

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

4<sup>th</sup> April 2007

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

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**S/0107/07/F - COTON**

**Replacement Dwelling Following Demolition of Existing – Blue Gates, Madingley Road for A and R Waughman**

**Recommendation: Approval**

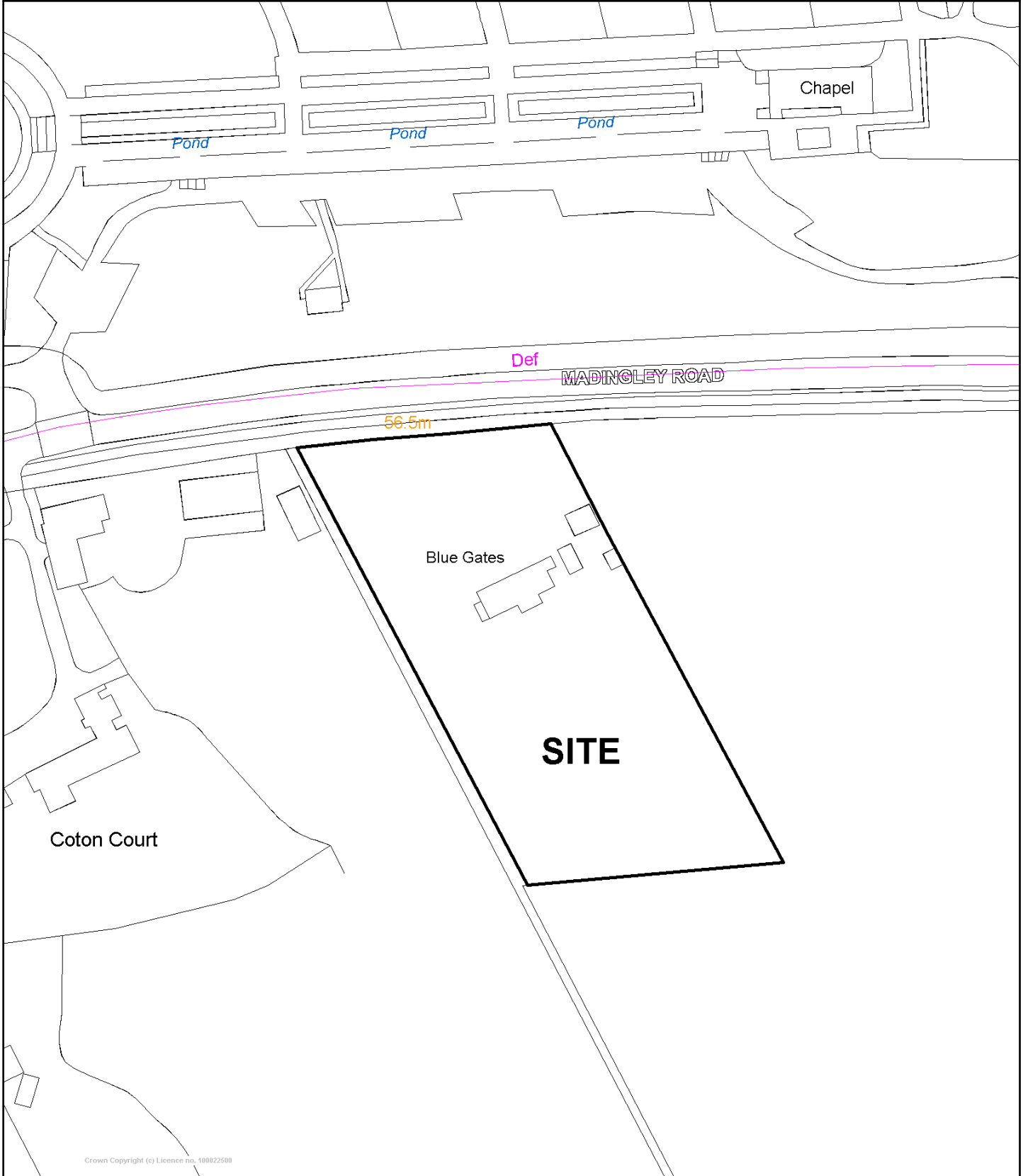
**Date for Determination: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

**Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because Madingley Parish Council has recommended that the application be refused, contrary to the officer recommendation.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. Blue Gates is a tall 1930s two storey, 254sq.m brick and tile dwellinghouse that enjoys a generous residential curtilage (0.658 ha.), all of which falls within the Cambridge Green Belt. The site is accessed off Madingley Road by way of a relatively well-screened entrance opposite the American War Cemetery. The dwellinghouse itself is centrally located within the plot with a large front garden that is partially screened by mature trees from the adjacent highway that runs between Madingley and Cambridge, from which the main public views of the site are enjoyed. To the rear of the site the land is more open with views over the Green Belt and the village of Coton as the land drops away to the south. To the east of the dwelling there are several outbuildings behind which mature trees demarcate the property boundary with the adjacent agricultural land. The western boundary is similarly demarcated and screened from the collection of properties that form Coton Court and the public footpath that separates the two sites. Although the site itself is entirely within Coton Parish, Madingley Road forms the boundary with the Parish of Madingley.
2. This full application received on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2007, as amended by drawings 30 Rev B, 131 and 134 Rev B, proposes to replace the existing dwellinghouse with an Italian timber frame house from a Rome based company called Pagano. The new dwelling will sit on roughly the same footprint as the original property, though will be significantly lower in height due to its flat roof design. The application has been amended in order to reduce the number of openings in the front elevation and to reduce the overall height of the dwelling. The height of the replacement dwelling (excluding the central glazed element) is 6.3m, which runs for a width of 22m. The overall width of the dwelling is 36.4m at a ground floor level and it has a depth of 20.8m. The external materials of the dwelling will be a mixture of timber and glass panels and the design of the dwelling incorporates numerous measures to limit the amount of energy required to heat the building.



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Scale 1/1250 Date 27/3/2007

Centre = 540538 E 259424 N

APRIL 2007 PLANNING COMMITTEE

3. In addition to the replacement dwelling a 2.5m acoustic fence is also proposed along the eastern and northern boundary of the site. This fence is to be located within the existing mature hedge.

### **Planning History**

4. Planning consent was granted in 2003 for a significant single storey annexe, which went before members in October and November 2002 (**S/1351/02/F**). This application was only approved subject to the signing of a section 106 agreement to prevent the sub-division of the property.
5. Two years after the approval of the above application consent was granted for a significant extension and increase in the cubic volume of the property (**S/0092/05/F**). This application was only considered acceptable due to the fact that the aforesaid annexe had not been built; therefore it was also the subject of a section 106 agreement in order to rescind the earlier approval.

### **Planning Policy**

#### *Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003*

6. **Policy P1/3** 'Sustainable Design in Built Environment' states that a high quality of design will be required for all new developments and promotes more compact forms of development through higher densities.
7. **Policy P9/2a** states that new development within the Green Belt will be limited to agriculture, forestry, outdoor sport, cemeteries or other uses appropriate to a rural area.

#### *South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004*

8. **GB2** 'Green Belt' states that replacement dwellings in the Green Belt is not inappropriate so long as it is in accordance with Policy HG15 and there is no adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
9. **HG15** 'Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside' states that permission for replacement dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where they are in scale and character with the dwellings they are intended to replace and will not increase the impact of the site on the surrounding countryside.

### **Consultation**

10. **Coton Parish Council** – Recommends approval
11. **Madingley Parish Council** does not think that the replacement dwelling blends in with the area and recommends that the application be refused. However it is aware that it cannot be seen.
12. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – 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 during the period of construction.
13. **Defence Estates Cambridge** – Had not commented at the time of writing this report.

## **Representations**

14. An E-mail of support has been received from the owner/occupiers of Coton Court.

## **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

15. The replacement dwelling at Blue Gates benefits from its central location within a generous curtilage well away from the only neighbouring property and the public highway. Therefore the main issue for Members to consider is whether the replacement dwelling would have significant visual impact on the surrounding countryside, whether the enlargement in the volume of dwelling is in accordance with the overall aims of Policy HG15 and hence whether it is appropriate development in the Green Belt.

### ***Increase in volume***

16. In the accompanying text of Policy HG15 it is stated that replacement dwellings in the countryside ought to be similar in size and height to the original structure and will be subject to a maximum enlargement of 15% of volume. Previously Blue Gates has been extended by way of a large conservatory and a detached garage was built in the mid 1990s. The original dwelling has a volume of approximately 819.9 cubic metres, which is significantly lower than the proposed replacement dwelling (1,729m<sup>3</sup> for the main house and 2,226m<sup>3</sup> for the main house, pool and existing garage). The greater increase in volume is compared to the cubic volume of the property once extended under the plans approved in 2005, an extension that would have added an additional 776 cubic metres to the dwelling. Although the 2005 planning consent is still extant I do not consider that it should be used to justify the greater volume increase that is proposed.
17. The applicant's figures compare a volume of 2,226m<sup>3</sup> against a volume of 1.878m<sup>3</sup> for the approved scheme notwithstanding the increase in cubic volume the design of the replacement dwelling is for a three bedroom dwelling, as apposed to the four bedroom existing dwelling and the six-bedroom dwelling that would be created if the extant application were to be implemented. Moreover I consider that the replacement dwelling will have significantly less of a visual impact upon the surrounding countryside than the existing property and on that basis the development is considered to be in accordance with Policy HG15.

