

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6th February 2008

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

**S/2125/07/F - WILLINGHAM
Erection of 19 Affordable Dwellings
Recommendation: Approval**

Date for Determination: 6th February 2008 (Major Application)

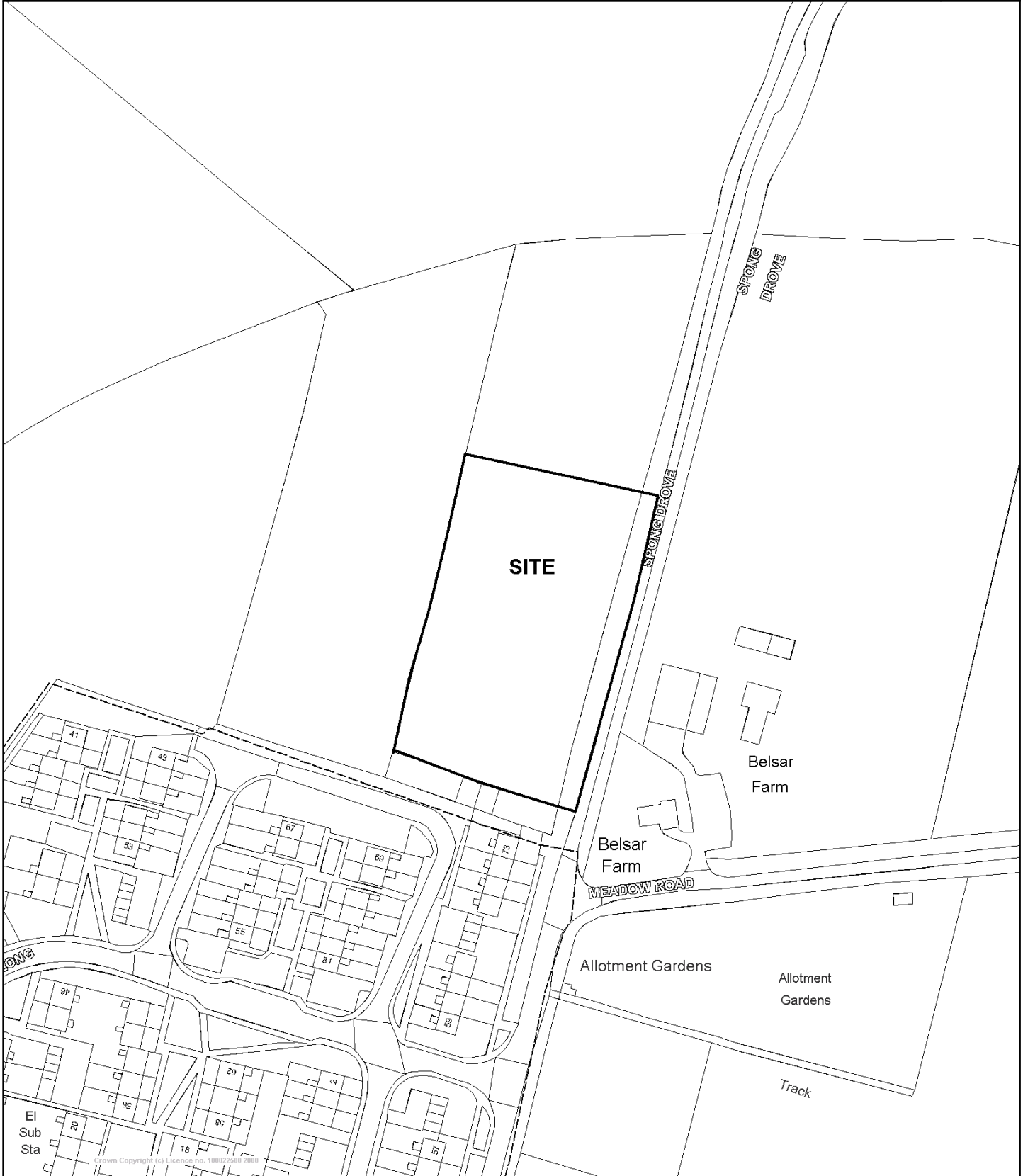
Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because it is for affordable housing on an exception site.

Members will visit this site on Wednesday 6th February 2008.

