

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

6<sup>th</sup> February 2008

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

---

**S/1857/07/F – PAPWORTH EVERARD**

**Erection of Two Dwellings, Garaging and Revised Access Following Demolition  
of Existing Church**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2007**

**Notes:**

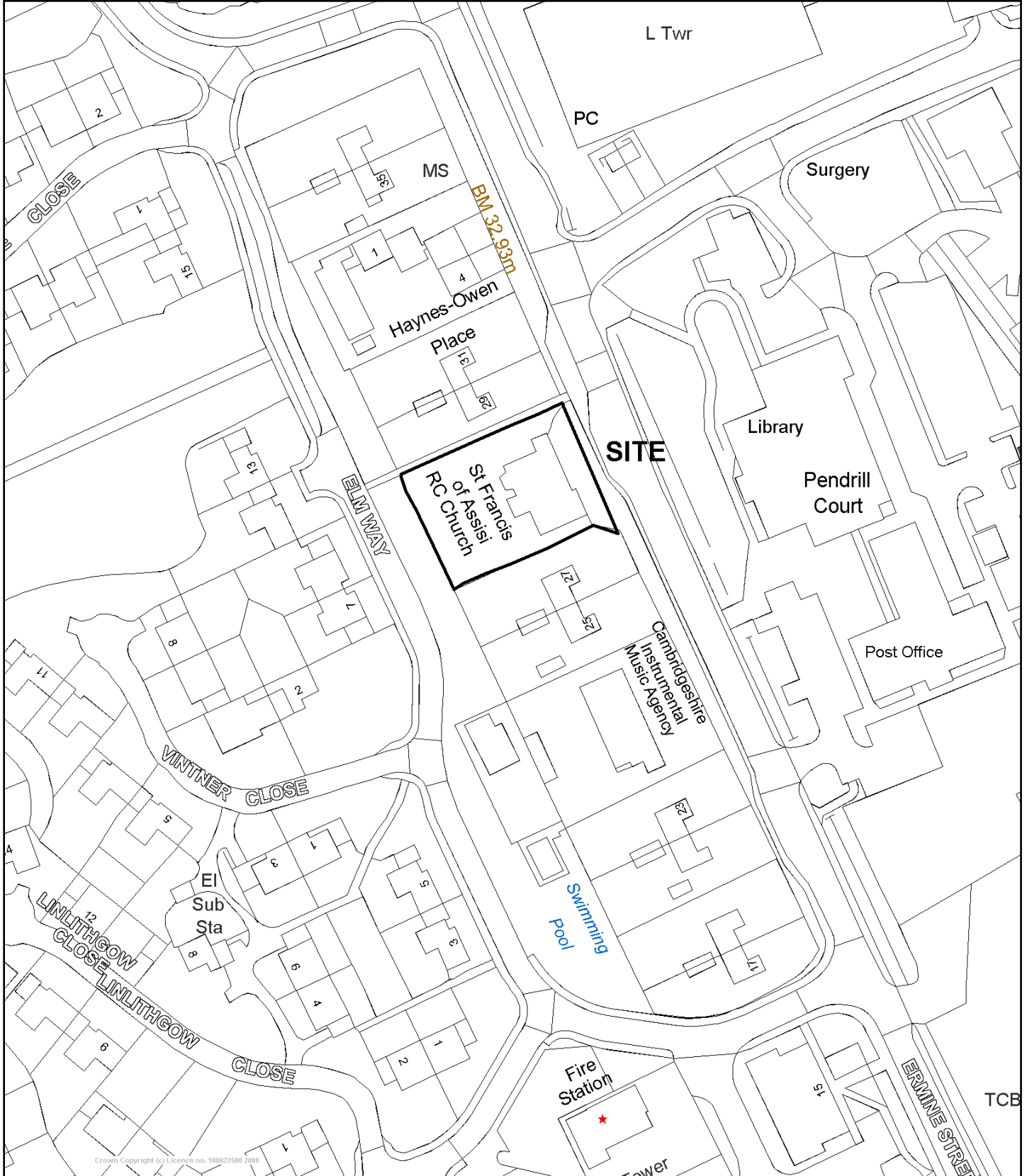
**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the Parish Council recommendation of refusal does not accord with the officer recommendation.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The site, measuring 0.1252 hectares (ha), lies immediately to the west side of Ermine Street, behind a lay-by. On the site at present is an existing single-storey church building, which is currently vacant. This structure broadly fills the width of the plot and is located behind two mature trees that are located on a grassed verge at the site's frontage. The southern most of these trees is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. The remaining boundaries to the site are made up of a dense hedgerow to the south, a row of coniferous trees to the west and a close-boarded fence and pathway to the north. Within the site, immediately to the rear of the existing church building, is an overgrown area of grass and a fruit tree.
2. To the north and south are two-storey dwellings. Both structures are free from facing openings, apart from a single ground floor door in each. Beyond the rear (west) boundary of the site is an area of grassed verge that separates the site from Elm Way.
3. This full planning application, as submitted on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2007, proposes the demolition of the existing vacant church building and its replacement by the erection of two detached dwellings, with single, detached garages to their rear and the creation of a shared access onto Ermine Street. The proposed dwellings are two-storey structures, each providing 4-bedroom accommodation.
4. The scheme equates to a density of 16 dwellings per hectare.

