

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

1<sup>st</sup> August 2007

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

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### **S/0925/07/F – CASTLE CAMPS**

**Dwelling, Land Rear of The Bays, Haverhill Road, for Mr K O'Malley**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2007**

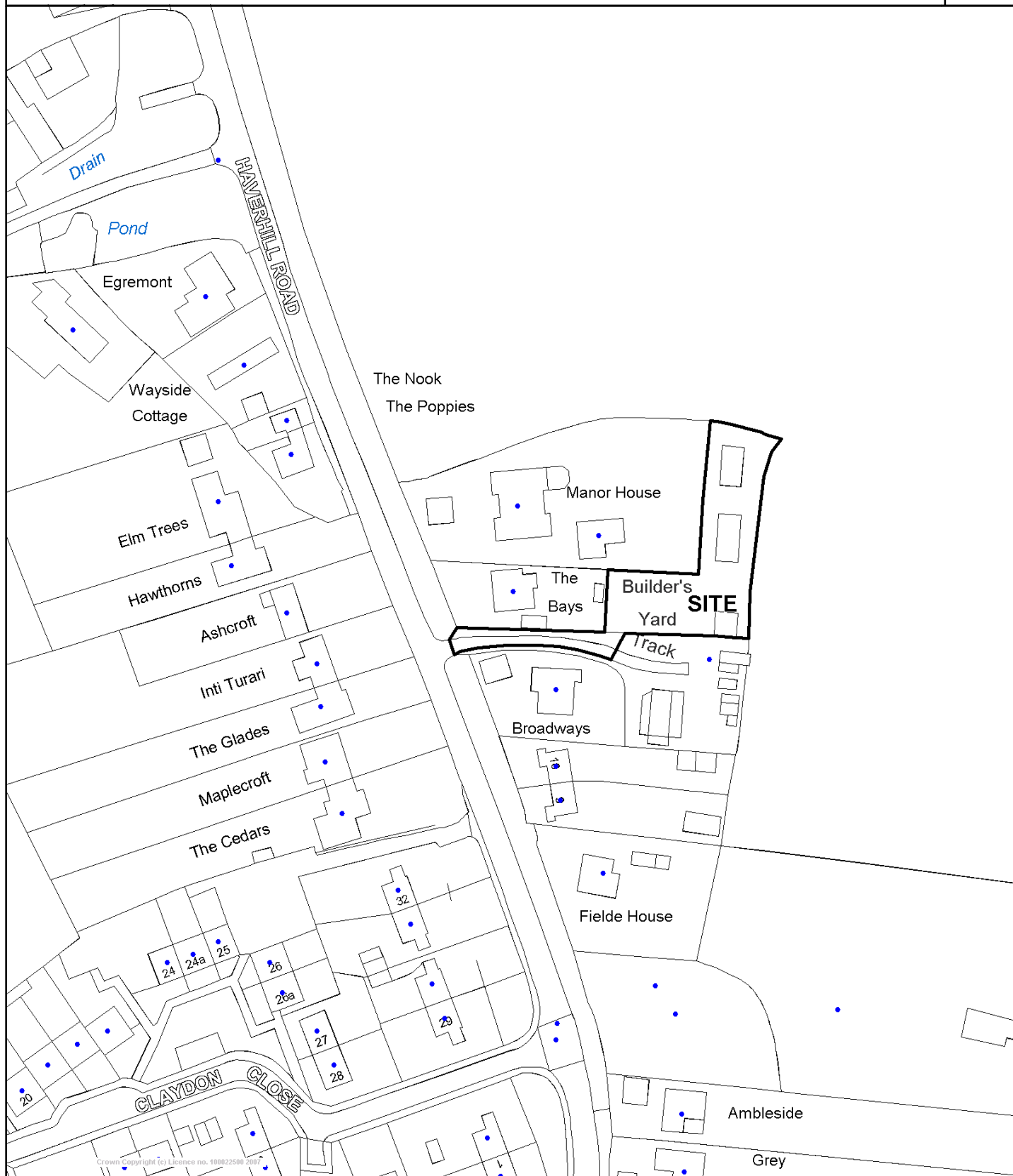
**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation of the Parish Council does not accord with the officer recommendation.**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. The application site, with an area of 0.13ha, is located on the northern fringe of the village. The site is a builders yard at present, with a number of single-storey storage buildings. To the north and east the site adjoins open agricultural land. To the west, the site adjoins the rear boundaries of dwellings at Manor House (the applicant's residence) and The Bays. Vehicular access is gained from an existing gated track onto Haverhill Road that runs between The Bays to the north and Broadways to the south, with screen brick walls on both boundaries. There are views of the site at the northern approach to the village from Haverhill Road.
2. The full application, dated 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007, proposes the demolition of existing buildings on the site and the erection of 4-bedroomed detached house with linked garage, to be sited on the southern part of the site adjacent to the driveway. The main house has been designed to have the appearance of a converted weather boarded barn. First floor windows have been sited low in the roof on the exposed eastern elevation. The ridge height of the main house is to be 7.0m. The boundary with the fields will be planted with native-species hedging. Existing trees are to be retained and additional trees planted.
3. External materials include black tarred boarding on the main house and on part of the garage, and Cambridge stock bricks on the remainder to match adjoining properties. Roofs are to be natural Welsh slate on the main house and kitchen wing, and handmade clay tiles on the garage. The density of development is 7.7 dwellings per hectare.