Site and Proposal

1. The site, measuring 0.60 hectares (ha), lies immediately to the west of Spong Drove. It is located to the north of the existing residential developments at Rockmill End and Wilford Furlong and comprises an area of largely flat, grassed field.
2. It is surrounded by mature hedgerows that form the boundaries with a field access, that separates the site from Wilford Furlong; other fields to the west; and Spong Drove to the east. There is a significant mature tree located immediately adjacent to the south-east corner of the site, on the approach from the village. Three other mature trees are located along the western edge of the site. The northern boundary of the application site is currently undefined, located in the middle of the open field of which the application site is part.
3. Spong Drove is presently a single width, unadopted, road that leads north towards the River Great Ouse.
4. This full planning application, as submitted on the 7th November 2007, proposes the erection of 19 affordable dwellings, an area of open space for play, the widening of Spong Drove to the point of access into the site, internal roadways, parking spaces and internal landscaping. The proposed dwellings comprise 4 one-bedroom flats, to be provided in a two-storey structure; 8 two-bedroom semi-detached houses; 6 three-bedroom semi-detached houses and 1 four-bedroom detached house. An amendment has been received on the 17th January 2008, illustrating visibility splays serving accesses within the estate, enhanced landscape proposals and revisions to the elevational treatment for plots 1-4, 5/6, 9/10, 11/12 and 17/18.
5. The scheme equates to a density of 32 dwellings per hectare.



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Scale 1/1711 Date 24/1/2008

Centre = 540931 E 270884 N

February 2008 Planning Committee

Planning History

6. There is no relevant planning history for the site.

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. **Policy ST/5 – Minor Rural Centres** identifies Willingham and states that residential development and re-development up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 30 dwellings will be permitted within village frameworks. Where development of a larger scale (9 to 30 dwellings) would place a material burden on the existing village services and facilities the District Council will use its powers under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure financial contributions at an appropriate level towards their development or improvement.
11. **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.
12. **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.
13. **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.
14. **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.

15. **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.
16. **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.
17. **Policy HG/2 - Housing Mix** requires affordable housing to be of an appropriate mix to respond to identified needs at the time of the development, in accordance with HG/3
18. **Policy HG/5 - Exceptions Sites for Affordable Housing** states that as an exception planning permission for 100% affordable housing may be granted subject to it meeting identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. Such housing will relate well to the built-up area and village services, its scale will be appropriate to the size and character of the village, it should not damage the character of the village or rural landscape and it shall be secured in perpetuity.
19. **Policy SF/6 - Public Art and New Development** states in determining planning applications the District Council will encourage the provision or commissioning of publicly accessible art, craft and design works. The Policy will apply to residential developments comprising 10 or more dwellings.
20. **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.
21. **Policy NE/3 - Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development** states all development proposals greater than 10 dwellings will include technology for renewable energy to provide at least 10% of their predicted energy requirement.
22. **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.

23. **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.
24. **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.
25. **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.
26. **Policy TR/4 - Non-motorised Modes** states the District Council will use its planning powers by ensuring that all new developments are designed at the outset to facilitate and encourage short distance trips between home, work, schools and for leisure.

Consultations

27. **Willingham Parish Council** – recommends approval (no comments).
28. **Local Highways Authority**– requested:
 - (a) Two 2.0m x 2.0m visibility splays to all car parking spaces (within dwelling curtilages where applicable), be secured by condition.
 - (b) a section 106 for the provision of the new footway and full reconstruction of the existing road to the widths as shown on the drawings
 - (c) the clarification of the proposed position of parking bays 33 and 34 in the event of future development proceeding
 - (d) a cartographic error with reference to the Local Area for Play be corrected.
29. **Housing Projects Officer** – unanimous support for development on this exception site for local people. Happy with numbers proposed, will partly address the housing needs for the village and seems well related to village amenities. Mix proposed as 11 rental units and 8 shared ownership.
30. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – considers that extension of development into small fields risks loss of small-scale agricultural pattern. However, positioning of housing entirely within field, with retention of existing field boundary and new hedge is reasonable compromise. Proximity of close boarded fence to hedgerow is a concern. Recommends alternative boundary treatments. Seek management plan for planting and comprehensive planting scheme. Tree protection will be required for the existing trees on adjacent fields.

31. **Old West Internal Drainage Board** – no comment received.
32. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue** – request that adequate provision for fire hydrants be made by way of Section 106 agreement or planning condition.
33. **Environment Operations Manager** – no comment received.
34. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – no comments received.
35. **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.
36. **Environment Agency** – comments surface water run-off should be controlled as near to its source as possible through a sustainable drainage approach to surface water management (SUDS). Where it is intended that disposal is made to public sewer, the Water Company or its agents should confirm that there is adequate spare capacity in the existing system taking future development requirements into account.
37. **Anglian Water** – no comments received.

Representations

38. The owner/occupier of 55 Fen End has raised the following concerns/comments:
 - (a) Site is outside the planning line and will be ribbon development leading into the fen
 - (b) SCDC has previously opposed this type of Greenfield development in Willingham. No reason to change this policy.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

39. The key issues in determining this planning application are:
 - (a) Affordable housing provision,
 - (b) Highways,
 - (c) Drainage,
 - (d) Landscaping
 - (e) Other Matters

Affordable Housing

40. An affordable housing panel was held on the 11th January 2008. Parish Council and Local Councillors were represented. The Housing Projects Officer, Development Control Manager and Case Officer were also in attendance.
41. The site is located outside, but immediately adjacent to, the village development framework. As such the scheme must satisfy the exception site criteria, set out in Policy HG/5 of the Local Development Framework ('the LDF').