**Planning History**

5. **S/2435/02/O** – proposed the erection of two dwellings on the site, in outline. This application was withdrawn prior to determination.



Crown Copyright (c) Licence no. 100022500 2005



Reproduced from the 2007 Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's stationary office (c) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Scale 1/1250 Date 23/1/2008

Centre = 528440 E 263093 N

February 2008 Planning Committee

6. **S/0752/74/O** – proposed a day nursery/playgroup use on the church site. Consent was granted for a temporary period of two years, after which the proposed works were to be removed from the site and the land be restored.

## **Planning Policy**

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

7. **P1/3 - Sustainable Design in Built Development** requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development, providing a sense of place appropriate to the location, efficient use of energy and resources and account to be taken of community requirements.
8. **Policy P6/1 - Development Related Provision** states development will only be permitted where the additional infrastructure and community requirements generated by the proposals can be secured.
9. **Policy P9/8 - Infrastructure Provision** identifies a coordinated approach to securing infrastructure improvements required to support development for the Cambridge sub-region. A programme encompassing for example, transport, affordable housing and education, amongst others is identified.

### **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007**

10. **Draft Site Specific Policy SP/8 – Papworth Everard Village Development** states that exceptionally, if the re-use or redevelopment of the area to be known as Papworth Everard West Central is required, development above the scale permitted in a Group Village will be permitted. Redevelopment will be based on a mixed-use development aimed at the continued invigoration of the village centre with community uses, employment and housing development. Any scheme for redevelopment must: be well related to, and respect the character of, Papworth Everard village centre; and integrate with the housing allocation to the south.
11. **Policy ST/5 – Minor Rural Centres** identifies Papworth Everard and states that residential development and re-development up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 30 dwellings will be permitted within village frameworks.
12. **Policy ST/6 – Group Villages** states that residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village frameworks of Group Villages.
13. **Policy DP/1 - Sustainable Development** states development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form.
14. **Policy DP/2 - Design of New Development** requires all new development to be of a high quality design and indicates the specific elements to be achieved where appropriate. It also sets out the requirements for Design and Access Statements.
15. **Policy DP/3 - Development Criteria** sets out what all new development should provide, as appropriate to its nature, scale and economic viability and clearly sets out circumstances where development will not be granted on

grounds of an unacceptable adverse impact e.g. residential amenity and traffic generation.

16. **Policy DP/4 - Infrastructure and New Developments** requires that development proposals should include suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. It identifies circumstances where contributions may be required e.g. affordable housing and education.
17. **Policy DP/5 – Cumulative Development** states that development will not be permitted where it:
  - (a) Forms part of a larger site where there would be a requirement for infrastructure provision if developed as a whole;
  - (b) Would result in a piecemeal, unsatisfactory form of development;
  - (c) Would prejudice development of another site adjacent or nearby.
18. **Policy DP/7 - Development Frameworks** states 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.
  - (b). Development would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historic importance, and the amenities of neighbours.
  - (c). There is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development.
19. **Policy HG/1 - Housing Density** is set at a minimum of 30 dph unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment in order to make best use of land. Higher densities of 40 dph will be sought in the most sustainable locations.
20. **Policy HG/3 - Affordable Housing** at a level of 40% of all new dwellings on developments on two or more units is required to meet housing need. The exact proportion, type and mix will be subject to the individual location and the subject of negotiation. Affordable housing should be distributed in small groups or clusters. Financial contributions will be accepted in exceptional circumstances.
21. **Policy SF/1 – Protection of Village Services and Facilities** states that planning permission will be refused for proposals which would result in the loss of a village service, including village pubs, shops, post offices, community meeting places or health centres, where such loss would cause an unacceptable reduction in the level of community or service provision in the locality. The following matters will be considered in determining the significance of the loss:
  - (a) The established use of the premises and its existing and potential contribution to the social amenity of the local population;
  - (b) The presence of other village services and facilities which provide an alternative with convenient access by good local public transport services, or by cycling or walking; and

