

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Wednesday, 11 May 2016 at 10.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Lynda Harford – Chairman
Councillor David Bard – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Anna Bradnam
Kevin Cuffley
David McCraith
Deborah Roberts
Robert Turner
Pippa Corney
Sebastian Kindersley
Charles Nightingale (substitute)
Tim Scott

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Julie Ayre (Planning Team Leader (East)), Julie Baird (Head of Development Management), Andrew Fillmore (Principal Planning Officer), John Koch (Planning Team Leader (West)), Karen Pell-Coggins (Principal Planning Officer), Stephen Reid (Senior Planning Lawyer), Ian Senior (Democratic Services Officer), Paul Sexton (Principal Planning Officer (West)), David Thompson (Principal Planning Officer) and Alison Twyford (Senior Planning Officer)

Councillors Henry Batchelor and John Batchelor were in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Brian Burling, Des O'Brien and Ben Shelton sent Apologies. Councillors Charles Nightingale and David McCraith substituted respectively for Councillors O'Brien and Shelton. No further substitute was available.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Interests were declared as follows:

Councillor Lynda Harford

Non- Pecuniary Interest in respect of Minutes 6 and 7 in Cottenham (S/1952/15/OL and S/1818/15/OL) as having been present at meetings of Cottenham Parish Council where these applications had been discussed. She was considering the matters afresh.

Non-pecuniary interest as a Cambridgeshire County Councillor, particularly in relation to Minute 9 in Over (S/2870/15/OL) as County Councillor for the Electoral Division of Bar Hill, which includes the Parish of Over. She was considering the matter afresh.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley

Non-pecuniary interest as a Cambridgeshire County Councillor, particularly in relation to Minute 11 in Gamlingay (S/0078/16/FL) as County Councillor for the Electoral Division of Gamlingay. He had been present at Gamlingay Parish Council meetings at which this

application had been discussed, but was considering the matter afresh.

Councillor Deborah Roberts

Non-pecuniary interest in respect of Minute 12 in Fowlmere (S/2403/15/FL) as a member of Fowlmere Parish Council having attended the meeting at which the application had been discussed. Councillor Roberts was considering the matter afresh.

Councillor Tim Scott

Non-pecuniary interest in respect of Minute 5 in Toft (S/2294/15/OL) as a member of the Parish Council in the adjacent parish of Comberton. Councillor Scott was consider in the matter afresh.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2016.

4. S/2833/15/OL - WILLINGHAM, (LAND OFF ROCKMILL END & MEADOW ROAD)

Iain Hill (applicant's agent) addressed the meeting. He presented what he described as a viable and deliverable proposal, which was compliant with policy. The Case Officer read out a statement from Willingham Parish Council. The statement said that the Parish Council strongly opposed the application, pointing out that Willingham was a Minor Rural Centre, suitable only for developments up to a maximum of 30 dwellings.

The Committee unanimously gave officers **delegated powers to approve** the application, subject to

1. The prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring
 - (a) A financial contribution of £9,896.10 towards the improvement of library services
 - (b) The financial contributions listed in an appendix to the report
2. Safeguarding Conditions and Informatives including those referred to in the report from the Planning and New Communities Director.

5. S/2204/15/OL - TOFT (BENNEL FARM, WEST STREET)

Julie Horne (objector), Nicky Parsons (applicant's agent), Councillor Nick Taylor (Comberton Parish Council), and Councillor Martin Yeadon (Toft Parish Council) addressed the meeting. Julie Horne described the application as premature. The proposal was inappropriate and even the affordable housing, which would be welcome, was in the wrong location. Nicky Parsons presented the outline application in the context of the Green Belt, and describe the measures taken to mitigate the effects of flooding. Councillor Taylor consider the siting of the proposal to be poor, and highlighted the danger to vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Drainage was also a concern. Councillor Yeadon argued that there were no special circumstances that might otherwise allow such development to take place in the Green Belt. Healthcare and cycling provision were other factors.