### **Planning History**

4. Two previous applications to erect a dwelling of this site have been submitted. The first, **S/2316/05/F**, proposed a dwelling with a height of 8.7m and included an area of the adjoining field 90m x 30m to be incorporated into the garden. The application was refused on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006 as being out of scale with adjoining development and prominent on this sensitive edge-of-village location. A second reason referred to the harm to the appearance of the countryside of the additional garden land. The second



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application, which related to the same area as the current application i.e. with no garden extension, was withdrawn prior to determination because of concerns raised by the Parish Council and officers about the design and 8.2m ridge height of the proposed development (**S/0143/07/F**).

5. An Established Use Certificate was granted for the builder's yard use in 1977 (**S/1265/77/EU**).

### **Planning Policy**

#### **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, (2007)**

6. **ST/6 (Group Villages)**  
Residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village frameworks of Group Villages, as defined on the Proposals Map.

#### **LDF Development Control Policies (2007)**

7. **DP/2 (Design of New Development)**
  1. All new development must be of high quality design and, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, should:
    - a. Preserve or enhance the character of the local area;
    - b. Conserve or enhance important environmental assets of the site;
    - c. Include variety and interest within a coherent design, which is legible and provides a sense of place whilst also responding to the local context and respecting local distinctiveness;
    - d. Achieve a legible development, which includes streets, squares and other public spaces with a defined sense of enclosure and interesting vistas, skylines, focal points and landmarks, with good interrelationship between buildings, routes and spaces both within the development and with the surrounding area;
    - e. Achieve a permeable development for all sectors of the community and all modes of transport, including links to existing footways, cycleways, bridleways, rights of way, green spaces and roads;
    - f. Be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area;
    - g. In the case of residential development, provide higher residential densities, and a mix of housing types including smaller homes;
    - h. Provide high quality public spaces;

- i. Provide an inclusive environment that is created for people, that is and feels safe, and that has a strong community focus;
- j. Include high quality landscaping compatible with the scale and character of the development and its surroundings.

8. **DP/3** (Development Criteria)

Planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact:

- a. On residential amenity;
- b. From traffic generated;
- c. On village character;
- d. On the countryside, and landscape character;
- e. From undue environmental disturbance such as noise, lighting, vibration, odour, noxious emissions or dust;
- f. On ecological, wildlife and archaeological interests;
- g. On flooding and flood risk;
- h. On the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- i. On quality of ground or surface water;
- j. On recreation or other community facilities.

9. **DP/7** (Development Frameworks)

- 1. Outside urban and village frameworks, only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted.
- 2. Development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks will be permitted provided that:
  - a. Retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character; and
  - b. Development would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historic importance, and the amenities of neighbours; and
  - c. There is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development; and

- d. Development would not result in the loss of local employment, or a local service or facility, protected by Policies ET/6: Loss of Rural Employment to Non-Employment Uses: SF/1: Protection of Village Services and Facilities and SF/9: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas.

10. **HG/1 (Housing Density)**

Residential developments will make best use of the site by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment.

11. **ET/6 (Loss of Rural Employment to Non-Employment Uses)**

1. The conversion, change of use or re-development of existing employment sites to non-employment uses within village frameworks should be resisted unless one of the following criteria is met:
  - a. It is demonstrated that the site is inappropriate for any employment use to continue having regard to market demand. Applications will need to be accompanied by documentary evidence that the site is not suitable or capable of being made suitable for continued employment use. Evidence would be required that the property has been adequately marketed for a period of not less than twelve months on terms that reflect the lawful use and condition of the premises; or
  - b. The overall benefit to the community of the proposal outweighs any adverse effect on employment opportunities and the range of available employment land and premises; or
  - c. The existing use is generating environmental problems such as noise, pollution, or unacceptable levels of traffic and any alternative employment use would continue to generate similar environmental problems.

