested the following:

- (a) The applicant show visibility splays with dimensions of 2.4m x 90m as measured from and along the nearside edge of the carriageway on both sides of the access. The area within each splay to be kept clear of any obstruction exceeding 600mm in height at all times.
- (b) That two 2m x2m visibility splays be provided on all drawings, again this is to be kept clear of all planting, fencing, wall and the like exceeding 600mm high. The LHA also requested that dimensions for the proposed car parking spaces are shown measuring 2.5m x 5 m with a 6m reversing space.
- (c) Manoeuvring space must be kept clear at all times.
- (d) No unbound material should be used for the hard surfacing.
- (e) The access should not be laid at a gradient exceeding the 4% for the first 4 metres from the Highway boundary and not exceeding 8% thereafter.
- (f) Details to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing the means to prevent surface water from the development onto the Highway.
- (g) The applicant must define the parking arrangements on the drawing at the boundary with No. 18 Lowfields as the LHA is concerned that the entrance and exit for No. 18 could be obstructed by the proposed arrangements as shown on Drawing No. P2.
- (h) A site traffic management plan must be submitted and agreed prior to demolition.

## Representations

18. There has been a large amount of interest in the site by immediate neighbours and local residents. The original submission received 12 letters of objection. The amended details were sent out to all of those who commented on the original scheme and the previous planning application. Following the amendments made I have received 10 objection letters from immediate neighbours and other local residents.

The majority of the letters share the same concerns, which are summarised below:

19. On design, scale and character
- (a) Overdevelopment on a small plot
  - (b) Inappropriate development in a village with very limited services (unsustainable)
  - (c) Two units are too large and overbearing
  - (d) 1 unit preferred
  - (e) Poor design
  - (f) Out of character
  - (g) Lack of front garden
  - (h) Set a precedent for other semi detached proposals that are not present in the vicinity
  - (i) Cluttered access with bins, recycling boxes etc
  - (j) Urban frontage with all frontage laid to parking
  - (k) Access to gardens is limited
  - (l) Materials proposed expensive and high maintenance
20. On Highway safety
- (a) Parking bays are inadequate in size
  - (b) Not enough parking
  - (c) No garages
  - (d) No visitor parking
  - (e) Inadequate road infrastructure
  - (f) Blind bends, narrow lane and no turning facilities
  - (g) No room for service/emergency vehicles
  - (h) Construction parking problems
  - (i) Damage to the grass verges due to passing vehicles on a narrow road
  - (j) No scope to increase the road and already in a poor state of repair
  - (k) Disproportionate increase in vehicular movement
21. On neighbour amenity (though some refer to an improvement on neighbour amenity since the amendments the following objections still apply)
- (a) Too close to neighbouring properties
  - (b) Loss of light
  - (c) Overpowering/overbearing
  - (d) Encroaching on privacy of neighbouring units
  - (e) Unit 1 will be dark in side and have limited sunlight for the majority of the day
22. Other objections raised
- (a) Where is the telegraph pole going to be relocated?
  - (b) Inaccuracies in the Design and Access Statement
  - (c) Depicted view of new and existing properties is misleading
  - (d) Bad example made with reference to development at No. 4 Lowfields as the plot size has a considerably narrower width than that of No. 4

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

23. Having regard to the presumption in favour of development within the village framework and the housing mix proposed the key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- (a) Impact on neighbour amenity
  - (b) Impact on the character of the surrounding area
  - (c) Impact on Highway safety

***Changes since the earlier submitted scheme and subsequent amendments to the current scheme dated 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008***

24. The originally submitted scheme proposed two large detached properties that officers did not support. This was primarily due to the overdevelopment of the site, the impact of the development on the street scene and the adverse impact both properties would have on the amenity of the neighbouring properties No.14 and No. 18 Lowfields. The application was withdrawn.
25. This submitted application still raised concern with reference to impact on neighbours and the street scene. The agent agreed to reduce the height by 0.9m, floor space by approximately 50m<sup>2</sup>, rectified boundary concerns raised by neighbours and reduced the impact of Unit 2 by reducing part of the rear elevation to single storey and pulling the development further away from neighbouring boundaries and the road frontage.

***Neighbour Amenity***

26. The height of Unit 1 was reduced from the earlier submissions to ensure the occupiers of No. 18 were not adversely impacted by undue loss of light to the rear of the property or suffered from overbearing impact. The proposed development is located further (1.7 m) away than that of the existing property, though the existing property is attached with a single storey flat roof garage and therefore the visual impact is considerably different to what is proposed.
27. The ridge height of unit 1 is 6.4m above ground level at the front of the site, marginally higher than No. 18 that measures approximately 5.6m to the ridge (according to a street elevation submitted with the application). Unit 1 measures 4.7m to the eaves and the rear projects 1.2 metres further than that of the existing dwelling and that of No.18. Although the conservatory at No. 18 is not marked in the drawings, I am of the view that the proposed scheme has successfully attempted to avoid an unacceptable loss of light and overbearing impact to No. 18, particularly as there exists a separation of approximately 5m between the two dwellings.
28. The impact of the development on the occupiers of No. 14 was initially more of a concern for officers in the original submissions; since the amendments have been received the reduction in height the movement away from the boundary and the reduction in size have all positively addressed initial concerns with reference to the impact on No. 14. The existing dwelling has several windows that look directly into the rear garden of No. 14 at ground and first floor. The proposed scheme has no first floor overlooking windows and a bathroom window at first floor would be obscure glazed. The overlooking aspect has been significantly improved.
29. The impact of the proposed south west facing wall has been reduced significantly also, in length, in distance from the boundary and in height. The overbearing impact that was initially a major concern has thus been removed.
30. I am of the view that the impact on neighbour amenity for both No. 14 and 18 Lowfields is acceptable.

***Character of the Surrounding Area***

31. The character of this part of the village is quite rural; the units along this stretch of road are detached and benefit from reasonably sized plots. The house type and design varies considerably in style, materials, height and age. The scheme is



proposing two semi detached properties that are not present in the existing street scene, though I am of the view that this does not necessarily present a problem if all other development criteria can be appropriately addressed. Policy promotes best use of land and I am of the view that two semi detached units can be achieved successfully on this site, particularly as at the front of the site the dwellings are staggered by some 6m.

32. The design of the units has been influenced by the neighbouring properties in terms of height, design and siting. Though this scheme represents a tighter form of development and quite modern in its approach I am of the view the design is acceptable in terms its neighbouring units and not incongruous with the local character. As for setting a precedent, each application is assessed individually on its merits and therefore do not believe this to be the case.
33. The amendments have addressed officer concern regarding impact in the street scene by reducing the forward projection on unit 2 by 1.5 metres allowing more frontage to the site and an improvement visually when viewing the site from the north east. The development would be barely visible when approaching from the south west due to the projection of No. 14.
34. The agent has shown the existing footprint of the original dwelling on the plans, specifically drawing P3A (amended 28<sup>th</sup> October). The development outside of this footprint is minimal albeit height, size and design has changed. I am of the view that all three areas have been appropriately addressed and do not have an unacceptably adverse impact on the character of the area.

### ***Highway Safety***

35. The scheme proposes one 2 bedroom unit and one 4 bedroom unit. The maximum requirement for off road parking is set by the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies adopted July 2007 under Policy TR/2 and appendix 1 to reduce over reliance on the car to promote more sustainable forms of transport. For new dwelling houses it states that developments must have an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling across the district (up to a maximum of 2 per 3 or more bedrooms in poorly accessible areas). With 2 spaces per dwelling as proposed this would meet the tests of this policy. If two spaces can be achieved along with the correct dimensions, the correct visibility splays and distances required by the Local Highway Authority I am of the view that Highway safety concerns can be adequately addressed.

### **Recommendation**

36. Approval subject to meeting highway requirements
    1. SCA - (RCA)
    2. No development shall commence until details of the following 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.
      - a) the materials to be used for the external wall(s) and roof(s).
      - b) refuse storage accommodation
      - c) finished floor levels of the building(s) in relation to ground levels.
- (RC 14)

3. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment [for each dwelling] shall be completed before that/the dwelling is occupied in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.  
(Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
4. During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site 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 agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions.  
(Reason – To protect the occupiers of adjacent properties from an unacceptable level of noise disturbance during the period of construction.)
5. Notwithstanding drawing P1A franked 28th October 2008 showing access details and visibility, no development shall commence until further details showing a revised scheme for the junction of the proposed access with the existing road have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with the Local Highway Authority.  
(Reason – To ensure the access is not unnecessarily wide and does not have an adverse impact on the street scene in accordance with the requirements of DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)
6. Before development commences, a plan specifying the area and siting of land to be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during the period of construction shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; such space shall be maintained for that purpose during the period of construction.  
(Reason – In the interests of Highway Safety.)
7. The first floor window in the southwest elevation of the building on Plot 2, hereby permitted, shall be fitted and permanently maintained with obscured glass.  
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining property in accordance with Policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)
8. The first floor windows in the northeast elevation of the building on Plot 1, hereby permitted, shall be fitted and permanently maintained with obscured glass.  
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining property in accordance with Policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)
9. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall

also include specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.

