

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th July 2006
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/0836/06/F – Great Shelford
Golf Course Club House (Amended Design to that Approved Under Reference
S/2257/01/F) on Land North of Granhams Road and Hinton Way for Mandarin Oriental
Hotel Group & Masters, Fellows & Scholars of the College of St John the Evangelist in
the University of Cambridge**

**Recommendation: Approval
Date for determination: 28th July 2006 (Major Application)**

Members will visit the site on Monday 3rd July.

Site and Proposal

1. The application site includes the land on which the new golf course and clubhouse would be constructed. The part of the site on which the clubhouse and car parking would be constructed is undulating and well-treed. The fire damaged shell, with trees growing through, is all that remains of what was a country house and hotel ('Uplands') which stands where the parking area is proposed.
2. This full application, registered on the 28th April 2006 and amended by Flood Risk Assessment and 'Trees To Be Retained Plan' drawing date stamped 5th June 2006, proposes the erection of a golf course clubhouse as an alternative to the clubhouse approved as part of the permission for the golf course (S/2257/01/F). The proposed clubhouse measures 64m x 18.5m and stands 8m high to the main ridge at the north front and, due to the fall of the land, 11.5m high to the main ridge at the south front. A total of 108 parking spaces are proposed – 72 below ground and 36 at ground level. Access would be off Hinton Way as approved for S/2257/01/F, which requires the removal of a number of trees. The submitted 'Trees to be removed plan' indicates that for the clubhouse itself, 6 trees would be removed (1 less than for the approved clubhouse) but an additional 10 trees would be removed for the revised parking.
3. In addition to the Flood Risk Assessment and 'Trees to be retained plan', the application is accompanied by a Planning Justification Statement, the November 2001 Environmental Statement for the Golf Course and a Transport Assessment.

Planning History

4. An application submitted in 2000 for a golf course and associated development was withdrawn prior to determination (**S/1230/00/F**).
5. Permission was granted in February 2004 for a Golf Course with Associated Club House, Car Parking, Landscaping Including Lakes and Maintenance Facilities, Public Open Space and Public Bridleway (**S/2257/01/F**) following the completion of a S.106 Agreement (which related to the application and an application for a hotel – **S/1229/00/F**) covering a financial contribution towards traffic calming along Hinton Way, the construction of a foot/cycleway, the revocation of an earlier consent for a hotel with associated car parking,

ensuring that the hotel and golf course developments were occupied as a single planning unit and lorry routing during the construction of the golf course.

6. Details of applications for a hotel on land at Upland/Whitefields, including application **S/1229/00/F**, are set out in the report for application **S/0835/06/F** on this agenda.

Planning Policy

Development in the Countryside and Green Belt

7. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P1/2** states that development in the countryside will be resisted unless the proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
8. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P9/2a** states that within the Green Belt, new development, including change of use, will be limited to that required for agriculture and forestry, outdoor sport, cemeteries, or other uses appropriate to a rural area.
9. Local Plan 2004 **Policy GB2** states that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Development is not inappropriate if it involves, amongst others, buildings providing essential facilities for outdoor sports. It also states that any development considered 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.
10. Local Plan 2004 **Policy EN1** states that relevant parts of the Landscape Character Areas of England are defined on the Proposals Map. In all its planning decisions the District Council will seek to ensure that the local character and distinctiveness of these areas is respected, retained and wherever possible enhanced. While recognising that landscape is a dynamic concept, planning permission will not be granted for development which would have an adverse effect on the character and local distinctiveness of these areas.
11. Local Plan 2004 **Policy EN3** states that, in those cases where new development is permitted in the countryside, the Council will require that (a) the scale, design and layout of the scheme (b) the materials used within it, and (c) the landscaping works are all appropriate to the particular 'Landscape Character Area' (the East Anglian Chalk Landscape Character Area in this instance), and reinforce local distinctiveness wherever possible.

Trees

12. Local Plan 2004 **Policy EN5** states that the District Council will require trees to be retained wherever possible in proposals for new development; and landscaping schemes will be required to accompany applications for development where it is appropriate to the character of the development, its landscape setting and the biodiversity of the locality.

Recreation Development

13. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P4/1** states that new recreation and leisure developments should: maintain or increase employment opportunities; meet the needs of local communities as well as visitors; be accessible by a choice of sustainable transport modes; protect or improve the local environment, landscape and residential amenity; and strengthen and diversify the local economy.