- (c) The future economic viability of the use including, in appropriate cases, financial information and the results of any efforts to market the premises for a minimum of 12 months at a realistic price.
22. **Policy NE/1 - Energy Efficiency** states development will be required to demonstrate that it would achieve a high degree of measures to increase the energy efficiency of new buildings, for example through location, layout, orientation, aspect and external design.
23. **Policy NE/6 - Biodiversity** requires new developments to aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. The District Council will refuse development that would have an adverse significant impact on the population or conservation status of protected species, priority species or habitat, unless the impact can be adequately mitigated by measures secured by planning conditions. Previously developed land will not be considered to be devoid of biodiversity. The re-use of such sites must be undertaken carefully with regard to existing features of biodiversity interest. Development proposals will be expected to include measures that maintain and enhance important features whilst incorporating them within any development of the site.
24. **Policy NE/9 - Water and Drainage Infrastructure** indicates that planning permission will not be granted where there are inadequate water supply, sewerage or land drainage systems to meet the demands of the development unless there is an agreed phasing agreement between the developer and the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure.
25. **Policy TR/1 - Planning for More Sustainable Travel** states planning permission will not be granted for developments likely to give rise to a material increase in travel demands unless the site has a sufficient standard of accessibility to offer an appropriate choice of travel by public transport or other non-car travel modes. The amount of car parking provision in new developments should be minimised, compatible with their location. Developments should be designed from the outset with permeable layouts to facilitate and encourage short distance trips by cycle and walking. Safe and secure cycle parking shall be provided.
26. **Policy TR/2 - Car and Cycle Parking Standards** states car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's maximum standards, to reduce over reliance on the car and to promote more sustainable forms of transport.

### **Consultations**

27. **Papworth Everard Parish Council** – recommends refusal and comments “the application contravenes SCDC's adopted and draft planning policies. In addition there are specific details and aspects of the site arrangements that are not appropriate when assessing the application on its merits.” The Parish Council's comments in full are included as appendices. A summary of the points raised is as follows:
- (a) Site lies within Submission Site Specific Policy SP/8 area – Papworth West Central
- (b) Development Brief should be prepared for submission site to set out criteria which the District Council will take into account when determining applications.

- (c) Consider that policy requires Development Brief to be agreed before any development should take place.
- (d) No such document has yet been agreed and other applicants have suspended pending applications until such a document has been agreed.
- (e) Grant of consent would therefore be premature and would set a precedent for other sites with the policy area.
- (f) District Council is seeking a land equalisation scheme for site, towards provision of balanced provision of community uses etc across site. Grant of consent for this development would diminish likelihood of successful land equalisation scheme on rest of site.
- (g) Applicant does not acknowledge that site is within SP/8 area.
- (h) Density of housing proposed does not meet policy target.
- (i) Draft SPD identifies site for six cottages.
- (j) Site does not meet affordable housing requirements.
- (k) Proposed access crosses footway near a pelican crossing. Potential danger to children walking to school.
- (l) Hard surface area in front of dwellings is unattractive and out of character in the location
- (m) Disappointed that one of the two mature horse chestnut trees is to be removed.
- (n) Concerns would be addressed if access were re-directed to the rear of the site.
- (o) Any development needs to respect the building line on this side of Ermine Street North.
- (p) Boundaries are to be retained as existing – not appropriate for central village area and replacements should be specified.
- (q) Concern regards due process of application. Understood that application could have been considered at Chairman's delegation meeting.

