

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6th August 2008

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

S/0805/08/O - WIMPOLE

3 Affordable Houses, 72A The Cottages, Wimpole Woodyard, Cambridge Road for Mr R Foster

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 1st July 2008

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as it relates to an exception site for affordable housing.

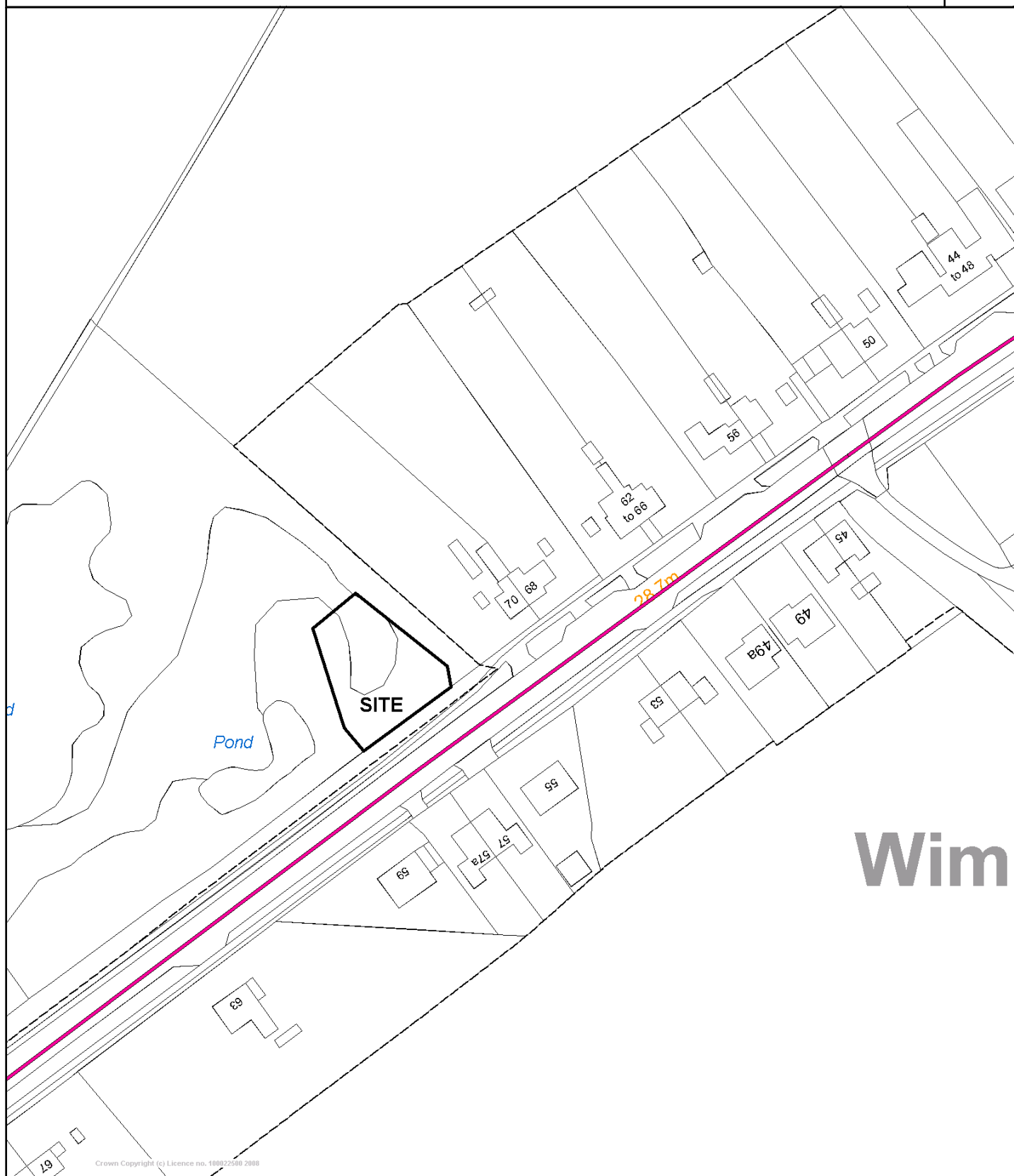
Members will visit this site on Wednesday 6th August 2008.

Site and Proposal

1. This outline application, received on 6th May 2008, proposes the erection of a terrace of three 3-bedroom affordable dwellings on a 0.3ha area of land associated with the former woodyard site in Cambridge Road (A603).
2. A new single vehicular access, 4m wide, is to be formed to Cambridge Road serving all three new dwellings, with parking provided for 4 vehicles and a shared turning area. The proposed dwellings are shown sited 13m back from the road and will have a ridge height of between 7.5 and 8.25m.
3. Two new market dwellings (see History below) to the south west of the application site, within the area of the old woodyard are currently in the course of construction.
4. To the north east of the site is a pair of semi-detached houses. A 4m wide strip of land has been left between the application site and the boundary with these adjacent properties. Opposite the site are residential dwellings.
5. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.
6. The density of the scheme is 15 dph.
7. The site is outside but adjoining the village framework.

Planning History

8. Planning consent was granted in 2006 for the erection of two dwellings on the former woodyard site as a departure from the Development Plan (Ref: **S/0031/06/F**). That application indicated that the applicant would be prepared to provide an area at the north east end of the site for the construction of two affordable dwellings. A Section 106 Agreement was entered into requiring either the provision of two affordable



Reproduced from the 2008 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 21/7/2008

Centre = 534722 E 249857 N

August 2008 Planning Committee

dwelling (subject to obtaining the appropriate planning consent) or the payment of a commuted sum in lieu of such provision.