(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

10. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.  
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
11. No additional windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted in the first floor south west elevation of Unit 2 or the first floor north east elevation of Unit 1 of the development, hereby permitted, unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.  
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining properties and in accordance with the requirements of Policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)

#### **Informative**

1. During demolition and construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation
2. Before the existing property is demolished, a Demolition Notice will be required from the Environmental Health Department establishing the way in which the property will be dismantled, including any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains and establishing hours of working operation. This should be brought to the attention of the applicant to ensure the protection of the residential environment of the area
3. Should pile driven foundations be proposed, then before works commence, a statement for the method of construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies 2007
- Planning Files Ref: S/1584/08/F and S/0802/08/F

**Contact Officer:** Saffron Garner – Senior Planning Assistant  
Telephone: (01954) 713082

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and  
Sustainable Communities

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**S/1655/08/F – HISTON**

**Variation of Condition 3 of Planning Permission S/1501/03/F, which restricts the use of the extension as ancillary to the dwelling house with no trade or business to be carried out from these premises, at 6 Cottenham Road, for Mr Colin Bates**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 12<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because Histon Parish Council has recommended approval contrary to the recommendation of the case officer. Furthermore, Councillor's Chatfield & Mason have requested that this application is brought before the Planning Committee for determination.**

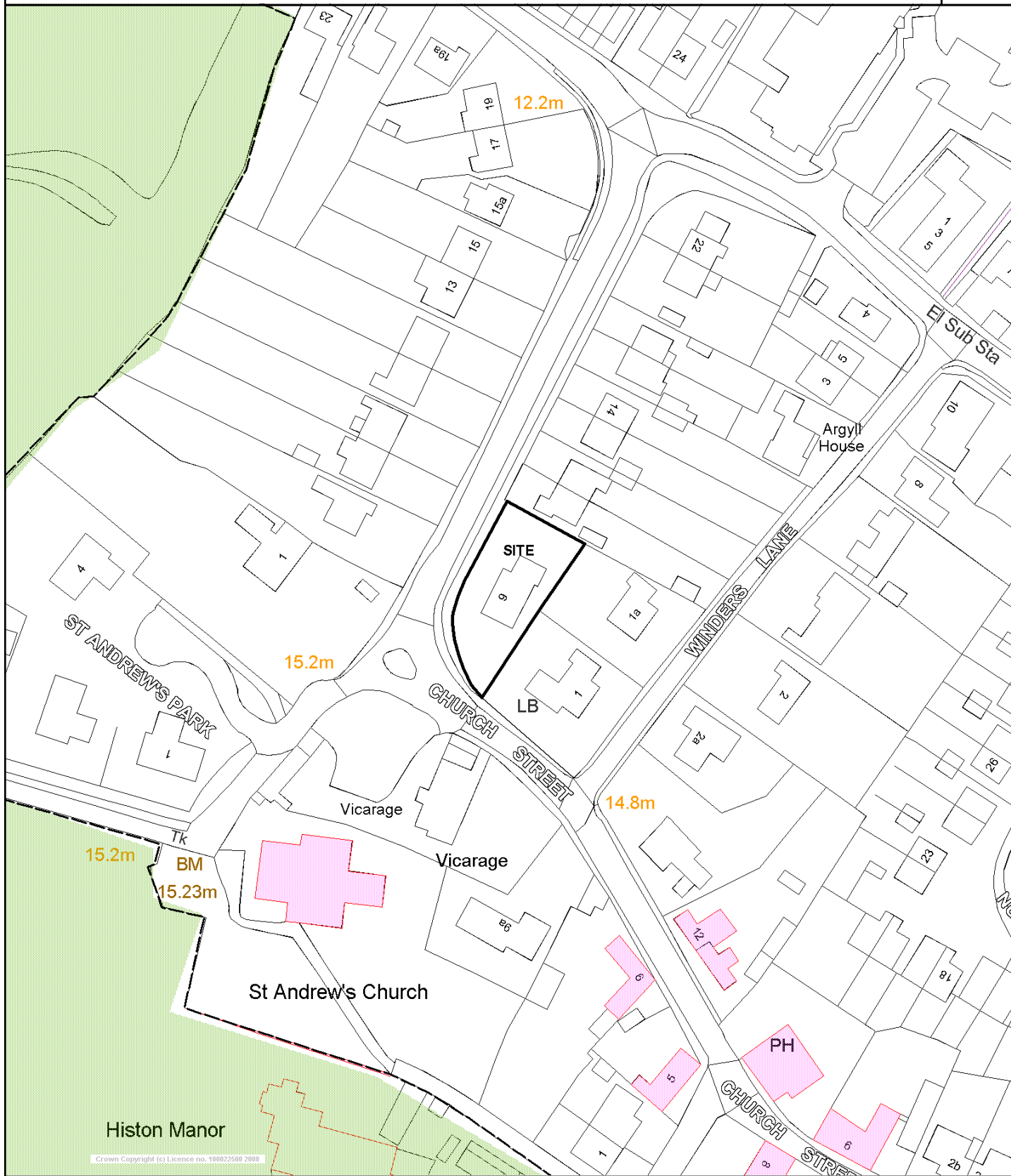
**Site and Proposal**

1. The site (approximately 0.0687 of a hectare) consists of a detached two-storey dwelling (No.6 Cottenham Road) located on a corner plot where the Cottenham Road and Church Road meet. The dwelling is accessed off Cottenham Road by virtue of a private driveway with associated hard standing to the front and side of the dwelling, which also serves as parking area. The dwelling has a single storey side extension upon its eastern elevation, which is currently used as a work from home office, which is utilised as a family run accountancy business. Cottenham Road is primarily residential in nature with most properties benefiting from off road car parking. No.6 sits slightly higher than the adjacent property at No.8 Cottenham Road, with the timber boundary fence being situated on the lowest ground level nearest No.8.
2. The proposal seeks to vary Condition 3 of Planning Application S/1501/03/F, which confines the use of the extension to domestic purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling and that no trade or business shall be carried out from the premises. The applicant seeks to vary this condition to be used as an office solely for the purposes of Colin Bates, his family and his employees.

**Planning History**

3. Planning Application **S/1501/03/F** was approved for a single storey side extension. Condition 3 of this permission states that the use of the building shall be confined to domestic purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house and that no trade or business shall be carried out from the premises. The reason for this condition was to protect the amenities of the adjoining neighbours.

S/1655/08/F Histon



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Scale 1/1250 Date 17/11/2008

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December Planning Committee

## Planning Policy

4. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007:
5. **Policy DP/1 “Sustainable Development”** only permits development where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development. The policy lists the main considerations in assessing whether development meets this requirement.
6. **Policy DP/2 “Design of New Development”** requires all new development to be of a high quality design and indicates the specific elements to be achieved where appropriate. It also sets out the requirements for Design and Access Statements.
7. **Policy DP/3 “Development Criteria”** sets out what all new development should provide, as appropriate to its nature, scale and economic viability and clearly sets out circumstances where development will not be granted on grounds of an unacceptable adverse impact e.g. residential amenity and traffic generation.
8. **Policy DP/7 “Development Frameworks”** permits development within village frameworks provided that retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character; it would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historic importance, and the amenities of neighbours; there is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development; and it would not result in the loss of local employment, or a local service or facility.
9. **Policy TR/1 “Planning for More Sustainable Travel”** states that planning permission will not be granted for developments likely to give rise to a material increase in travel demands unless the site has (or will attain) a sufficient standard of accessibility to offer an appropriate choice of travel by public transport or other non-car travel mode(s). Opportunities to increase integration of travel modes and accessibility to non-motorised modes by appropriate measures will be taken into consideration. The Local Transport Plan road user hierarchy will also be taken into account in the determination of planning applications to ensure adequate emphasis has been placed on the relevant modes, although no modes should be promoted to the exclusion of others.
10. **Policy “TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards”** identifies maximum parking standards to reduce over-reliance of the car and to promote more sustainable forms of transport. Cycle parking should be provided in accordance with minimum standards

## Consultation

11. **The Histon Parish Council** recommends refusal on the grounds that the use of the extension as a home run family business is an inappropriate use in a residential area. The site is on a corner plot, which suffers from on-street parking problems at certain times.
12. **The Local Highway Authority** has requested that the applicant provide a drawing showing the dimensions for the existing car parking spaces in order to demonstrate how such spaces can be achieved (dimensions to be 2.5m x 5m with 6m reversing space in accordance with Local Highway Authority Standards). Following the submission of these additional detail the Highway Authority is of the opinion that 8 parking bays would be required to fulfil the daily requirements of the applicants business following the information submitted. 5 parking bays as shown on the

submitted drawing would be insufficient, as this would have the potential to increase on street car parking within the area, which in turn may become a nuisance for other local residents.

### **Representations**

#### **Cllr Mason wishes to make the following comments:**

13. The applicant seeks to regularise a breach of the condition imposed in the previous decision by a retrospective application to remove or vary that condition. I have not been advised of any intent to enforce that condition despite the very clear terms of the wording. This is yet another example of the Council adding conditions, which may in practice carry little weight. Nearby residents do not understand this administrative failure and I have seen a letter of objection making this point.
14. Taking the application to delegation does not give the public the advantage of an officer's report in which there would be a professional assessment and reason in writing as to why a condition imposed in 2003 is no longer considered to be applicable. My question here is what, in the opinion of the case officer, are the changes in circumstances and other local factors, which now render the condition unnecessary. Officer assessment should not be purely be "desk top" and "Policy based" but should take into account local knowledge and experience of neighbours concerning the breach of condition. Is the recommendation merely based on some change of policy between LP2 and LDF? If so it needs to be spelt out openly so that objectors and the Parish Council can clearly understand the reasons behind it.
15. My own observations lead me to believe that the removal of the condition could have ongoing traffic implications on Cottenham Road, which is a major bus route (City 7 - 10 minute frequency both directions). I use the service regularly which is frequently delayed by parked vehicles on this stretch of the Road. Buses meeting at this location and on the corner by the Church frequently have wait and/or mount the pavement. Unauthorised business use should not therefore be now approved without some assessment of the possible growth of the business and traffic turning movements adjacent to the Church St. / Cottenham Road corner. Indeed there is a very good case for double yellow lines on both sides of the road around many if not all of the right angled bends along the Cottenham Road to allow unhindered access for public transport. I would therefore ask that this observation be formally put to the County Council for their comments. Free flow of traffic is important to pedestrian safety at this location. Obstruction caused by customers or delivery vehicles, when the existing car parking space is full, could worsen this situation.
16. If after further consultation the Chairman and Officers are still remaining minded to approve this change of use then I would suggest that conditions, which should be regularly monitored by the enforcement team, should be applied. (a) That any approval be made Personal to the Applicant and be Temporary for a maximum of 2 years in order that the effects on traffic.
17. **4 Letters** of representation have also been received, which outline the following objections:
  - a. Visitors to No.6 are able to view into the adjacent property at No.8 Cottenham Road, due to the difference in heights of these two plots and the low level boundary treatment that is situ;



- b. Visitors to No.6 often park upon the road and up upon the pavement, which can obstruct access for pedestrians such as pram users;
- c. Condition 3 is unambiguous in its purpose and the reason behind it. Despite this the applicant has had no regard to the interests of it and has had no form of communication with adjoining residents;
- d. From the date the extension was completed a business has been developed and established with the employment of 2 or more full time staff whilst catering for some hundred clients;
- e. The associated activity and disruption which results from the business is contrary to the interests of my wife and myself as well as my neighbours;
- f. The use of the extension for a business has led to considerable volumes of traffic, most certainly not restricted to office hours;
- g. The numbers of visitors/clients has increased over the years as has the number of staff;
- h. Visitors tend to travel by car or van and frequently choose to park at the roadside immediately close to a tight bend;
- i. We have concerns about the possible future expansion of the business adding to the risk of further detrimental impact within an otherwise extremely harmonious residential area;

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

#### ***Principle***

18. Government guidance states that planning permission is not necessarily required for individuals to work from home. The key test is whether the overall character of the home will change as a result of a business being conducted from the property. Such issues such as whether the home is to be mainly used as a private dwelling or would the business result in a marked rise in traffic or people calling at the property need to be considered. Other matters for consideration are whether the nature of the business would lead to activities that are unusual within a residential area or if the business would disturb neighbours at unreasonable hours. Notwithstanding the above the key issue to evaluate is whether or not the home will remain primarily residential or would it become a business premise.