14. Local Plan 2004 **Policy RT1** states that, in considering applications for the development of recreation and tourist facilities, the District Council will have regard to the need for such facilities and the benefits which might accrue. The District Council will resist any proposals which would: result in the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a); not be in close proximity to and not be well related with an established settlement and its built-up area; result in buildings and other structures not directly related to the proposed use; by reason of its scale, form, design and materials of the proposal, together with any associated development such as clubhouses, pavilions, and other buildings and structures would create an intrusive feature in the landscape or surrounding area; result in the loss of ecological, wildlife and archaeological interests; generate significant motorised traffic movements; have inadequate provision for parking and manoeuvring of cars and service vehicles to the District Council's standards; not provide appropriate provision for screening and to minimise the visual intrusion into neighbouring development and the countryside; and not undertake adequate measures for the screened storage and safe disposal of refuse.

Nature Conservation

15. Local Plan 2004 **Policy EN13** states that the District Council will not grant planning permission for development which could adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, the habitats of animal and plant species which are protected by law unless the need for the development clearly outweighs the importance of conserving that habitat and the advice of English Nature is to the effect that permission may be granted. Where development is permitted which may have an effect on these species, the District Council will impose conditions, where appropriate, and seek to use its powers to enter into planning agreements to: facilitate the survival of individual members of the species; reduce disturbance to a minimum; and provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population.

Sustainable Travel

16. Local Plan 2004 **Policy TP1** states that the Council will seek, through its decisions on planning applications, to promote more sustainable transport choices and to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, by amongst other things requiring the preparation of a Travel Plan.

Consultations

17. **Great Shelford Parish Council Great Shelford Parish Council** makes no recommendation and states "We have some concerns that the construction of the underground car park, the ramp and road leading into it and the enlargement of the above ground car park will adversely affect the trees. As in our previous comments on the hotel we hope the District Council will be completely satisfied that the amendments will not damage the tree cover or affect the long term viability of the trees. It was felt the design was over ornate and out of keeping with its location. If the amended scheme is given approval all the previous conditions should be imposed on this application as were imposed on S/2257/01/F. The design, layout and landscaping of the golf course should not be changed from the existing approval. The increased spoil which will result from the digging out of the basements for both the hotel and the golf clubhouse should be disposed in such away that it will not affect the agreed contours of the golf course. *All* the previously agreed benefits for the parish must be provided in connection with this application if approved and secured for a further 5 years. The benefits were obtained by a stand alone agreement but because of the variations and the possibility of more the

Parish would want a Section 106 agreement to protect the position of the stand alone agreement.”

18. **Stapleford Parish Council** recommends approval but asks “would there be a Section 106 gain for traffic calming in Church Street Stapleford in view of increased traffic generated?”
19. **Trees & Landscape Officer’s** comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.
20. **Ecology Officer’s** comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.
21. **Local Highway Authority’s** comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.
22. Having considered the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, the **Environment Agency** states that the proposal for surface water to discharge to a sustainable system incorporating attenuation and grey water usage is commended although considerable details will be necessary to ensure that third parties are adequately protected. It recommends that any permission is subject to conditions relating to surface water drainage and pollution control, makes advisory comments and states that Anglian Water should be consulted.
23. **Anglian Water** has been consulted.
24. **County Archaeological Office’s** comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.
25. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** states that provision of underground car parking will deny opportunities for natural surveillance and, in the absence of access control, it may be advisable to consider a formal surveillance system such as CCTV. He also states that lighting for the car park should be by means of column mounted white downlighters.
26. **Cambs Fire & Rescue Service** comments will be reported at the meeting.
27. The comments of the **Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)** were sought on the design of the building but, as it is consulted on more schemes than it has the resources to deal with, it was not able to comment.
28. **Countryside Agency** states that it does not wish to comment.
29. **Campaign to Protect Rural England** states that it has no comments on the application.