42. In respect of the aforementioned criteria, the scheme proposes that all the dwellings that are to be provided are affordable, with a mix of 11 rental units and 8 equity share units. At the panel meeting it was confirmed that there is need for affordable units within the village in excess of the number and type proposed by this scheme. The scheme was therefore considered to be compatible with the requirement to service the specific local need. It was also confirmed that the mix of tenure and property type being provided is compatible with local need in the village.
43. The panel requested that the applicants consider revisions to the mix of materials and minor design features for the dwellings, to visually enhance the development. The applicants have submitted revised elevational treatments, in an attempt to address these comments. Any comments that are received in respect of these alterations will be reported verbally at Committee.
44. The site, by virtue of its proximity to the existing residential estates to the south, was considered to relate well to the built-up area of the village. Furthermore, it is close to the services and facilities that are located along Church Street and High Street, which are within walking distance.
45. Although the scheme proposes a cluster of 19 affordable units on one single development, it was considered that the scale of the proposal is acceptable and proportional to the size and character of the village of Willingham.

Highways

46. The layout is acceptable in principle. The agent has submitted additional details, in respect of provision of visibility splays, which appear to satisfy the comments made by the Local Highway Authority in that regard. Any additional comments received will be reported verbally at the meeting. It is understood that the proposed section 106 agreement is acceptable, although footway provision and the widening of Spong Drove can be required by planning condition.

Drainage

47. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 (Low Risk), as identified by the Environment Agency. As such the application is not required to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. However, The Old West Internal Drainage Board has a drain that is located near the southern boundary of the site. This is not anticipated to cause any additional flood risk to the site, in light of the Environment Agency's comments and the applicant's proposed methods of surface water disposal. However, any comments received from the Drainage Board will be reported verbally to members.
48. The comments of Anglian Water are awaited in respect of foul water disposal and the residual capacity within the recipient system to cope with the additional requirements arising from this development. Any comments received will be reported verbally to Committee. Notwithstanding this point, however, the applicants and Anglian Water have various obligations under the Land Drainage Act that would need to be satisfied separately from any planning requirements, to ensure adequate provision of facilities.

Landscaping

49. The outline landscape details that have been provided by the applicants are acceptable, in principle. Additionally, the enhancements sought by Officers have been addressed, in part, by the submitted amendment. Specific boundary treatments and planting schedules could be secured by appropriate planning conditions. Tree Protection measures, to ensure that existing mature trees are unharmed by the proposed development, can also be secured by condition.

Other Matters

Renewable Energy

50. The applicants have stated that the scheme will meet the 10% renewable energy requirements as set out in Policies NE/2 and NE/3 of the LDF. Roof-mounted solar water heating panels or ground heat recovery systems are being considered by the applicants, who are willing to agree an appropriate scheme with the Authority. A condition of consent can require agreement of a scheme prior to development commencing.

Open Space

51. The scheme provides a Local Area for Play measuring approximately 100sqm. The applicants have previously agreed a separate capital contribution for the provision of off-site outdoor sport facilities, that can be secured through a formal section 106 agreement.

Refuse Management

52. Although the comments of the Environment Operations Manager are awaited, it is noted that the applicants have indicated spaces to be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling for the storage of refuse bins, at a distance within the draft waste design guide standards. A large turning area is provided centrally within the site's road layout that would meet Manual for Streets standards to enable refuse vehicles to turn within the site, enabling access for collection staff.

Archaeology

53. The comments of the County Archaeologist are noted. The imposition of relevant planning conditions can ensure that a scheme of archaeological investigation takes place prior to development commencing.

Recommendation

54. Approve - Subject to no new material planning objections being received from the outstanding consultations; and completion of a section 106 securing affordable housing provision, outdoor sport facilities and highway alterations, subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. Drainage
 3. Renewable energy
 4. Archaeology

5. Landscaping
6. Implementation of landscaping
7. Tree protection
8. Retention of car parking, including within garages
9. Details of boundary treatments
10. Materials
11. Materials for hard surfaced areas
12. Visibility splays
13. Lighting scheme
14. Provision of fire hydrants
15. Scheme of affordable housing
16. Scheme for the provision and maintenance of open space
17. Footway provision
18. Scheme for the widening of Spong Drove.

Informatives

1. Piled foundations,
2. Demolition
3. Bonfires
4. Bird boxes

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/2125/07/F

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