#### ***Evidence***

19. The applicant states that he has worked at home for a period of over 30 years. The home run accountancy business is run via an internal office situated within the extension approved under Planning Reference S/1501/03/F. This room is linked internally to the main house and is laid out very much like a study with 3 desks and associated office equipment. The external appearance of the property remains very much residential with the extension being a subservient addition to the main house. The business employs 5 employees in total including the applicant and occupier of No.6, Mr Colin Bates. The employee working arrangements are flexible with individuals working from their own homes when necessary. Upon my site visit there were 3 employees present including Mr Bates, with the other two employees working from

home as the office/extension only accommodates 3 employees with an additional chair to allow for visiting clients.

***Amenity***

20. The adjacent dwelling at No.8 Cottenham Road sits slightly lower than No.6 and the boundary treatment between the two properties does not provide sufficient screening to the ground floor windows within the flank elevation, which faces No.6. It has been suggested that this boundary treatment could be raised to 2m from No.6 to afford heightened privacy to the occupiers of No.8. The applicant has agreed this and a condition is recommended to address the eastern boundary treatment between Nos.6 and 8 Cottenham Road. Raising this boundary would allow for sufficient screening to No.6 with the final detail to be agreed by condition.

***Parking***

21. The property is accessed off Cottenham Road and could accommodate up to 5 vehicles parked clear of the highway. The applicant has submitted a parking plan showing the maximum off street parking accommodation for the site to the Highway Authorities standards. The site can accommodate 5 spaces in total, which despite the comments from the Highway Authority is deemed sufficient given the intensity of the use of both the business and the dwelling. This is on the grounds that no more than 3 employees work from the site on any given day with the addition of the applicant who also resides at the dwelling (3 spaces). It has been confirmed that on average the site receives up to 3 clients per day by appointment with only one being scheduled at any given time. It is however, acknowledged that some clients may visit the site unannounced to drop off paperwork or may indeed be early for an appointment. Furthermore, occasional visitors such as friends and family or deliveries must also be taken into consideration. Nevertheless, the site's location is considered sustainable in relation to the close proximity of local public transport and village services.
22. In light of the above it would appear that 5 off road car, parking spaces would be sufficient to accommodate employees (2), the dwelling's occupier (1.5) and visitors (up to 2) with vehicles being able to enter and egress the site within a forward gear. Whilst the application site is within close proximity to a tight bend and it would not be possible to restrict people from parking upon the road I am satisfied that the site provides sufficient scope for visitors to park off road. It is understood that the applicant and his employees would park within the block of 4 spaces at the northwest corner of the site, which would allow for an ease of movement for visitors to park and turn more freely. Despite the above it is noted that it would be difficult to differentiate between visitors who are clients of the business and relatives, friends, domestic deliveries or workmen who may visit the site.

***Conclusion***

23. I am of the opinion that the nature of the business does not result in a material change of use of the property and that the site is essentially residential in nature with the use of the business confined to the single storey side extension. Furthermore, the business does not result in a material increase in traffic movement to and from the site by virtue of employees and clients. Nevertheless, the traffic movements are considered minimal and the use of conditions restricting the times of day that clients can visit the site would be sufficient to protect the amenities of the surrounding neighbouring properties. I therefore suggest that clients wishing to visit the site be restricted between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and between 9am to 1pm on

Saturdays and are prohibited on Sundays and Bank Holidays. In addition to this a condition shall also be attached to restrict the numbers of employees on site at any given time to not exceed 3. This would be sufficient in both terms of parking accommodation as well as the internal layout of the extension itself. A further condition shall be added restricting the use of the business to an accountancy practice only and no other office use within the B1 (a) Use Class.

24. The applicant has confirmed that the suggested conditions are acceptable and I am of the opinion that these restrictions will allow for the business to continue with minimal impact to the surrounding neighbours and upon highway safety.

### **Recommendation**

25. Approve

### **Conditions**

1. The use, hereby permitted, shall be carried on only so long as the residential property No.6 Cottenham Road, Histon is occupied by the present or any future owner of the application premises or by an employee of such an owner working at the application premises. (Reason - To protect the residential amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of No.6 Cottenham Road, Histon due to the proximity of that property to the application premises in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of article 3 and schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order), the extension shall not be used for any purpose other than an Accountants Office and for no other purpose (including any other purposes in Class B1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that order. (Reason – To protect the amenities of adjoining residents to safeguard the character of the area.)
3. No clients shall visit the site outside the hours of 09.00am and 17.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am and 13.00pm on Saturdays; nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public holidays. (Reason - To limit the impact of vehicle movements on residential amenities in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
4. No more than 3 employees may be present on site at anyone time. (Reason To limit the impact of vehicle movements on residential amenities in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
5. Within 1 month of the date of this permission a detailed plan indicating the position, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected upon the northeast boundary shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatment shall be completed within 3 months of the date of approval of these details accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained. (Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- Planning Application Files S/1501/03/F & S/1655/08/F

**Contact Officer:** Mike Jones – Senior Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713253

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1640/08/RM - LINTON**

**Approval of all reserved matters relating to the erection of 11 dwellings, land rear of Newdigate House, Horseheath Road for Beechdale Homes Ltd**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Date for Determination: 22 December 2008**