28. **Local Highways Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) – recommended and requested:**

- (a) Location of garages encourages unnecessary manoeuvring within the site. Would be better relocated closer to properties
- (b) Request radii details for access route, as a minimum 6m
- (c) Proposed access should be at least 5m for the first 5m to permit two cars to pass off the adopted Public Highway
- (d) Two 2.0m x 2.0m visibility splays to be provided within site curtilage, to be secured by condition.
- (e) Informatives should be attached to any consent regarding works in the Public Highway and the need for relevant licences and costs to be sought and borne by the applicant

29. **Housing Projects Officer** – no comments received.

30. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – no comments received.

31. **Cultural Services Manager** – no comments received.

32. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – no comments received.

33. **Principal Planning Policy Officer** – comments that the site lies within an area designated by the Submission Site Specific Policies DPD Policy SP/8,

known as Papworth West Central. Although this plan has yet to be adopted it is a material consideration. The policy requires a holistic approach to the redevelopment of this area that will enhance the village centre. Achieving a mix of uses, including housing, employment and community uses, is an essential element of the policy. Whilst this is a small site in the context of the policy area, it is reasonable and appropriate to require a contribution towards community provision to be achieved offsite, on a scale appropriate to the development proposed.

34. **Archaeology (Cambridgeshire County Council)** – considers it likely that there are important archaeological remains on the site that could be severely damaged or destroyed by the proposed development. A condition requiring a scheme of archaeological investigations in accordance with PPG16 is required.

### **Representations**

35. No representations have been received.

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

36. The key issues in determining this planning application are:
- (a) Location within Submission Site Specific Policy Area SP/8 – Papworth West Central
  - (b) Affordable housing provision,
  - (c) Density and Character,
  - (d) Highways,
  - (e) Loss of Village Service
  - (f) Other Matters

### ***Location within Submission Site Specific Policy Area SP/8 – Papworth West Central***

37. The site is located within the northern peninsula of the Submission policy area, which extends largely to the south of the application site and includes its main body around Church Lane. The site forms a minor area of land, when compared with the size and nature of the allocation as a whole.
38. The submission policy seeks to ensure a mixed-use redevelopment of the site, to include residential development, as well as employment and community uses, that will enhance the village centre.
39. Considering the concerns raised in respect of the prematurity of the application, and the potential precedent that this would set for future developments, I am mindful of Para. 17 of the Communities and Local Government's publication *The Planning System: General Principles* which states that "in some circumstances, it may be justifiable to refuse planning permission on grounds of prematurity where a DPD is being prepared or is under review, but it has not yet been adopted. This may be appropriate where a proposed development is so substantial, or where the cumulative effect would be so significant, that granting permission could prejudice the DPD by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development which are being addressed in the policy in the DPD. A proposal

for development which has an impact on only a small area would rarely come into this category.”

40. As the proposal seeks consent for residential development on a small site within the policy area, the scheme would not, in principle, conflict with the aims of the submission policy and would therefore not be considered premature against Government guidance. Whilst the comments of the Parish Council are noted in respect of its consideration that the policy also requires a Development Brief to be prepared prior to any schemes being determined, this is not so. The policy advises that a Development Brief will be prepared to inform the whole-scale redevelopment of the site, but does not require it as a necessity prior to considering individual applications. Additionally considering the nature of the draft Development Brief, the Parish Council highlights that the site has been identified in that process as offering potential for residential development. By virtue of its size and location, and the nature of development proposed, therefore, the development of this parcel of land is not considered to significantly prejudice the application of the submission policy.
41. Whilst this is a small site in the context of the policy area, and the site specific policy is not formally adopted, the submission policy does serve to add weight to the basic criteria within Policy DP/4 of the LDF which seeks to ensure that a balanced range of development and services is forthcoming within villages. It is therefore considered reasonable and appropriate to require a contribution towards community provision to be achieved offsite, on a scale appropriate to the development proposed. This could be secured through the completion of a S106 Agreement. It is considered that this would serve to further satisfy the mixed-use aims of the submission policy, by securing facilities that could be provided off-site, but to the benefit of the village. The comments of the Cultural Services Manager, in respect of any likely requirement for community provision, are awaited. Any comments received will be reported verbally at Committee.

### ***Affordable Housing***

42. Parish Council has noted that the development did not originally propose any contribution towards affordable housing. Since the time of the original submission, the applicants have indicated a willingness to consider that one of the dwellings be given over as an affordable unit of accommodation, which would satisfy the criteria set out in Policy HG/3, in respect of the sought level of provision on site.