Representations

30. Occupiers of 245 Hinton Way comment that the proposed substantial increase in the sizes and activity associated with the hotel (S/0835/06/F) and clubhouse means that the proposal is no longer appropriate for a small village setting; and the enlarged scheme will cause even more significant disruption to nearby and distant residential properties, including causing intolerable pressure on the access roads which will be clogged due to inadequate provision on-site for staff parking.
31. Occupier of 173 Hinton Way comments that the amended plans for the hotel (S/0835/06/F) and clubhouse are an improvement on the approved schemes but she is concerned that, due to the very limited parking on-site for staff, Hinton Way may be used for parking which would be a safety issue if parked vehicles obstructed visibility for those pulling out of or turning into nearby properties in Hinton Way.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

32. The main issues in relation to this application are: whether the proposed building and facilities provided constitute appropriate development in the Green Belt; the design of the building and its impact on the openness and rural character of the countryside and Green Belt; and parking provision and the consequent impact on trees.
33. The ground floor area of the building now proposed (1012m²) is very similar to the previously proposed scheme (1050m²) and the total floor area, excluding parking, now proposed (1785m²) is less than previously approved (1963m²). An enlarged basement is now proposed to provide parking underground – see below. The clubhouse and facilities proposed would provide essential facilities for outdoor sport and therefore constitute appropriate development in the Green Belt.
34. The ‘orangery’ design of the proposed building is considered appropriate whether the approved hotel (S/1229/00/F) or proposed hotel (S/0835/06/F) was built. The previously approved design, unless particular attention was paid to detailing, could have been a little bland. Whilst the ground level footprint of the proposed clubhouse is approximately 3% larger than the approved scheme, the proposed building is approximately 2m lower than the approved one and, as a consequence, the building would not have a greater impact upon the openness and rural character of the countryside and Green Belt. The use of appropriate materials would be important and, in this regard, I consider that timber rather than the proposed aluminium would be appropriate for the windows and doors. I also have some concern about the use of what is described as ‘terne coated grey metal roofing with batten roll joints’ as the roofing material and consider that samples of the roofing material to be used would need to be agreed.
35. Whilst recommending approval of the previous scheme (S/2257/01/F), I was concerned about the very light parking provision proposed at that time (36 spaces) compared to recommended standards of 100 permanent spaces plus provision for an additional 50, either as overflow or permanent spaces, but was also concerned about the potential landscape implications of additional provision. The comments of the Trees & Landscape Officer on the proposal will be important as the submitted ‘Trees to be Retained’ plan indicates that the revised parking arrangement would involve the loss of an additional 9 trees, although due to the depth of excavation required for the proposed basement parking, it seems likely that more trees than this are likely to be lost. However, subject to the comments of the Trees & Landscape Officer, I consider that the proposed provision of 108 spaces, 72 of which would be below ground, is a sensible solution to the need to make appropriate parking provision whilst minimising the impact on the landscape.
36. The previous permission was, and any approval of this application would also have to be, subject to the construction of a foot/cycleway and a financial contribution being paid towards traffic calming along Hinton Way. However, subject to comments received from the Local Highway Authority, Stapleford Parish Council’s request for a Section 106 obligation with respect to traffic calming in Church Street, Stapleford, is not considered to be justified.

Recommendation

37. Subject to the comments of the Trees & Landscape Officer, Ecology Officer, Local Highway Authority, County Archaeology and Cambs Fire & Rescue Service, Approval (as amended by Flood Risk Assessment and ‘Trees To Be Retained Plan’ drawing no. (PA)014 both date stamped 5.6.06) subject to conditions based on those attached to permission S/2257/01/F to cover:

- a. Standard 3 year time limit
- b. Samples of materials
- c. Details of openings
- d. Hard and soft landscaping
- e. Tree protection
- f. Replacement trees
- g. Floodlighting details
- h. Fume filtration/extraction
- i. Noise insulation
- j. Construction hours
- k. Details of contractors' operations
- l. Green Travel Plan
- m. Provision and retention of parking
- n. No parking other than in approved spaces
- o. Cycle parking
- p. Space for loading, unloading and turning of vehicles
- q. Restriction on use as a golf clubhouse only
- r. Need to vary the S.106 Planning Obligation dated 12th February 2004 to refer to this application
- s. Surface water drainage
- t. Pollution Control

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/2** (Environmental Restrictions on Development), **P4/1** (Tourism, Recreation and Leisure Strategy) and **P9/2a** (Green Belt)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: GB2** (Green Belt), **TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel), **RT1** (Recreation and Tourism Development), **EN1** (Landscape Character Areas), **EN3** (Landscaping and Design Standards for New Development in the Countryside), **EN5** (Retention of Trees and Landscaping of New Development) and **EN13** (Protected Species).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: need for traffic calming in Church Street, Stapleford; crime prevention; scale and design of proposal in this location; residential amenity; highway safety; and flood risk, surface water drainage and pollution control.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning file Refs: S/1229/00/F, S/1230/00/F, S/2257/01/F, S/0835/06/F and S/0836/06/F

Contact Officer: Andrew Moffat – Area Planning Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713169