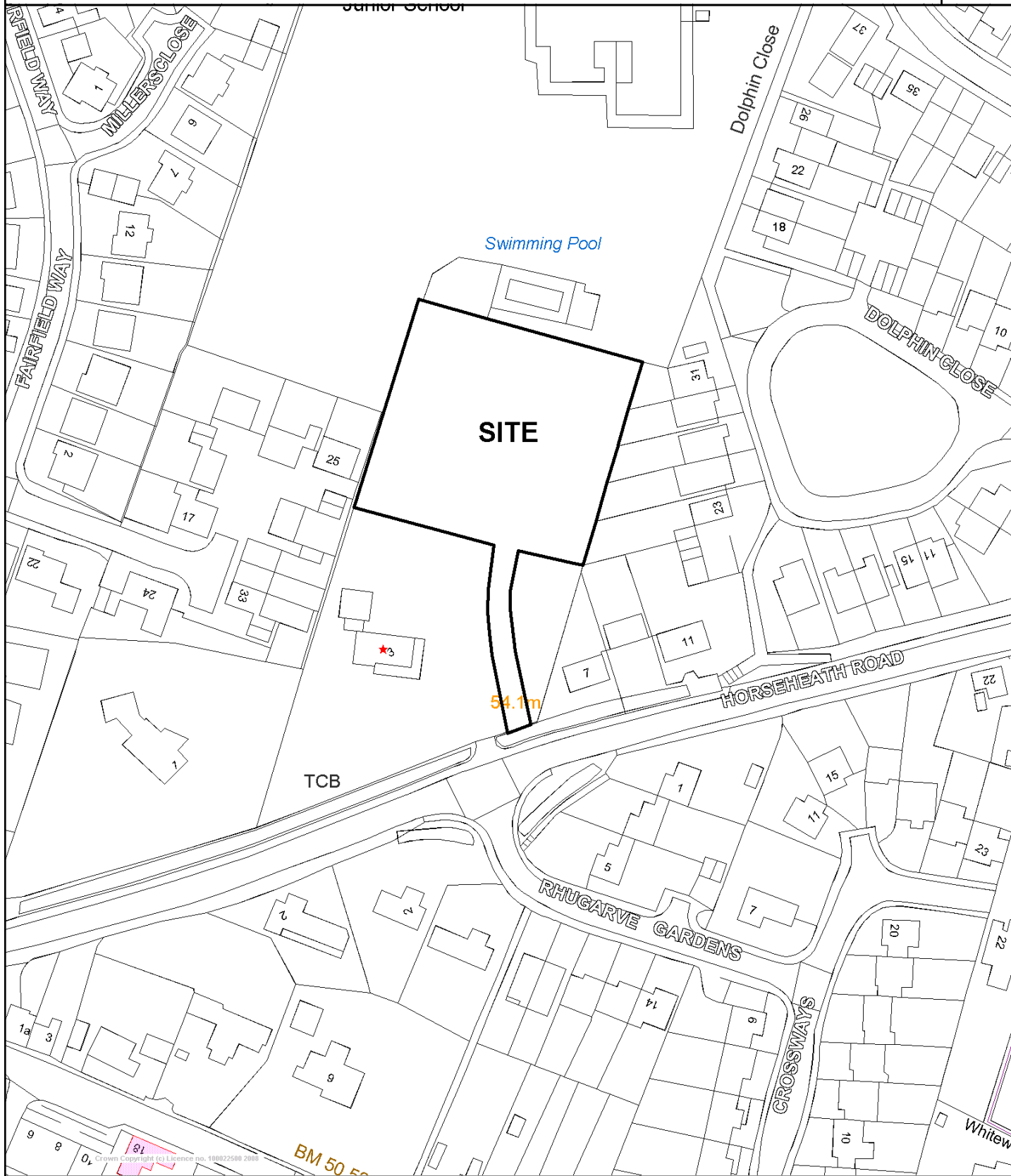
**Major development**

**This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the application is a major development which has attracted an objection from an adjoining owner of land. The application was considered at the Chairman's Delegation Meeting 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The application relates to 0.3ha rear garden area associated with a detached dwelling, Newdigate House, which takes vehicular access from Horseheath Road. The land slopes upwards to the north (rear). The northern boundary is marked by a small spinney of conifer trees. To the north and west, the site is adjoined by the playing fields and the swimming pool of Linton Heights Junior School. To the east, the site is overlooked from the rear elevations of two-storey dwellings Nos 23 to 31 (odd) Dolphin Close, and Nos 7 and 9 Horseheath Road. To the south west, the site adjoins the rear garden boundaries of Nos 25 and 27 Parsonage Way.
2. This reserved matters application, dated 12 September 2008, shows details of layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping for the erection of eleven dwellings, sharing vehicular access with Newdigate House onto Horseheath Road. The proposal includes provision of three affordable terraced houses on Plots 3-5, each with two bedrooms. The remaining market housing is to have a mix of 38% of 2-bed, 12% of 3-bed and 50% of 4+-bed. The density equates to 36.7 dph.
3. The layout shows the dwellings grouped in a courtyard, in similar fashion to the layout of the adjoining group in Parsonage Way. The external materials are to be facing brick and tile roofing, details to be agreed.
4. The application is supported by an arboricultural assessment, a biodiversity strategy and a landscape plan. These indicate that the conifer spinney is in a generally poor condition, and some specimens are dying and should be removed. The proposal is to erect on the rear garden boundary of Plots 6,7 and 8 a 2.4m high close-boarded fence, surmounted with 0.8m trellis, which would be planted with climbing plants. This would provide a visual barrier of 3.2m height to the school's swimming pool. As many existing trees as possible would be retained, and new tree planting provided. Confirmation has been provided by the agent that the school will be provided with

S/1640/08/RM Linton



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funding to provide additional planting on the school's land between the developer's fencing and the swimming pool fence, to provide additional screening.

5. Remaining boundaries would be provided with 1.8m high close board fencing or 1.2m high post and rail fencing, as appropriate. Ornamental planting areas are shown within the courtyard area.
6. The vehicular access onto Horseheath Road is to be repositioned and widened to 5.0m, which will entail some removal of earth banking on the eastern side, together with mature conifers and a length of hedgerow on the frontage. 2.4m x 90m visibility splays have been demonstrated in each direction along Horseheath Road. A single rumble strip is proposed at the entrance. The road has been designed to cater for the access and turning of emergency and refuse vehicles. This is to be a private road.

### Planning History

7. Outline planning permission for the erection of eleven dwelling units was allowed on appeal reference **APP/W0530/A/06/2020762** dated 6 February 2007. A copy of this decision is attached at Appendix 1. The appeal was lodged following the refusal of planning application **S/0348/06/O** on the grounds of harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties and the adjacent junior school swimming pool, and the insufficient provision of affordable dwellings to meet the 30% level required under former Policy HG7 of the Local Plan 2004.
8. The Inspector attached five conditions to the approval, including a requirement to provide three affordable dwellings (Condition 5). Details of the siting, design, external appearance of the buildings and the landscaping of the site were to be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority (Condition 1).
9. A reserved matters applications for eleven dwellings was refused on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008 following a Committee site visit, when scaffolding was erected to represent the dwelling in the north east corner of the site – **S/1881/07/RM**. The refusal reason stated:

*The proposed dwellings on Plots 3, 4 and 5 are shown to be positioned close to the south east boundary with 29 and 31 Dolphin Close, where garden depths are very limited. The proposed development would be unduly dominant on the outlook from the garden areas and facing windows in these dwellings, and would result in overlooking from upper storey rear windows in the new development with little scope for natural screening, and overshadowing of these gardens from the afternoon onwards. The development would therefore be contrary to Policy DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework which seeks to ensure that new development does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity.*

### Planning Policy

*South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007):*

10. **DP/2** (Design of New Development) requires all new development to be of a high quality design and indicates the specific elements to be achieved where appropriate. It also sets out the requirements for Design and Access Statements.

11. **DP/3** (Development Criteria) sets out what all new development should provide, as appropriate to its nature, scale and economic viability and clearly sets out circumstances where development will not be granted on grounds of an unacceptable adverse impact e.g. residential amenity and traffic generation.
12. **HG/2** (Housing Mix) states that in developments of more than 10 dwellings, a mix of units will be sought providing a range of accommodation.

### **Consultations**

13. **Linton Parish Council** - no recommendation, nor any comments.
14. **Local Highway Authority** - no objection in principle. The LHA has recommended conditions and the replacement of the proposed rumble strip with a smooth feature. Entry radii should be increased from 6.0 m to 7.5 m.
15. **Disability Forum** - recommendation of provision of one disabled parking space for visitors.
16. **Environment Agency** - no objection to the development, with recommended informatives.

### **Representations**

17. The Head teacher of Linton Heights Junior School has indicated that the applicant should provide agreed boundary treatment and financial contributions in order to allay concerns over the proximity of the new development to the school swimming pool.
18. The occupier of 27 Dolphin Close has written to express concern over the overbearing impact and loss of outlook from windows in the rear elevation and garden area as a result of the proximity of the dwellings on Plots 3 to 5, particularly during autumn and winter.

### **Planning Comments**

#### ***Changes compared with previously refused application***

19. The layout of the scheme has been modified since the previous refusal of S/1881/07/RM. The main change is the siting of car parking garage block in the place of the previously proposed dwellings, former Plots 3 to 5 in the north east corner of the site. This has overcome issues of overlooking and overbearing impact on the rear garden and outlook of number 31 Dolphin Close.

#### ***Residential amenity***

20. The revised layout has brought the rear elevations of the affordable dwelling units, plots 3 to 5, facing towards the rear gardens of nos 25, 27, and 29 Dolphin Close. This part of the site was previously proposed for car parking on the earlier scheme. As result, first floor rear windows in these Plots will be sited at 8.1 m from the rear gardens of nos 25, 27 and 29 Dolphin Close, and within 21m nearest window-to-window distance. An improvement to the amenity of these dwellings would result if the affordable dwellings were to be repositioned approximately 1.0 m further from the boundary, so reducing overlooking and overbearing impact. The applicant has been requested to submit an amended layout to show this change, which in my opinion would provide an acceptable relationship between dwellings.



**Other matters**

21. The proposed development will provide an acceptable proportion of smaller sized market units, in compliance with Policy HG/2.
22. The applicant has confirmed that he will provide the assurances requested by the Head Teacher of Linton Heights Junior School in respect of boundary treatment and financial contribution towards landscaping of the area between the developments and the school swimming pool.
23. The comments of the Highway Authority are noted and have been brought to the attention of the applicant. The required alterations to the access, including deletion of the rumble strip and its replacement with a smoother feature, may be achieved by the imposition of suitable conditions on any reserved matters consent that may be issued.

**Recommendation**

24. Subject to receipt of suitably amended plans to show a revised siting of the dwellings on Plots 3 to 5, in accordance with the application dated 12 September 2008, approval of reserved matters -- layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping in accordance with outline planning permission reference APP/W0530/A/06/2020762 (LPA reference S/0348/06/O) dated 6 February 2007:

**Additional Conditions**

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, or openings of any kind, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be constructed in the following elevations unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf;  
Plot 5 - rear (eastern) elevation at and above first floor level;  
Plots 6, 7 and 9- side (western) elevation at and above first floor level;  
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of adjoining occupiers in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
2. Plots 1 to 8 - Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development within Classes A (the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house) or B (the enlargement of a dwelling house consisting of an addition or alterations to its roof) of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Order shall take place unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.  
(Reason - In the interests of safeguarding of the amenity of adjoining residential dwellings, to prevent undue overlooking of the swimming pool at Linton Heights Junior School, and to maintain small units of accommodation at units 3, 4 and 5 in accordance with Policies DP/3 and HG/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
3. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting of any tree that tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, is

removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.  
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

4. No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.  
(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
5. Prior to the occupation of the dwellings or the completion of the development on Plots 6, 7 and 8, whichever is the sooner, a 3.2m metre high fence shall be erected along the northern boundary of the application site in accordance with details shown upon Drawing No. LD 08 379, and thereafter retained at that height.  
(Reason - To prevent undue overlooking of the swimming pool at Linton Heights Junior School, in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).
6. No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision and location of fire hydrants to serve the development to a standard recommended by the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented.  
(Reason - To ensure an adequate water supply is available for emergency use.)
7. Notwithstanding the details shown upon submitted drawings nos 'bcg:09/07 – Scheme Layout' and '207/332 SK/01 Access Road Landscaping Details', no development shall commence until details of the following matters have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
  - a) speed reduction measures in the private drive serving the development;
  - b) entry radii at the junction with Horseheath Road;
  - c) footway widths at the junction with Horseheath Road;
  - d) provision for one disabled parking space;the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.  
(Reason - Insufficient information was submitted with the application to assure the Local Planning Authority that the development will not give rise to highway dangers to comply with Policies DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
8. Immediately the new access is used the existing access shall be permanently closed in accordance with details which shall have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (Reason - In the interests of highway safety).
9. Prior to the occupation of any dwelling, hereby permitted, the existing crossover on Horseheath Road shall be removed and the footpath resurfaced and reinstated for use in accordance with a scheme that shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (Reason - In the interests of highway safety).

10. Any removal of trees, scrub or hedgerow shall not take place in the bird breeding season between 15 February and 15 July inclusive, unless a mitigation scheme for the protection of bird-nesting habitat has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (Reason - To avoid causing harm to nesting birds in accordance with their protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and in accordance with Policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
11. No development shall begin until a scheme for the provision of bat and bird nest boxes has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the dwellings shall not be occupied until the nest boxes have been provided in accordance with the approved scheme. (Reason - To achieve biodiversity enhancement on the site in accordance with adopted Policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

### **Informatives**

The applicant's attention is drawn to Condition Number 5 of the outline planning permission relating to the provision of affordable housing.