### ***Impact upon the Green Belt***

18. In addition to considering the cubic volume of replacement dwellings in the countryside Policy HG15 also states that a replacement dwelling should be in scale and character with the dwelling it is intended to replace, and that it should be of a similar height. It is impossible to argue that the Pagano dwelling is of a similar character to a 1930s dwellinghouse. However the design of the replacement dwelling does offer a substantial benefit when considering the visual impact of the site on the openness of the Green Belt, primarily as a result of its lower height.
19. The existing dwelling has a height of 8.9m, with a ridge width of 10.7m. At the height of the proposed replacement dwelling (6.3m) the existing dwelling is 16m wide. The steeply sloping side elevations of the Pagano house and its 2.6m reduction in height help to significantly reduce the visual impact of the site on the surrounding countryside. I consider this to be acceptable, especially give the fact that under the approved scheme of extensions the ridge width would increase to 16.5m and at the

height of the Pagano dwelling the extended dwelling would have a width of 21.8m.

20. Previously the visual impact of the extension of the property was considered to have an acceptable impact upon the Green Belt. In comparison the replacement dwelling will have no greater impact than either the existing dwelling or the existing dwelling as extended. In fact due to its decrease in height I consider it will have less of a visual impact when viewed from the adjacent highway. Views from the public footpath adjacent the site are limited due to the level of natural screening that presently exists.
21. Having regard to Policy HG15 and at worst, the neutral impact on the openness of the Green Belt I consider that the development is appropriate in Green Belt.
22. In response to Madingley Parish Council's comments that the dwelling does not fit in I do not consider that there is any strong character that defines the properties in this part of Madingley Road. Either side of the highway there are the distinctly different sites of the American War Cemetery and Coton Court, and the tall dwelling that is Blue Gates does not fit the 'character' of either. I consider that these three sites each exert their own particular character and that the proposed Italian dwelling will prove to be a positive contribution to the area that will not have an unacceptable impact upon the character of this part of Madingley Road.
23. The only concern I have about the proposed new dwelling is the level of glazing, which has already been reduced by way of an amendment. Presently Blue Gates is not visually prominent especially during the winter months when the days are shorter. If the Pagano dwelling were to be overly illuminated I believe that the site would have a greater impact upon the countryside and the setting of the American Cemetery. It is therefore considered necessary to attach a condition to any approval in order to limit the number of openings on the north elevation of the dwelling and to limit any illumination of the frontage of the property.
24. It is recognised that there is a tall fence at the front of Coton Court, though I would like further details of the proposed acoustic fence and gate to be submitted and agreed by way of a planning condition before the development is commenced. I consider that the height of the fence should not exceed two metres on the front elevation, it is also considered necessary to locate the gates further within the site in order to prevent vehicles being parked on the cycle path whilst the gates are being opened. These minor alterations can be secured by a planning condition.
25. The proposed building is environmentally sustainable in terms of low energy production, low CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and many other features which are detailed in the Design Statement.

### **Recommendation**

26. Approval

### **Conditions**

1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
2. Notwithstanding the submitted plans no fence shall be erected on the north or east boundaries until details of the location, height and foundations of the proposed acoustic fence 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. (Rc - To ensure that the fence does not have an unacceptable visual impact upon the openness of the Green Belt);

3. Neither the north elevation of the replacement dwelling, hereby approved, nor the front driveway/parking area shall be externally illuminated other than in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
(Rc - To ensure that the unrestricted illumination of the frontage of the site does not harm the rural character of the surrounding countryside or the setting of the American Cemetery);
4. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
5. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
6. Sc22 – No additional windows at first floor level in the north elevation of the development (Rc22);
7. Sc26 - "During the period of demolition and construction" - (Rc 26);
8. Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery.

#### **Informatives x 2**

See Chief Environmental Health Officer's letter 27/02/07

#### **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:**  
**P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development)  
**P9/2a** (Green Belt)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**  
**GB2** (Green Belt)  
**HG15** (Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Impact upon the character of the area

**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 Files Ref: S/0107/07/F, S/0092/05/F and S/1351/02/F

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