12. **NE/4 (Landscape Character Areas)**

Development will only be permitted where it respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the individual Landscape Character Area in which is it located.

**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003**

13. **P1/1 (Approach to Development)** – development sites involving the use of previously developed land and buildings within existing settlements should be afforded the highest priority.
14. **P1/3 (Sustainable Design in Built Development)** requires compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities that responds to the local character of the built environment.

**Consultations**

15. **Castle Camps Parish Council** – Recommendation of refusal, commenting that, “Back building should not be allowed. A previous application for this site (S/2316/05/F) was refused on several criteria. When there is so little development

land in the village, it is a pity that it is being used for such a large house when smaller, low cost housing is what is required. The design is not pleasing.”

16. **Environment Agency** – No objections. Recommendation of a condition for investigation of soil contamination

### **Representations**

17. None received.

### **Planning Comments**

#### ***Siting, scale and design***

18. This site lies in a sensitive position of the fringe of the village, which can be viewed when approaching the settlement from the north. The height of the building has been reduced from earlier schemes, and is now no higher than dwellings that front Haverhill Road, and is lower than Manor House, for example. The roof has been kept simple in appearance on its open eastern elevation, and will be finished with good quality materials. The dwelling will be seen from across the fields to the north, but I consider that the combination of size and appearance of the building, and the opportunity to provide planting on the open boundaries, will be successful in protecting the setting of the countryside from visual harm. The proposal will conform with Policy NE/4.
19. The site lies in a backland position, but on previously developed land where there is a builders yard with an access. I consider that this siting will not harm the existing character of the area, and is in conformity with DP/2 (a) and (f).

#### ***Density***

20. The developable area of the site is an awkward L-shape and is conspicuous from views to the north. In order to comply fully with Policy DP/1 four dwellings would be necessary. The development of four dwellings on this site would add considerably to noise and disturbance to occupiers of existing dwellings that have boundaries onto the site through use of the access, and would be more likely to cause visual harm to the setting of the village and the adjacent countryside. It is not clear that an acceptable layout could be achieved for this number of dwellings because of the awkward shape of the site. I consider that these factors amount to exceptional local circumstances and that the proposal conforms with Policy DP/1.

#### ***Loss of employment site***

21. The use of the site as a builders yard has become inappropriate with the development of residential properties adjacent to it in recent times, because of the potential for noise disturbance. For this reason, I do not consider the loss of employment to be harmful in this case. The proposal conforms with Policy ET/6 (c).

#### ***Other matters***

22. In other respects, including impact on neighbouring amenity and means of access to the highway, the proposal is considered to be satisfactory.

### **Recommendation**

23. Approval of application dated 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007,

## Conditions

1. Standard Condition A - Reason A
2. SC51 Landscaping - RC51
3. SC52 Implementation of landscaping - RC52
4. Prior to the commencement of development, an investigation of the site shall be undertaken to establish the nature and extent of any contamination and any remedial works to deal with contamination. This shall initially consist of a desktop study, which shall include details of the site history, development of a site conceptual model and a preliminary qualitative risk assessment. If any likelihood of contamination is indicated by the initial study, a further detailed site assessment shall be carried out which shall include intrusive investigations and which shall fully characterise the nature, extent and severity of contamination. Recommendations for a remediation strategy and post-remediation validation testing shall be included. Details of the site investigation and any necessary remediation strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The approved remedial work shall be carried out before development commences. (Reason – To protect future occupiers of the hereby permitted building from possible contamination of the site)
5. SC5 (a) external materials - RC a)ii)

## Informatives

As recommended by the Environment Agency.

## Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy**, adopted January 2007  
**ST/6** (Group Villages)
  - **LDF Development Control Policies (2007)**
    - DP/2** (Design of New Development)
    - DP/3** (Development Criteria)
    - DP/7** (Development Frameworks)
    - HG/1** (Housing Density)
    - ET/6** (Loss of Rural Employment to Non-Employment Uses)
    - NE/4** (Landscape Character Areas)
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**
    - P1/1** (Approach to Development)
    - P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development)
2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise: **siting; design and appearance; density.**

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- LDF Development Control Policies (2007)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Files ref S/0925/07/F, S/2316/05/F, S/0143/07/F, S/1265/77/EU.

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