The scheme of landscaping required to be submitted under Conditions 1 and 2 of the outline planning permission shall include details of the landscaping of the frontage of the site onto Horseheath Road.

As indicated by the Local Highway Authority and the Environment Agency.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007)
- Planning File refs S/0348/06/O and S/1881/07/RM.

**Contact Officer:** Ray McMurray – Principal Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713259

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1628/08/F- BARRINGTON**  
**New Dwelling at Land Adjacent 17 Orwell Road for Landmark Real Estate**

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination at the request of the Local Member, Councillor Bird, for the same reasons as that of the Parish Council.**

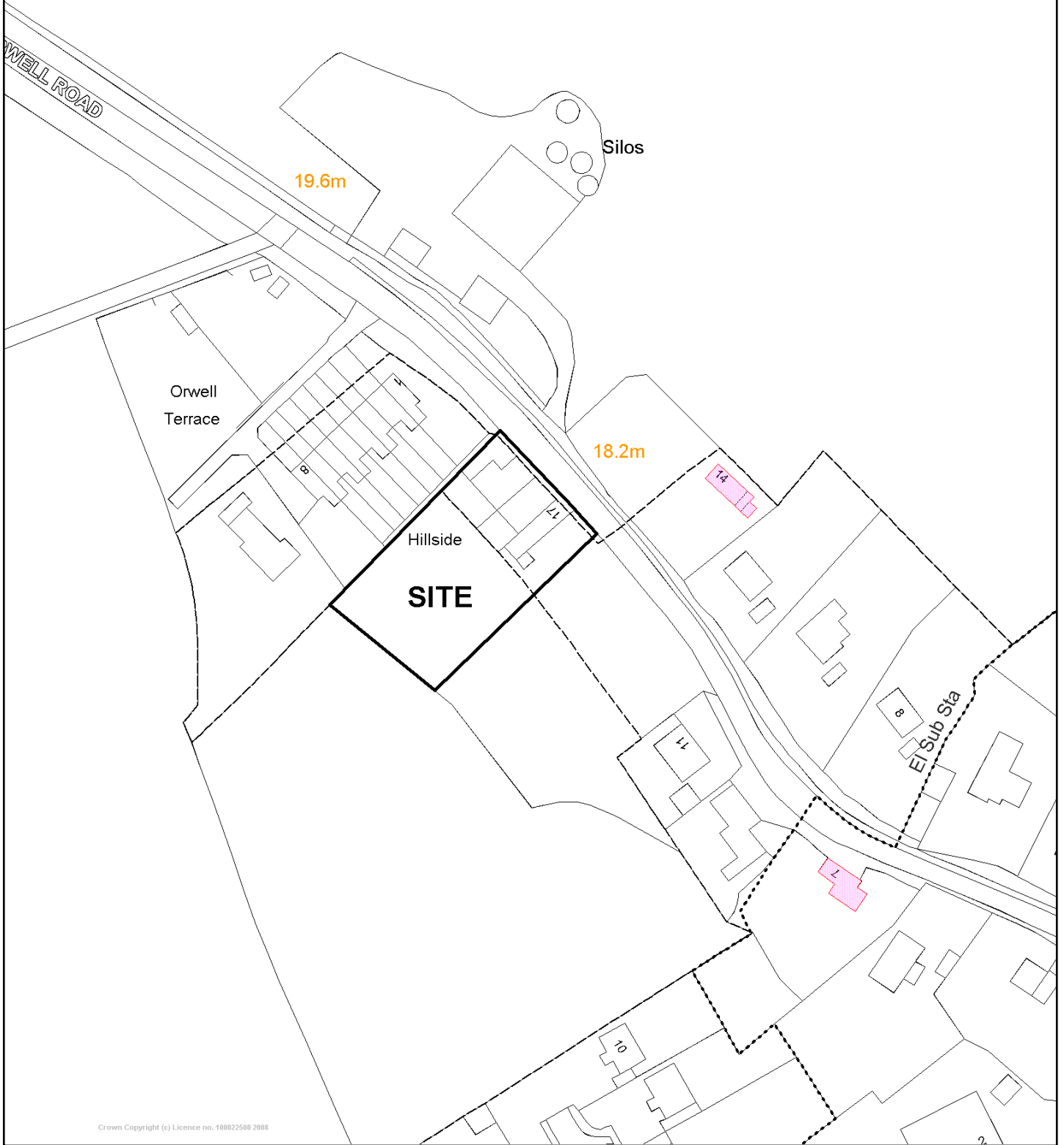
**Site and Proposal**

1. The site comprises 1650m<sup>2</sup>. The front 0.56 ha of the site is occupied by buildings, which are located within the village framework for Barrington; it is outside the Conservation Area by some 85m but west and opposite the nearest Listed Building, No. 14 Orwell Road. To the north west of the site is Orwell Terrace, a row of 8 terraced properties whose rear gardens almost abut the application site, separated only by a small private footpath that is used to access the rear of those properties. This boundary currently comprises single storey outbuildings and mature hedging. To the North and East of the site across Orwell Road are farm buildings and predominately open countryside comprising an Iron Age settlement and Anglo Saxon burial ground. To the south and southeast is open countryside and the garden of No. 17 Hillside.
2. The full planning application, received 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008 proposes demolition of the existing single storey outbuildings and replacement with a new two storey detached dwelling house. The height to the eaves varies from front to back comprising approximately 2.4m at the front and 3.4m and 4.5m at the back. Height to the ridge also varies from front to back measuring between 5.5 and 7.2 metres high. The dwelling has been sited approximately between 13/14 metres from the neighbouring properties to the North West. The house would incorporate four bedrooms and a forward projecting pitched roof 'cart-lodge' to accommodate two cars.
3. The density of the scheme, incorporating No.17 Hillside, equates to 12 dwellings per hectare.

**Planning History**

4. **S/1437/07/F** was submitted in July 2007 for the erection of a detached dwelling, and an extension to the existing dwelling at No. 17 Hillside. The proposed extension to No. 17 was seen as acceptable. The proposed dwelling raised concern with officers due to its overbearing impact on the occupiers of Orwell Terrace and the scheme was

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recommended to Committee for refusal. The new dwelling was subsequently omitted from the application, which was approved as amended.

5. A revised scheme submitted under **S/2416/07/F** was a result of negotiations. This scheme was very similar though slight reductions were made to the ridge heights and distances from the occupiers of Orwell Terrace to help overcome overbearing impact.
6. Despite an officer recommendation for approval based on the alterations to its design the application was referred to March Planning Committee and subsequently refused due to its mass, scale and siting being out of keeping with the spacious character of this part of the village, to having an adverse impact on the occupiers of Orwell Terrace by reason of being overbearing and causing loss of light and inadequate visibility splays harming highway safety.

### **Planning Policy**

7. **Policy ST/6** of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy lists Barrington as a Group Village.
8. **Policy DP/2** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2007 (LDFDCP) addresses the design of new development. It states, in part, that all new development must be of high quality design and should preserve or enhance the character of the local area and be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area.
9. **Policy DP/3** of the LDFDCP addresses development criteria. It states, in part, that planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity or village character. All development should provide appropriate access from the highway network.
10. **Policy DP/7** of the LDFDCP permits development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks, provided, inter alia, that the site does not form an essential part of the local character, and development would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historic importance and the amenity of neighbours
11. **Policy HG/1** of the LDFDCP aims to achieve residential net residential densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment.
12. **Policy SF/10 ‘Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments’** states all residential developments will be required to contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space (including children’s play space and formal outdoor sports facilities) and Informal Open Space to meet the additional need generated by the development in accordance with the standards in **Policy SF/11**.
13. **Policy SF/11 ‘Open Space Standards’**. The minimum standard for outdoor play space and informal open space is 2.8 hectares per 1,000 people, comprising:
  - (a) Outdoor Sport - 1.6 hectares per 1,000 people
  - (b) Children’s Playspace - 0.8 hectares per 1,000 people
  - (c) Informal Open Space - 0.4 hectares per 1,000 people

## Consultation

14. **Barrington Parish Council** – Recommends refusal. The comments are as follows:

“The Parish Council noted the changes made to the previous application for this site in order to bring forward this new one. The Parish Council consider that this new design for a large house would present as a large mass to the houses in Orwell Terrace, in addition to becoming a large development in comparison with the majority of nearby dwellings. There is insufficient parking and turning area on site for visitors and residents. Although the proposed house has been set back a little further from the road, exit from the premises would be difficult due to poor visibility and the speed and volume of traffic in this 40mph which is well-used by local and HGV traffic both by CEMEX and passing through to avoid Cambridge. The plot is not generous. There is no possibility of screening from Orwell Terrace or the road. Concerns were expressed again for this application about the ability of the sewers to cope with the development and these concerns remain constant in light of cumulative development by the owners of the site of this former working farm. The Parish Council did not support this application”.

**Local Highway Authority** has made the following comments:

15. The applicant shows on drawing number 200809/10 Revision D that they can achieve 2.0m x 70m in a north westerly direction and 2.0m x 57m (this should be 59m as a minimum in MFS) in a south easterly direction which the Highway Authority do not believe to be sufficient inter-vehicle visibility from the proposed development. Within the Access Appraisal it states that Orwell Road is a quiet country road that serves as a link between two villages....’ which is outside the definition of rural lanes contained within Manual for Streets.
16. The Highway Authority wishes to raise an objection to the above planning application in its current format.
17. Notwithstanding this objection, if this Council is minded to approve the application, a condition requiring that the manoeuvring area as shown on the drawings is maintained so that it is free of any obstruction that would prevent a domestic vehicle from being able to manoeuvre with ease so it may enter and leave the property in a forward gear is recommended.
18. The applicant should provide a method statement relating to the process of demolition and construction and any effects this may have on the adopted public highway. In particular reference should be made to control of debris, mud & dust, pedestrian & vehicle movements and the control of contractors parking.
19. **The Environment Agency** commented on the earlier application (S/1437/07/F) for a dwelling. It did not object to the scheme but included informatives and comments regarding drainage on the site. It also recommended that the Councils Engineer should be consulted in respect of local ‘Award Drains’.
20. **Local Authority Drainage Manager** - no comments have been received. (There do not appear to be any nearby awarded watercourses).

