

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee

10<sup>th</sup> May 2006

**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/6341/06/F - Caxton  
Mitigation Works for the Caxton Bypass Comprising New Planting at Land West of  
Caxton Bypass North of Bourn Brook  
for MCA Developments Ltd**

**Recommendation: Approval  
Date for Determination: 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2006**

### Site and Proposal

1. The application site lies on the west side of the by-pass at the top of its cutting between the Bourn Road bridge and Bourn Brook. The land slopes down from north to south. It comprises spoil from the bypass construction which has not been topsoiled or landscaped. A public footpath alongside Bourn Brook skirts the southern toe of the slope, to cross the by-pass near the Bourn Brook culvert.
2. The full application received on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2006, with additional information (cross-sections) received on 18 April 2006 proposes to plant the area with a mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs to blend in with the surrounding landscape and roadside hedge planting. Eventually the planting will form a visual screen to this section of the by-pass, although not to the section where the by-pass crosses the brook. The western side of the planting will be protected by a post-and-wire fence with a hedge on its east side.

### Planning History

3. **S/6066/00/RM** approval of the Caxton By-pass as a reserved matter of the Cambourne development outline permission.
4. **S/6294/05/F** Additional planting in Block W – withdrawn because of inadequate information.

### Planning Policy

5. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan"):

**EN3** Landscaping and design standards for new development in the countryside

**EN5** The landscaping of new development

### Consultation

6. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Landscape Consultant** – the planting is acceptable. No additional mounding should be included as this would have been visually excessive on the already deep cutting.

7. **Caxton Parish Council** – recommends approval:
  - The screening used over Crow Dean on the west side of the bridge over Bourn Brook should be repeated.
  - The level of the southern half of the area should be raised subject to planning permission S/6341/06/F – suggest 6 feet.
  - There is not sufficient top soil on the existing mound. At least one foot of top soil should be put on the existing bank.
  - Trees which will grow tall should be used and preferably larger, more mature (6') trees should be used.
  - Care should be taken near Bourn Brook not to obstruct flow either now or in the future.
8. **Cambourne Parish Council** – recommend refusal for the following reasons:
  - The plans appear not to show the adjoining property 20 Bourn Road
  - Consideration should be given to native evergreen species as part of the tree mix
  - The bunds should be increased to help mitigate the effects of the By-Pass prior to planting
  - Hedging removed as part of construction works should be reinstated.
9. **County Footpaths** – planting must not obscure the line of vision at the footpath crossing.
10. **Environment Agency** – reply awaited
11. **English Nature** – no comment.
12. **The Ramblers Association** – anxious that planting should not be so close to Public Footpath 13 as to overhang the footpath and cause obstruction. The Ramblers Association also trying to negotiate a route for the footpath to pass underneath the by-pass, and would prefer the planting not to prejudice this alternative route.
13. **British Horse Society** – no works should interfere with passage along the public bridleway.

### **Representations**

14. One letter from a resident on the south side of Bourn Road expressing concern about the lack of landscaping for visual and noise screening, and decreased security because of the use of the by-pass lay-by and the public footpaths.
15. One e-mail from a resident north of Bourn Road concerned that no additional bunds would be constructed on this part of the site.
16. One letter from 9 signatories at 6 addresses in Bourn Road, objecting to this proposal because it would not mitigate nuisance caused by the traffic on the by-pass to residents in Bourn Road, who wished for bunds on both sides of the bypass up to 4 metres high.

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

17. The key issues are the impact of the proposed planting on the local landscape character, and the impact on residential amenity at premises in Bourn Road. The land on this site has been disturbed by the construction of the by-pass beneath Bourn Road, which results in a cutting immediately to the east of the site, of necessity an

alien feature. The site itself is gently sloping in keeping with the surrounding landscape. The proposed planting would be similar to local copses, and therefore would help the environs of the new road to be reconciled with the wider landscape. Whilst it would to some extent form a visual screen between Bourn Road and the by-pass, it must not extend into the Bourn Brook flood plain, nor encroach on to the public footpath, and therefore would not form a complete screen either visually or acoustically. Despite the aspiration of some local residents that more substantial screening should be installed, this proposal is acceptable on its own merits, as a good mixed planting scheme in keeping with the local landscape in accordance with policies EN3 and EN5 of the Local Plan.

### **Recommendation**

#### **18. Approve** subject to the following conditions

1. The landscaping and boundary treatment hereby permitted shall be carried out in the first planting season following the issue of this decision, and any trees or plants which within a period of ten years from the completion of the landscaping and boundary treatment die, are removed or become seriously damaged or distressed, shall be replaced in the next planting season with other of a similar size and species, unless the LPA gives written consent to any variation.  
(Reason – To secure the completion of the landscaping works for mitigation of the impact of the by-pass in accordance with Policies EN3 and EN5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.)

### **Informatives**

#### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
    - EN3** (Landscaping and design standards for new development in the countryside)
    - EN5** (The landscaping of new development)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity including noise and security issues
  - Footpath use
  - Visual impact on the landscape

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning applications reference S/6066/00/RM approval of the Caxton By-pass as a reserved matter of the Cambourne development outline permission and S/6294/05/F Additional planting in Block W

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