

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th June 2008

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

S/2048/06/F - WILLINGHAM

Siting of 1 Gypsy Mobile Home, 2 Touring Caravans and Amenity Block at 2 The Willow, R/O Green Acre, Meadow Road for Mrs C Smith

Recommendation: Temporary Approval

Date for Determination: 18th December 2006

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

Members will recall that at the February Meeting (Agenda Item 7), which is attached as an Appendix to this report, it was resolved that the application be refused on the basis that local service providers could not cope with additional pressure. Should there be no such evidence, the application would be referred back to Committee.

Update

Travellers and Housing Support Team leader

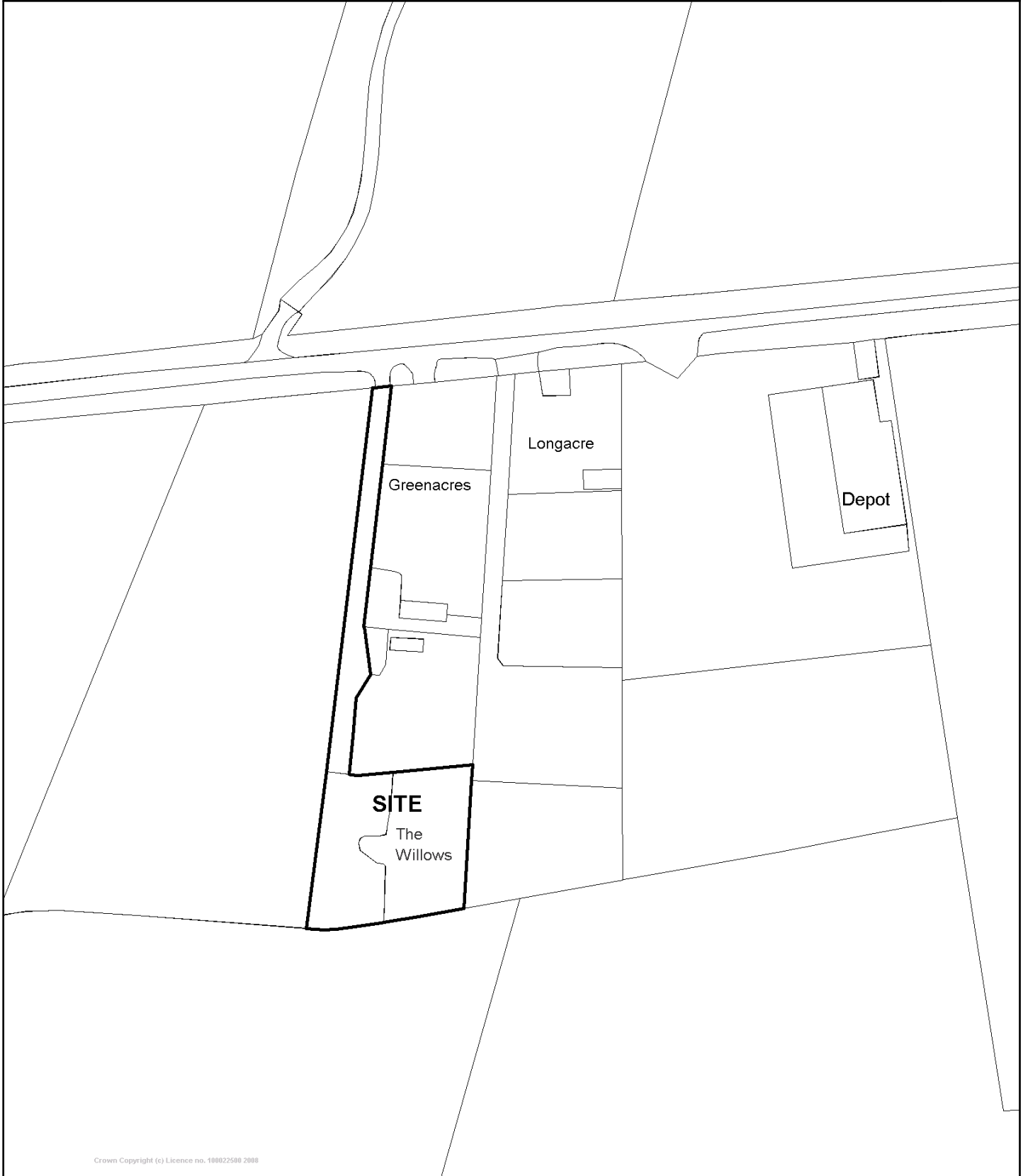
1. I have been in touch with the applicant and Team for Traveller Education at the County Council. Mrs C Smith's application for planning permission was registered with South Cambridgeshire District Council in October 2006. The applicants' two children have been in education prior to, and since, the planning application was submitted.
2. Mrs C Smith's children's need are being met locally already and as such the approval of this application would have no additional call on places at local schools.
3. Any children in need of specialist support in respect of their educational needs are provided with such services regardless of their ethnicity. I would be concerned if the assumption was made that all Gypsy and Traveller children need specialist support in their education, as this could be perceived to be judgmental.