## Representations

21. An email has been received from Councillor Bird with reference to the concerns held by Barrington Parish Council. He has referred the application to Planning Committee



as is it felt there are additional reasons, other than highway safety, that need to be addressed at Committee.

22. A letter received from the occupier of No. 2 Orwell Terrace raises the following objections:
- (a) Overshadowing and light
  - (b) Overbearing and impact on privacy
  - (c) Out of keeping
  - (d) Development will set a precedent
23. A letter received from the occupier of No. 4 Orwell Terrace raises objections regarding:
- (a) Overshadowing and loss of light
  - (b) Overbearing
  - (c) Inappropriate density
  - (d) Inappropriate and poor design
  - (e) Alteration of roofline is not sufficient to make a material difference.

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

24. Having regard to the presumption in favour of development within the village framework, the key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- (a) Impact upon residential amenity,
  - (b) Impact upon highway safety.
  - (c) Impact on the character of the surrounding area

#### ***Changes since the earlier application***

25. The originally submitted scheme comprised a dwelling of approximately 155.72m<sup>2</sup>. The new scheme comprises 215m<sup>2</sup> including the garage space. The design approach is very different to the earlier scheme in that the architect has tried to keep the ridge and eave heights to a minimum where they face the gardens of Orwell Terrace. The main bulk of the proposed dwelling runs parallel to Orwell Road and the forward projecting element is proposed as an open cart lodge. This has been reduced in length and no longer sits hard against the public footpath. Drawing 200809/09 Revision A shows the existing outline of the outbuildings with that of the proposed and the existing outline of No. 17 Orwell Road.

#### ***Impact on the Neighbouring properties.***

26. The proposed dwelling is to be located very close to the boundary of the neighbouring access way, particularly towards the rear of the property closest to the properties No. 2 and 3 Orwell Terrace.
27. The height of the proposed dwelling varies as the ground levels differ slightly from the front to the rear of the site. The height of the building at the front of the site measures at 5.4 metres to the ridge; the ridge height of the centre element steps up to measures 6.5 metres and to the rear of the property the ridge height measures 7.2 metres. The three different ridge heights help to break up the bulk of the northwest façade.

28. The garden of No. 1 Orwell Terrace wraps around its property and therefore the openness of the garden helps reduce any impact the new dwelling would have on neighbour amenity, particularly with reference to being overbearing and more so now that the height has been reduced and the built form set back into the site. There is no significant loss of light to this garden and therefore the impact of the new development minimal.
29. The gardens of No. 2 and 3 already have various outbuildings located in the application site close to their southeast boundaries. The development is taller than the existing buildings and the scheme, in terms of its scale and massing, is a large improvement to the original application. A large tree in the rear garden of No. 2 screens the development, though there is no protection of this tree if the occupiers/owners wish to remove it in the future.
30. The height of the proposed property even at its tallest point is sufficiently distant (approximately 14 metres) not to cause an adverse loss of sunlight or daylight to the rear of the properties in Orwell Terrace.
31. The windows proposed in the north west elevation are proposed at ground floor only, are high level and thus overlooking to the properties of Orwell Terrace is not considered to be a problem.
32. The changes in this scheme to the original design and the application recently refused have considerably helped to address the overbearing impact of the proposal on its neighbours to an acceptable degree. I am of the view that the architect has successfully taken on board the second reason for refusal in the earlier application.

***Impact on Highway Safety***

33. It has been confirmed that the Local Highway Authority cannot support the scheme, as the correct visibility splays cannot be achieved on site and, therefore, the additional traffic generated by the proposal would represent a danger to Highway Safety. The required visibility splays for the measured 85% speed should be 2.4m x 120m. The splays in each direction fall significantly short.

***Impact on the character of the Area***

34. The design of the proposed house is now very different to the neighbouring property, and this is due to the architect creating a design that positively addresses the impact on the occupiers of Orwell Terrace. The property will stand together with that of No. 17, both of which are different to other properties along this frontage in Orwell Road. The properties at Orwell Terrace are of a completely different style and design altogether and they would predominately hide the new dwelling when approaching from the northwest on the Orwell Road. From the south east the new open cart lodge feature creates a less dominant vista than the earlier schemes and set back from the main road. The varied ridge heights also reflect that of the existing built form.
35. The design approach of the dwelling, though different, would not be completely at odds within the street scene and not unacceptable in design terms. The views across the open countryside are partly restricted by mature hedging and farm buildings and I am of the view that the building proposed is in character with the existing street scene and not harmful to its immediate surroundings. The plot frontage measures approximately 31 metres and the new development replaces an existing footprint of development, albeit slightly taller and in a different form.

**Conclusion**

36. I am of the view that the changes made to the design have addressed the issues raised earlier about the development being overbearing to the neighbouring occupiers and the design is not unacceptable. However the comments from the Local Highway Authority do not support the scheme and there is a fundamental highway safety concern that still has not been adequately addressed. It is for this reason that I recommend refusal.

**Recommendation**

**Refusal**

37. Barrington Road, Orwell does not fall within the parameters set by Manual for Streets in relationship to a quiet rural lane or high street. The required visibility splay for the measured 85% speed should therefore be 2.4m x 120m; and the achievable splays are significantly less than this; therefore the creation of additional traffic under these circumstances would be to the detriment of Highway safety.

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

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/1598/08/F - SAWSTON**  
**Redevelopment of Site to Provide 27 Units for B1 (c), B2, and B8 Uses, and the erection of 14m high Wind Turbine, at Former Marley Building Materials Ltd, Babraham Road, for Salmon Harvester Properties Ltd**

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 8 December 2008 (Major Application)**

**Major development**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because, in the event of further information been received which would result in a change to the officer recommendation, the revised recommendation would substantially conflict with the recommendation of the Parish Council.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The application relates to 2.92 ha of industrial land located at the northern fringe of the village adjacent to the Green Belt. The site was formerly associated with Marley Building Materials Ltd, which had a tall central building and gantry on the site, which has recently been demolished. The remainder of site is in use for vehicular access and turning, and external storage of materials. To the north east, the site is adjoined on a disused railway track with mature landscaped tree belts, to the north west by an area of mature woodland. To the south east, the site adjoins industrial buildings on the business park, and to the south west, the site adjoins dwellings in Fairfields and Broadmeadow, although there is a separation distance of 20 m. between the respective boundaries. A dwelling at North farm is located in the Green Belt 120 m to the north of the site.
2. The full application, dated 22nd of August 2008, proposes the removal of existing buildings on the site and the erection of 27 industrial units to be used flexibly between the uses B1(c) (light industrial), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and warehousing). The proposal also includes the erection of a 14 m high wind turbine, which has a helical blade design set on a vertical axis, as part of the renewable energy provision for the site. A 3m-high acoustic fence is proposed along the open side of the group formed by Blocks E, F and G in order to safeguard the amenity of residents of Broadmeadow from the noise of manoeuvring vehicles.
3. The unit sizes vary from 619 m<sup>2</sup> (Block A) to 1932 m<sup>2</sup> (Block H), measured internally. Overall, the proposal shows 13153 m<sup>2</sup> total floorspace, measured externally, to replace the previous provision of nearly 4000 m<sup>2</sup> in respect of the Marley operation. A total of 266 car parking spaces are proposed, including 32 spaces for disabled parking. 158 cycle parking stands are also to be provided.

S/1598/08/F Sawston



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December Planning Committee

4. The heights of buildings vary from 10.6 m in Block H, adjacent to dwellings in Fairfields, down to 8.2 m in Blocks F and G. The design of the buildings is of a metal clad enclosure, topped with a curved metal clad roof. The buildings will be provided with contrasting colours of flat profile metal cladding. The frontage of the buildings is shown to include canopies over the entrance doors, supported from a series of inclined posts arising from ground level to eaves. An existing 8m-high conifer screen hedge on the south western boundary is to be retained.
5. The application has been supported by a number of reports; Planning Statement; Design and Access Statement; Habitat and Protected Species and Assessment; Flood Risk Assessment; Utility Services Report; Archaeological Assessment; landscaping details; Lighting Proposals; Noise Assessment; Site Waste Management Plan; Transport Assessment; Tree Survey; Sustainability Statement and Health Impact Assessment; Building Services Renewables Report; Travel Plan; Ground Remediation Strategy and Geo- Environmental Assessment Statement.

### **Planning History**

6. There are a number of consents relating to the former buildings and uses on the site, the most significant of which are:  
**SC/63/472**- Building contractors yard, approved 28.10.1963  
**SC/65/193**- Erection of building to house tile manufacturing plant, approved 10.5.1965  
**S/1784/87/F** - An appeal for redevelopment of the site including expansion into the Green Belt was dismissed 22.7.1988 because of the harm that would have been caused to the Green Belt.  
The most recent consent was **S/0775/04/F** for the erection of a cement silo, approved 2.9.2004.
7. A screening opinion was issued on 7 July 2008 in respect of the Environmental Impact Regulations 1999, to the effect that a Environmental Impact Assessment was not required for this development.