One concern for Members was the loss of village identity should the proposal be granted planning permission. Another was overdevelopment. The applicant's agent had argued that there were many small factors which, when added together, constituted very special circumstances for permitting development in the Green Belt. The Committee did not find this argument persuasive.

However, the application was very finely balanced, and the Committee gave officers **delegated powers to approve** the application subject to

1. The prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring
 - (a) A contribution of £8,718.84 towards the improvement of library services
 - (b) a contribution of £30,300 to provide an additional 15.15 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional 221 anticipated population increase
 - (c) the financial contributions listed in an appendix to the report
 - (d) the affordable housing thereby secured being for those with a connection to Toft and Comberton only, subject to statutory exceptions and "staircasing" provisions
2. The Conditions and Informatives referred to in the report; and
3. It being referred to the Secretary of State in advance of the decision being issued as the proposal represents a significant departure from the Local Plan and a major development on Green Belt land.

6. S/1952/15/OL - COTTENHAM (36 OAKINGTON ROAD)

David Henry and John Hopkins (for the applicant) and Councillor Frank Morris (Cottenham Parish Council) addressed the meeting. Parish Councillor Tony Nicholas read out a statement from Mr Stableford, who had registered to speak as objector but was now unable to attend the meeting. The statement highlighted concerns relating to the rapid expansion of the village, an increase in the volume of traffic and number of accidents, vehicle speeds, and the dangerous nature of the access road. Mr Henry and Mr Hopkins commended the application in the context of five-year housing supply, deliverability, the lack of objections from the Local Highways Authority, and benefits of the scheme. Councillor Morris said that the site was located in an inappropriate part of Cottenham, and expressed concern about the safety of the access road. He also doubted the robustness of a Travel Plan relying on the Citi 8 bus service, and sustainability of the proposal in general. The Chairman read out a statement from Councillor Simon Edwards (a local Member). Councillor Edwards made the following points

- Impact outweighs the benefit
- Traffic concerns
- The cumulative effect of this application and application S/1818/15/OL

The Chairman, speaking as a local Member, highlighted traffic issues as a major concern.

Tam Parry (Cambridgeshire County Council) explained how the traffic assessment was carried out.

A number of Members expressed their misgivings about this application.

It was requested that affordable housing should be distributed throughout the development rather than grouped together, and should be for Cottenham residents in

perpetuity.

The Committee gave officers **delegated powers to approve** the application subject to

1. The prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
 - (a) Securing affordable housing
 - (b) Requiring the construction of a footpath along the northern side of OPakington Road to connect with an existing footpath
 - (c) Requiring the widening of the existing footpath between the site and Rampton Road junction
 - (d) Requiring the widening of the existing footpath along the southern side of Rampton Road between its junction with Oakington Road and the B1049
 - (e) Securing the upgrade of bus stops
 - (f) Securing an education contribution
 - (g) Securing public open space
 - (h) Requiring a financial contribution towards the provision or improvement of community facilities
2. The Conditions set out in the report from the Planning and New Communities Director
3. The application being advertised as a Departure from the Development Plan and not being called in for determination by the Secretary of State.

7. S/1818/15/OL - COTTENHAM (LAND OFF RAMPTON ROAD)

Councillor Frank Morris (Cottenham Parish Council) addressed the meeting. He raised concerns relating to traffic congestion, the lack of sustainability, and inadequacy of the Section 106 Agreement. The Chairman read out a statement from Councillor Simon Edwards (a local Member). Councillor Edwards made the following points

- Impact outweighs the benefit
- Traffic concerns
- The cumulative effect of this application and application S/1952/15/OL

The Chairman, as a local Member, supported the Parish Council.

The Committee **refused** the application unanimously for the reason specified in the report from the Planning and New Communities Director, and for reasons of demonstrable and significant harm, the lack of sustainability, and conflict with Policies DP/3 and NE/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007.