Planning Policy

4. The relevant Development Plan documents are referred to in Agenda Item 7.

Consultation

5. Consultee responses to the application are outlined in Agenda Item 7.



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Further representations from the applicant

6. My daughter Theresa has undertaken work experience in Willingham as part of her year 10 schooling programme. Since the lodging of the application in 2006 I have obtained work locally in Willingham and Cottenham Co-op. My family and I are at our most settled in a very long time but the undetermined planning application of November 2006 still leaves us in a state of instability in respect of planning for our future.

Planning Comments

7. As a result of the January meeting the key issue that needs to be addressed is whether there is evidence of an inability of local service providers to cope with the additional pressure of the proposal.
8. In this case, it is difficult to determine which "local service providers" should be used in the assessment of whether the proposal would cause an unacceptable pressure on its provision. The applicant has been working in the village, living on the site for 2 years and her children attend the local school.
9. There have been no adverse comments from, The Chief Environmental Health Officer, Traveller Liaison Officer, of the consultees. Drainage will be conditioned and subject to further approval. This would include a requirement to demonstrate that connection to public foul water sewer is not available.
10. The County Council Team for Traveller education has confirmed that the approval of this application would have no additional call on places at local schools.
11. The applicant has been registered with the Willingham GP for about 18 months and was registered with them for approximately 7 years when she was last resident on the site. There would therefore be no additional pressure on the local medical practice if this application were approved.
12. The GTPD is still at consultation stage. The Parish Council has concerns about the cumulative impact of Traveller sites within the Parish. There is an injunction on land within Willingham to prevent the establishment of new Traveller sites in the Parish. The planning approach in this interim period to existing occupied travellers site has been to grant a temporary planning consent on a without prejudice basis. This approach takes into account adopted government guidance and complies with the Local Development Plan. This is not a new travellers site. Mrs Smith has long established connections with the area. The planning principle of determining this application should be on the same basis as other occupied sites.
13. Plot 2 has not been created by subdivision of an adjacent plot. The site is currently well-screened from the south by an established hedge. As stated in my previous report I am confident that appropriate landscaping within the site could take place to reduce the impact of the structures on the site. I am of the view that the proposal would not be detrimental to the visual appearance of the countryside and rural character of the area.
14. It seems to me in the absence of any indication that the proposal would cause an unacceptable strain on the level of local service provision there are no planning grounds for refusing this application.

15. Should this application be refused and an appeal is lodged, the Council would have to demonstrate that approval of this application would place an unacceptable burden on village services. This would be over and above that generated by existing gypsy sites. There is no evidence of this; particularly as the Smith family already works and resides in the village and attend the local school. In these circumstances, the appellant could well succeed in an award of costs against the Council.

Recommendation

16. That temporary permission is granted for 3 years subject to conditions including a requirement to provide proper landscaping and drainage.

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

- Government Circular 1/2006
- PPS3 Housing
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development framework Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document Issues and Options Report October 2006.
- Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment 2006
- Planning Application Files Ref S/1420/91/F, S/0898/91/F
- Agenda Item 7. Report to February 2008 Planning Committee.

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