### **Planning Policy**

8. **East of England Plan (2008)**  
**Policy SS1** (Achieving Sustainable Development)  
**Policy SS2** (Overall Spatial Strategy)  
**Policy E1** (Job Growth)  
**Policy E2** (Provision of Land for Employment)  
**Policy ENV7** (Quality in the Built Environment)  
**Policy CSR2** (Employment-Generating Development)  
**Policy CSR3** (Green Belt)
9. **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003**  
**P2/5** (Distribution, Warehousing and Manufacturing)
10. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (2007)**  
**ST/4** (Rural Centres)  
**ST/8** (Employment Provision)
11. **South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007)**  
**DP/1** (Sustainable Development)

**DP/2** (Design of New Development)  
**DP/3** (Development Criteria)  
**DP/4** (Infrastructure and New Developments)  
**DP/6** (Construction Methods)  
**ET/1** (Limitations on the Occupancy of New Premises in South Cambridgeshire)  
**ET/4** (New Employment Development in Villages)  
**ET/5** (Development for the Expansion of Firms)  
**GB/3** (Mitigating the Impact of Development Adjoining the Green Belt)  
**SF/6** (Public Art and New Development)  
**NE/1** (Energy Efficiency)  
**NE/3** (Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development)  
**NE/6** (Biodiversity)  
**NE/7** (Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance)  
**NE/9** (Water and Drainage Infrastructure)  
**NE/11** (Flood Risk)  
**NE/12** (Water Conservation)  
**NE/14** (Lighting Proposals)  
**NE/15** (Noise Pollution)  
**CH/2** (Archaeological Sites)  
**TR/1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)  
**TR/2** (Car and Cycle Parking Standards)  
**TR/3** (Mitigating Travel Impact)

#### **Consultations**

12. **Sawston Parish Council** (16 October 08) - Recommends refusal: against 24-hour operational hours and increased traffic on Babraham Road.
13. **Sawston Parish Council** (29 October 08) - Recommends refusal, commenting, 'Parish Council do not support until more information provided; noise levels, maintenance and visual impact in highly residential area considered.'
14. **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** The H&ES Corporate Manager does not object in principle to the development, but has a serious concern regarding the intensity of the proposals and adverse noise impact on residential use associated with an unrestricted 24-hour use, and total flexibility in the planning class uses for each block. Air quality is also an unresolved issue. The H&ES Corporate Manager comments that:
  - a. Demolition/construction phase -- recommended conditions;
  - b. operational/plant noise -- further clarification required; concerned about 24-hour operation;
  - c. site lighting -- recommended condition;
  - d. air quality -- a detailed air quality assessment is required;
  - e. contaminated land -- recommended conditions.
15. **Council's Landscape Design Officer:** no objection in principle as the existing planting outside the sites will help to integrate the development into the landscape.
16. **County Archaeologist:** the site lies in an area of moderate archaeological potential – recommended condition.
17. **Local Highway Authority:** no objection -- recommended conditions. Recommended that the applicant adhere to the existing advisory lorry route.



18. **Environment Agency:** The submitted flood risk assessment satisfactorily demonstrates that the principle of industrial development is acceptable at this location. The EA recommends conditions to be attached to any planning permission issued.
19. **Disability Forum:** disabled spaces for units 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 30, 15, 60, 70, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, should be sited closer to the respective entrance doors. Lifts should be installed prior to first occupation.
20. The comments of the Ecology Officer are awaited.

### **Representations**

21. One adjoining resident (no address supplied) is concerned about the wind turbine, which should be sited as far away from the residential area as possible.

### **Further representations from the agent**

22. In response to the concerns raised by Sawston Parish Council, the agent has stated: 'We note that the Parish Council are against 24 hour operations at the site. As you will be aware, there were no restrictions upon the hours of operation of the previous tile manufacturing use at the site. There has therefore been a history of unrestricted operational hours at the site. Furthermore, the issue of 24 hour operation was discussed with officers prior to submission of the application and at no time was any concern expressed by officers that 24 hour operation would be unacceptable. You will appreciate that there will be a mix of employment uses and that many occupants may not choose to take up an option to work 24 hours. However, our client must provide this flexibility for occupants in the event that should they need it.'
23. In response to the Parish Council's comments in respect of increased traffic on Babraham Road, we would highlight the fact that a Transport Assessment was prepared and submitted as part of the planning application. This identified no unacceptable impacts upon the local highway network. Importantly, having considered the planning application, the Local Highway Authority has raised no objection to the planning application on the grounds of traffic generation.
24. We also note the Parish Council's comments in respect of noise. This issue has been considered as part of the planning application and is acceptable with regard to South Cambridgeshire District Council's Noise Standards, Health Organisation Standards and British Standard 8233.
25. You will appreciate that the potential for noise has been a consideration from the outset of the scheme's conception. The approach taken positions the largest units (25-27) adjacent the south western boundary in protecting the amenity of nearby residential properties. This approach ensures that vehicles moving within the site are as far as possible from residential properties in the vicinity of the site. This approach also ensures that units 25-27 serve to provide a screen between those properties and vehicular circulation areas and other units within the site. The buildings will also be insulated to prevent unacceptable levels of radiated break out noise. We would also point out that units 25 to 27 are most likely to be occupied for storage/warehousing purposes, which is an inherently quieter use than the light industrial and industrial uses that will also be applied for at the site. It is also relevant that as part of the previous use of the site storage/circulation areas extended right up to the site's

western boundary and therefore, the proposed redevelopment represents a significant improvement in this regard.

26. To confirm, we also propose to position an acoustic fence from the corner of unit 24 along the remainder of the south western boundary to the site's western most corner. This will mitigate noise resulting from vehicles manoeuvring outside of units 15 to 24. We can also confirm that any air conditioning units to serve units 15 to 27 will face into car parking areas and will not be placed around the perimeter of the site. No air conditioning units are proposed as part of this application and will be a matter for occupiers to address, subject to planning control.
27. In respect of maintenance, the applicant is expecting that a condition will be attached to any planning permission requiring the submission of a maintenance/management plan. I can confirm that the applicant will retain ownership of the buildings at the site and that the applicant will adopt best practice in ensuring that maintenance is carried out such that its impact upon neighbouring residential properties is minimised.
28. In terms of visual impact, it is proposed as part of the planning application to maintain the leylandii hedge which runs along the site's south western boundary. The hedge rises to a height of approximately 8 metres. Units 25 to 27 rise to a height of 10.6 metres and therefore only a small part of the overall elevation of those units would be visible above the leylandii hedge. As has been explained above, it was considered to be of particular benefit to position the largest units along the site's south western boundary with regard to noise considerations. The largest units are also the most likely to be occupied by the B8 users which are the 'least noisy' of the employment uses applied for at the site. Therefore, although a small part of the south western elevation of units 25 to 27 will be visible above the leylandii hedge, the benefits of positioning those units along the south western boundary of the site are considered to outweigh any disbenefit that could be considered to be associated with the visibility of those units above the hedge. It should also be recognised that units 15 to 24, will rise to a height of 8.2 metres which should ensure that these units are not visible above the hedge.
29. From a general perspective, you will be aware that we wrote to members of the Parish Council prior to the submission of the planning application along with neighbouring residents and business and also South Cambridgeshire District Council members for Sawston, inviting comments upon the proposals. I enclose a copy of this letter dated 4 August. Following this letter, Savills received comments from Mrs Ritchie of 11 Fairfields. Savills response to Mrs Ritchie's letter dated 22 August is also enclosed.
30. We had also hoped to present the proposals at a meeting of the Parish Council prior to their response to the planning application. However, owing to a lack of available Parish Council committee dates before the deadline for their response, this was not possible. However, I can confirm that Endurance Estates, Salmon Harvester Properties joint venture partner for the development, has spoken with Councillor Bard to discuss the proposals. Endurance Estates explained that they, along with Salmon Harvester Properties and their consultancy team, would be pleased to meet to present the proposals if that were considered to be desirable'.

## **Planning Comments**

### ***Scale***

31. Policy ET/1 allows for the development of small-scale industries in the use classes proposed up to a maximum floorspace of 1850 square metres. This limitation is met in all cases with the exception of Units 27 in Block H, which has a floor area of 1932

square metres. In the context of the replaced building, which approached 4000 m<sup>2</sup> in floor area, it is considered that the breach in floor level limitation is minimal and acceptable in this context. Policy ET/4 places floorspace limits on developments within villages. The proposal meets these limitations with the exception of Block H which has two units each having 1100 m<sup>2</sup> and one unit with 1932 m<sup>2</sup>. The applicant maintains that such units are most suitable for warehousing B8 use, in which case only unit 27 would be in breach of this policy. In view of the context of buildings to be replaced, officers are again of the view that this minor breach is not significant.

32. The height of the buildings is similar to others on the industrial estate, the highest being sited on the south western boundary will provide visual screening and noise baffling to adjacent residential properties.
33. Policy GB/3 requires developments adjacent to the Green Belt to take account of potential impact on its setting. Units 1 to 5 adjoining the Green Belt have a height of 7.5 m and are provided with a screening outside the site by an existing tree belt adjoining the former railway track. The Landscape Officer has assessed this arrangement to be acceptable in the context of the setting of the Green Belt.

#### ***Parking and highways***

34. The proposal has been provided with car parking at a ratio of 1 space to 50 square metres of floorspace (266 places in total), which is appropriate for Class B2 general industrial use. Because the application proposes flexible uses for each unit, an alternative layout of parking and vehicle manoeuvring areas showing 320 spaces has been provided, representing provision 1 space per 41 square metres. The maximum standard for B1 uses is 1 space per 30 square metres. Cycle parking provision is provided at a ratio of 1 space per 83 m<sup>2</sup>, which is significantly lower than the recommended requirement for Class B2 general industrial, but as the scheme will contain a significant element of Class B8 warehousing for which there is no recommended standard, the precise nature of the shortfall is not readily quantifiable. The application has been supported by a Travel Plan which is intended to reduce trips by car to and from the site, and takes account of walking and public transport links to and from the site. In the context of an operational Travel Plan, I consider the potential shortfall in parking and cycle space provision to be acceptable.
35. The application is accompanied by a transport statement, which projects traffic flows to and from the site over a five-year period. The report concludes that the development will have a negligible effect upon the junction of Grove Road/Babraham Road and the signalised crossroads of Babraham Road/Cambridge Road/Hillside/New Road, both now and in the future. The Local Highway Authority has concluded that the development should have no significant impact on the public highway subject to recommended conditions.

#### ***Environmental impact***

36. The concerns of the Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) have been brought to the attention of the applicant, and a formal response is awaited. The concern about 24-hour operation is also shared by Sawston Parish Council. The agent has presented a case to substantiate the proposals. Pending resolution of these concerns, I recommend that a holding objection be upheld. I will report further information verbally to the Committee, if received.

**Renewable energy**

37. The buildings will be designed to reach a Very Good rating under the BREEAM assessment, which will achieve a 15% reduction in carbon emissions, in compliance with Policy NE/1. The provision of a vertical axis wind turbine will provide 21% of the energy requirements of the development's base speculative scheme, in compliance with Policy NE/3. The application has been supported by a Sustainability Statement and Health Impact Assessment, and Building Services Renewables Report, which sets out the provisions for renewable energy in the development. The proposal vertical access wind turbine will be some 100m away in a north easterly direction from the rear boundary of residential properties in Fairfields. It is similar to the turbine installed at the new Arbury Park School. I consider it to be acceptable.

