

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th October 2006

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

APPEALS AGAINST PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION: SUMMARIES OF DECISIONS OF INTEREST – FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

1. To highlight recent Appeal decisions of interest forming part of the more extensive Appeals report, now only available on the Council's website and in the Weekly Bulletin.

Summaries

Mr & Mrs S Sharpe – Erection of dwelling and reorganisation of restaurant car park – 1 Church Street, Little Shelford – Appeal dismissed

2. The main issue in this appeal was the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the village conservation area.
3. This is a prominent corner site which the inspector found to form part of a significant undeveloped gap along Hauxton Road. It is a welcome open aspect in what is otherwise built up frontage. While it is not designated as a Protected Village Amenity Area, the inspector considered it forms an essential part of village character as set out in LP Policy SE5.
4. Regard was had to the possible enhancement of boundaries, the verdant setting of the site, a better screened location for car parking and no overall increase in hard surfacing overall. Nevertheless, the appeal proposal would create a dominant and unwelcome visual intrusion into the street scene. The shape and form of the new dwelling would articulate its mass and this would appear excessive. The resultant loss of distinctive open character would harm the character and appearance of the conservation area.
5. The Parish Council and local residents had also objected on the grounds of inadequate access and safety. The inspector did not accept that these were matters on which the application could be refused.

Persimmon Homes – Retention of Walls (temporary period 2 years) – High Street, Longstanton – Planning and enforcement appeals dismissed

6. Both appeals concerned the retention of two walls either side of an entrance to an area of new housing (Phase 1, Home Farm). There are plaques on the wall labelled 'St Michaels Park' in front of which are planted areas and floodlights.
7. The inspector found that the development amounts to an entrance feature and advertisement and noted the presence of several other advertisements near by. He was concerned about the likely timing of events including the handover of the village green to the Parish Council

8. The inspector accepted that the walls and adjacent planted beds are not unsightly.. On the other hand, they do add to the clutter of advertising material and intrude into an area intended to be open space. The presence of the floodlights also draws attention to the walls.
9. Development plan policies are aimed at ensuring recreational facilities are protected. The longer the walls remain, the greater the likelihood that their presence could inhibit the community use of the open space. The walls do not provide a sense of place which responds well to the character of the environment being suburban rather than helping to maintain what is left of the village or semi-rural character.
10. The possibility of a shorter temporary permission was considered but rejected given there was no clear evidence regarding the future timing of events. On balance, the inspector concluded that both appeals should be dismissed.
11. The developer has until 4 October 2006 to demolish the walls and remove the resulting materials.

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

- Planning Inspectors' appeal decisions dated 30th August and 4th September 2006

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