### ***Density and Character***

43. The street scene within the vicinity of the site is characterised by large, two storey structures, that are located approximately 15m back from the rear of the public footway. The scheme proposes the erection of two detached dwellings, of similar scale and proportions to other dwellings that are located within the vicinity, and set back from the public highway a similar distance, approximately 13.5m. The density for the proposed development equates to approximately 16 dwellings per hectare, which is below the level typically sought within the Authority (30dph typical). With the addition of the mature Horse Chestnut tree at the site's frontage and the relationship of the site with adjoining buildings, the developable area of the site is such that the site is considered to demand an alternative design approach. Considering matters of design, scale and form, and the relationship with existing buildings, which are



located broadly at the same distance back from the public highway, the proposed scheme, is considered to provide a satisfactory level and form of development that reflects the character of existing buildings within the street scene.

### ***Highways***

- 44 Whilst I note the concerns raised in respect of the proximity of the proposed access to the existing pelican crossing I am mindful that the Local Highway Authority ('the LHA') has not raised a specific objection to the access point, subject to a number of outstanding issues being addressed. The basic layout and principle of development on this site and its access point onto Ermine Street is therefore acceptable. Incidents of conflict between users of the site access and the footway and driveway would be resolved through appropriate visibility splays at the point of entry to the site. Sufficient space exists within the site for the LHA requirements to be achieved. The agent has discussed the points raised, in respect of the provision of additional and amended details, and has indicated that revised plans will be submitted shortly to address the comments made. Any additional details received will be reported verbally at the meeting. Where necessary specific details could be controlled by conditions of consent.
- 45 In respect of the concerns raised with regard to the appropriateness of the hard standing in front of the proposed dwellings, I note that other properties in the immediate vicinity have gravelled areas that cover the site frontage. As such, subject to appropriate materials being agreed, I am of the opinion that this aspect of the development would not be unduly out of character with the area, such as to warrant refusal.

### ***Loss of Village Service***

- 46 The applicants have detailed that the Church ceased operating from the site approximately 10 months ago, due to the condition of the existing buildings on site and the significant cost of repair. They state that since the time of the closure alternative provision for worship has been secured in the village with the Methodist Church, which is located about 150 metres away on Church Street.. The removal of the Church buildings and use would therefore not lead to an unacceptable reduction in the provision of such services within the village, and would therefore not prevent an alternative, appropriate use for the site being found.
- 47 The applicants have investigated the alternative conversion of some of the existing buildings on site for residential development, but have decided to pursue the demolition of existing structures and replacement as they consider this to be the most appropriate alternative use for the site.

### ***Other Matters***

- 48 The comments of the Trees and Landscape Officer are awaited in respect of the proposed landscape details, including the proximity of the proposed development from the protected Horse Chestnut tree on the site frontage. However, the scheme has been designed to keep the development away from the crown spread of that tree, save for the proposed access in front of the southern of the two dwellings. As such, subject to appropriate 'no dig' construction methods being used for the access, no harm should arise to that

tree. Whilst the loss of the other mature tree on the site frontage is regrettable, the Authority's trees team have previously inspected it and deemed that its health and condition means it is not worthy of being protected by Preservation Order. As such, its retention cannot be insisted upon. In respect of the proposed boundary treatment, it is considered that the existing boundary treatment could be improved upon to enhance and assimilate the development into the street scene. A condition of consent would secure an appropriate scheme be agreed prior to development commencing.

- 49 Other matters that can be dealt with through the imposition of planning conditions include: drainage, bin and cycle storage, and archaeology.

### **Recommendation**

- 50 Approve - Subject to the prior completion of a S106 Agreement in regard to affordable housing and to community provision and to no new material planning objections being received from the outstanding consultations and subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
2. Drainage
3. Bin and cycle storage
4. Archaeology
5. Landscaping
6. Implementation of landscaping
7. Tree protection
8. Permanent retention of car parking, including within garages
9. Details of boundary treatments
10. External Materials for Dwellings
11. Materials for hard surfaced areas
12. Visibility splays
13. Access widths

### **Informatives**

1. Piled foundations,
2. Demolition
3. Bonfires

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning file refs. S/1857/07/F, S/2435/02/O and S/0752/74/O

**Contact Officer:** Michael Osbourn – Senior Assistant Planning Officer (Acting)  
Telephone: (01954) 713379