**Recommendation**

38. **Refusal**

Notwithstanding the submission of the noise and assessment dated 21 August 2008, the Local Planning Authority has been unable to fully assess the implications and impact of noise generated by the operation of the site and from vehicles visiting the site upon adjacent residential dwellings. The applicant has not demonstrated that the proposal would comply with Policy NE/15 (Noise Pollution) of the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.

In the event that this objection can be overcome, I recommend approval of the application dated 22 August 2008 completed by wind turbine details received 29 September 2008 subject to the following conditions:

39. **Conditions**

1. Time limit.
2. Business occupancy.
3. Maximum occupancy by a single user.
4. Mezzanine floor control.
5. Details of landscaping and implementation of landscaping.
6. Samples of external materials.
7. Scheme of archaeology.
8. Control of outside storage of materials.
9. Details of external lighting.
10. Implementation of the renewables strategy including retention of the wind turbine.
11. As required by the H&ES Corporate Manager: noise insulation scheme; noise management plan; air quality screening and management; contaminated land; plant noise scheme.
12. Retention of car parking and cycle parking provision.
13. Operation of the submitted alternative car parking layout in the event of occupation of any units for class B1 (c) purposes.
14. Stopping up of the existing access.
15. As required by the environment agency.
16. Scheme for the provision of a travel plan scheme and advisory lorry route adherence strategy.

**Informative**

External plant to be the subject of further planning applications.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- East of England Regional Spatial Strategy 2008
- Planning File refs SC/63/472, SC/65/193, S/1784/87/F, S/0775/04/F and S/1598/08/F.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**C/6/9/1A****Discharge of Conditions - Cambridgeshire Guided Busway  
Design and External Appearance of Arbury Park South Bus Stop and Histon  
and Impington Bus Stops****Recommendation: Approval****Notes:**

**These submissions have been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the officer recommendations of approval are contrary to objections raised by the Parish Council.**

**Background**

1. On 21<sup>st</sup> December 2005, the Secretary of State for Transport directed that planning permission be deemed to be granted for the development included in the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Order. One of the ten conditions reads:

(Condition 3)

- (a) Work shall not begin on each of the following items of development until in each case prior written approval of their design and external appearance has been obtained from the local planning authority:
  - (i) any building or bus stop
  - (b) The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approval given by the local planning authority or, if that authority gives prior written approval to any amendment or alteration, subject to such amendment or alteration.

The reason for the condition is to ensure the satisfactory appearance and functioning of the development, in the interests of highway safety.

**A. CONDITION 3(a)(i) - ARBURY PARK SOUTH BUS STOP****Site and Proposal**

2. The site is located at the southern end of Arbury Park at the traffic light controlled junction of Kings Hedges Road, Arbury Road and Chariot Way.
3. The adjoining Arbury Park development comprises land parcels A2 and B1, on which development, comprising part four and part three storey dwellings have been erected on the former.

4. The submission, dated 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008, proposes details of design and external appearance for a bus stop on either side of Chariot Way. The eastbound stop comprises a 12m x 3.5m platform of block paving, a shelter 9.6m long incorporating ticket machine, seating and real time passenger information display and a 13.8m long cycle shelter for 30 cycles. The west bound stop comprises a 24m x 3.5m platform, and a shelter 12m long. The shelters would be constructed of a steel frame, glass panels to rear and side elevations and a clear polycarbonate roof. A CCTV camera would be positioned on each platform. The scheme incorporates planting proposals.

### **Consultations**

5. **Impington Parish Council** comments:

- “(a) Out of style and character
- (b) Not sympathetic to its surroundings
- (c) Poor functional design, with flat roof in an area of trees/leaves, attractive for climbing onto
- (d) No Smoking Signage will be required
- (e) Concern over lack of cycle shelter provision in both directions”

6. The **Landscape Design Officer** has no objections but suggests that on the northern boundary of the west side of the junction a few more plants than shown are planted. The planting on the south of the guideway will presumably be integrated into the existing planting. The bluebells are unlikely to succeed planted in grass around young trees because of the competition with the grass. However, they would thrive amongst the shaded environment of the adjacent established planting and could spread out in time as the hornbeams mature and shade out the grass. This may not technically be the busway site but there shouldn't be a problem blending in this bulb planting across the site as the planting operation is only very superficial.

7. No comments have been received from **Cambridge City Council**, or the **Local Highway Authority**.

8. **Gallaher Estates** asks that the land take and design of the cycle and bus shelters should be checked with Gallagher prior to construction.

### **Planning Comments**

9. The planning condition does not require the Authority's approval of siting of the bus stop. This has planning permission. The condition requires approval of “design and external appearance” in the interests of highway safety.
10. The Inspector's Report into the Guided Busway inquiry, which was held between September and December 2004, concluded that the proposed stops were appropriately located to serve the main areas of passenger demand.
11. The design and appearance of the shelters is functional but is not intended to reflect the style and character of buildings in the vicinity. The shelters are contemporary and transparent and will appear insignificant in the context of the scale of nearby buildings. Their transparency will also enhance the security of passengers using them. In addition the design has been accepted elsewhere along the route, including Arbury Park North, Cambridge Regional College and Cambridge Science Park.



12. I have made the Guided Bus Team aware of the comments regarding no smoking, but it believes that, since the shelter is only partly enclosed on each side, such signage is not required.
13. I have no evidence to suggest that the provision of secure parking for 30 cycles is inadequate. This was the number approved for the Science Park stop, which was also positioned on the eastbound side. The cycle shelter is, however, intended to serve both eastbound and westbound travellers.
14. The Guided Bus Team is happy to increase the number of plants as suggested by the Landscape Design Officer. A revised plan is expected.

#### **Recommendation**

15. Subject to the receipt of an amended plan incorporating additional planting, it is recommended that Condition 3(a)(i) be discharged in regard to the design and external appearance of the Arbury Park South Bus Stop.

### **B. CONDITION 3(a)(i) - HISTON AND IMPINGTON BUS STOPS**

#### **Site and Proposal**

16. Station Road is an un-classified road that runs parallel to the B1049 and is a relatively busy road within the villages. The junction of Station Road with the proposed Guided Busway is at the location of the former Histon Station, with Bishops' hardware and cycle shops on the opposite side of the line. The details of this junction were agreed by members at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2007. The junction has been since constructed along with the Guideway on this stretch of the line.
17. This submission dated 29th January 2008, seeks agreement of the detailed design and external appearance of the bus stops, one on the south-western side of the line, northwest of Station Road (adjacent to Bishops cycles and dwellings at Villa Place). The other is to be sited on the north-eastern side of the track, southeast of Station Road, adjacent to woodland.
18. The design includes details of the platform, bus and cycle shelters and landscaping of the stops. The platforms are both 3.5m deep and 36m long. Both include shelters for twenty cycles and on the western side a passenger shelter 9.6m long while on the eastern side one 12m long. These are all constructed with stainless steel frames, clear glass panels walls and clear polycarbonate roofs.

#### **Consultations**

19. **Histon Parish Council** recommends refusal, commenting:
  - (a) Poor design, lack of imagination.
  - (b) 20 cycle spaces are totally inadequate.
  - (c) The Guided Bus is a flagship for the Cambridge area. The Station area will form the first view of our Conservation villages for people who pass through or stop. The design that has been presented to us does not adequately reflect the prestigious nature of this project or a positive reflection on our community.

20. **Impington Parish Council** recommends refusal. It commented:
- (a) Out of style and character.
  - (b) Not sympathetic to its surroundings.
  - (c) Poor functional design, with flat roof in an area of trees/leaves, attractive for climbing onto.
  - (d) Twenty spaces totally inadequate.
  - (e) Design should be open at both sides, not user-friendly.
  - (f) Minimum standard width between hoops queried – should be 900mm?

21. The **Local Highway Authority** confirmed that the details are acceptable subject to detailed design.

22. The **Landscape Design Officer** has commented that the drawings no: CGB.DES.17300-D-1-1001 and 1002 are satisfactory for the discharge of the landscape condition.

### **Representations**

23. No representations have been received.

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

24. The issues to consider in relation to the design and appearance are whether:

- (a) They will enable the stops to function well.
- (b) The number and spacing of cycle spaces are appropriate.
- (c) The appearance is appropriate to the character of the area and of a sufficient quality; and the landscaping will be appropriate.

25. As with the other bus stop proposals discussed in this report, the siting is not for consideration.

26. In relation to the design, the proposals are a standard design that has been proposed for all stops along the route. The site is not within a Conservation Area or within the setting of Listed Buildings and therefore its visual impact must be judged on that basis.

27. The designs are modern, easily maintained and of quality materials that will weather well. They provide clear views, which in crime prevention terms is essential for the safety of bus users. They are considered by officers to be of sufficient design quality to ensure that the character and appearance of the area will not be harmed. Due to their lightweight form they will not be visually intrusive.

28. The four shelters are to be sited away from the boundaries of the Busway and as such are unlikely to suffer significant problems relating to leaf fall from adjoining trees and landscaping.

29. In total forty cycle spaces will be provided. On the shorter cycle shelter this still provides adequate space between hoops to ensure ease of use. The Local Highway Authority when asked to comment on the number of cycle spaces proposed has advised informally that forty spaces is a good starting point. It will seek to review this when it is up and running; and provision may be an appropriate strategy to adopt within the Cycle City initiatives, particularly if done on a strategic level along the entire route. The Guided Bus Team expressed its concern that the number of spaces is not

an issue for consideration in relation to the design and appearance, which are the matters to be decided by virtue of this condition. There is limited space to accommodate additional spaces at these stops, in any event.

**Recommendation**

30. It is recommended that Condition 3(a)(i) be discharged in regard to the design and external appearance of the Histon and Impington Bus Stops.

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

- Planning File Ref: C/6/9/1A
- Plans for the Guided Busway are attached as an Appendix.

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