8. S/1969/15/OL - LINTON (HORSEHEATH ROAD)

Monica Poulter (objector), Robert Wickham and Francis Burkitt (for the applicant), Councillor Enid Bald (Linton Parish Council) and Councillors Henry Batchelor and John Batchelor (local Members) addressed the meeting. There ensued discussion as to whether it was appropriate for Francis Burkitt, a Member of South Cambridgeshire District Council) to address the meeting on behalf of the applicant. While there was some concern, it was pointed out that Francis Burkitt was not a Planning Committee member and did not have a vote. He explained that his motive in addressing the Committee in person was to make sure that everything was in the public domain. It was agreed that Francis Burkitt should address the meeting in his personal capacity, and that it be clearly

understood that statements made by him were made as a representative of the applicant, not as a district Councillor.

Monica Poulter's concerns related to the alleged lack of consultation and the reliance on out-of-date traffic data. The bus service was under threat and there were issues about drainage, flooding, schools and play areas. Mr Wickham said that the development had been designed so that the archaeology known to be present would be underneath the proposed allotments. Other issues could be overcome. Mr Burkitt agreed, highlighting the 40% affordable housing element and the outline-only nature of the current application. Councillor Bald said that the emerging Local Plan had rejected this site, which was outside the village framework. The proposal would cause traffic congestion. It would neither enhance nor preserve this site of historic significance. Councillor Bald described the proposal as undeliverable and said the housing was of an inappropriate design. Other concerns related to an infrastructure deficit, flooding, the pressure on local schools, and the fact that allotments did not make the application acceptable. In conclusion, Councillor Bald described the proposal as an unsympathetic neighbour. Councillor Henry Batchelor's main concern related to cumulative effect, given a development proposal in the adjacent field. Councillor John Batchelor fully supported the recommendation of refusal and urged the Committee to consider the weight to be given to various policies.

Members clarified the impact of "out of catchment area" children on local school capacity.

The Committee unanimously gave officers **delegated powers to refuse** the application for the reasons set out in the report from the Planning and New Communities Director, subject to it being referred to the Secretary of State in advance of the decision being issued as the proposal represents a departure from the Local Plan.

9. **S/2870/15/OL - OVER (LAND TO THE WEST OF MILL ROAD)**

Councillor Geoff Twiss (Overpc) addressed the meeting. He reminded Members that the Appeal Inspector had said that Over was not sustainable. The current application was still inappropriate.

Had the Committee still had powers formally to determine the application, it would have **refused** it unanimously for the reasons set out in the report from the Planning and New Communities Director.

10. **S/2689/15/FL - HASLINGFIELD (115 NEW ROAD)**

Members noted that this application had been **withdrawn** from the agenda.

11. **S/0078/16/FL - GAMLINGAY, (FOUNTAIN FARM, PARK LANE)**

Kirstin Rayner (Clerk to Gamlingay Parish Council, acting as its agent) read a statement to the meeting. An approval could set a precedent, and would be harmful to the open countryside.

In another statement, Councillor Bridget Smith (a local Member) agreed with the Parish Council.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley (speaking as the other local Member) urged the Committee to protect the character of the area.

The Committee **approved** the application subject to the Conditions and Informatives referred to in the report from the Planning and New Communities Director.

12. S/2403/15/FL - FOWLMERE, (DEANS FARM, LONG LANE)

Councillor Lawrence Wragg (Fowlmere Parish Council) addressed the meeting. He voiced the Parish Council's strong concerns relating to

- The conflict with planning policy
- Implications for future applications by setting a precedent
- the increase in traffic
- accessibility of the site by car only as there was no footpath"

Councillor Deborah Roberts (local Member) agreed with the Parish Council.

Councillor Kevin Cuffley questioned the application's viability.

A proposal to grant consent subject to a personal Condition was defeated.

The Committee **approved** the application subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Planning and New Communities Director.

13. ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The Committee **received and noted** an Update on enforcement action.

14. APPEALS AGAINST PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION

The Committee **received and noted** a report on Appeals against planning decisions and enforcement action. There had been a 20% increase in the number of appeals in 2015-16 compared with 2014-15.

The Chairman noted that only one of the applications allowed on appeal and listed in the report related to a Committee decision.

The Meeting ended at 3.55 p.m.