9. A revised planning application for the two market dwellings on the site was approved in 2007 (**Ref: S/1407/07/F**). The houses are currently under construction.

Planning Policy

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007

10. **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.
11. **Policy HG/2 - Housing Mix** Affordable housing should be of an appropriate mix to respond to identified needs at the time of the development in accordance with HG/3
12. **Policy HG/3 - Affordable Housing** occupation will be limited to people in housing need and must be available over the long-term. The appropriate mix in terms of housing tenures and house sizes of affordable housing will be determined by local circumstances at the time of planning permission, including housing need and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities. In order to ensure sustainable communities, affordable housing will be distributed through the development in small groups or clusters.
13. **Policy HG/5 – Exception Sites for Affordable Housing** states that as an exception to the normal operation of the policies of this plan, planning permission may be granted for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. The following criteria will all have to be met:
 - (a) The development proposal includes secure arrangements for ensuring that all the dwellings within the scheme provide affordable housing in perpetuity for those in housing need;
 - (b) The number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confined to, and appropriate to, the strict extent of the identified local need;
 - (c) The site of the proposal is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village;
 - (d) The site is well related to facilities and services within the village;
 - (e) The development does not damage the character of the village or the rural landscape.
14. **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.
15. **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.

16. **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. village character and residential amenity.
17. **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.
18. **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.
19. **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.
20. **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.
21. **Policy NE/12 – Water Conservation** states that development must incorporate all practicable water conservation measures.
22. **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.
23. **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.
24. **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.

Consultation

Wimpole Parish Council recommends refusal commenting:

25. "The Council understood that only 2 houses would be built. Parking allocated is inadequate. Some flooding has occurred in recent years. It is essential that the adequacy of the electrical and sewage systems are checked in view of the new building on both sides of the road. A significant number of residents attended the PC meeting to express opposition."
26. The **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** requests that a condition is attached to any consent requiring the submission of a scheme for the investigation and recording of any contamination of the site, along with remediation objectives.
27. The **Local Highway Authority** requests the provision of visibility splays and that the drawing show the dimensions of parking spaces and reversing space. Conditions should be attached to any consent securing the splays and the maintenance of the manoeuvring area. Provision should be shown for cycle parking. The access should be widened to a minimum of 4.8m, although 5.5m would be preferable. The applicants should be asked to consider accessing the development through the existing main entrance to the site. The Highway Authority states that it will seek the upgrading of the existing footpath to a minimum width of 1.5m along the frontage of the development under a Section 106 Agreement.
28. The **Environment Agency** comments that it assumes that drainage will be as the previous scheme for the main site and has commented accordingly. It points out that the issue of ground contamination remains unresolved.
29. The comments of the **Ecology Officer, Trees and Landscapes Officer, Housing Development and Enabling Manager** and the **Affordable Housing Panel** will be reported at the meeting.

Representations

30. The occupier of No 70 Cambridge Road, the property immediately to the north east of the site, makes the following comments.

The application states that the site is not recorded on the Environment Agency maps within any flood zones and is therefore not at risk of flooding, however the site was flooded recently (in April or May) and this was not the first time. The waters of the main lake and the pond shown adjacent to the proposed cottages "joined-up", and the combined waters came to within 4m of the boundary with No70 and certainly covered part of the designated area for the proposed cottages.

The proposed car parking provision appears inadequate when looking at the experience of other new developments in the area and given that it is not possible to park on the road outside the houses. When a planning application was submitted for an extension to No 70 the owner was advised that two additional parking spaces should be provided.

There is concern about the extra loading on village utilities. The electricity for the village is fed by 2 transformers and previous conversations with electricity field engineers have indicated that both units are pretty much overloaded. Recently there

have been a number of occasions when dimmed lights have occurred and low voltage warnings issued by power supplies in the house.

Have any checks been made on the capacity of the electricity supply, sewage and water supply?

All the existing houses on this side of the road are semi-detached. As the original proposal was for 2 houses why is a terrace of 3 now being considered.

31. The occupiers of 55 Cambridge Road, opposite the site strongly object for the following reasons.
- (a) Not enough services in the village and neighbouring villages for education to accommodate more dwellings
 - (b) All new development within the village has been on brownfield sites, this is a Greenfield site.
 - (c) The location of the site is where common spotted and bee orchids have been found which now have to be relocated.
 - (d) In winter months when there is heavy rain the site is flooded
 - (e) Access to Cambridge Road will cause traffic problems
 - (f) Additional strain on drainage system which is already at capacity
 - (g) Inadequate parking provision which will lead to parking on the grass verge causing visibility obstructions.
 - (h) Trees will need to be removed to form the new entrance opening up views from properties on the opposite side of the road.
 - (i) Why has the proposal been increased to three dwellings?

Planning Comments – Key Issues

32. The key issues to consider with this application is whether the scheme complies with the criteria for exception sites in Policy HG/5
33. The planning consent for the erection of the two market dwellings on the former woodyard site required either the erection of two affordable dwellings, subject to obtaining the necessary planning consent, or the payment of a sum in lieu of their provision. The previous application indicated that the north east corner of the land was where these dwellings might be sited. The Section 106 Agreement did not specify the size of the unit but required one to be for rent and one for shared equity lease.
34. The current application proposes the erection of 3 affordable dwellings rather than 2. I have no objection to this change in principle provided that the additional affordable unit can be demonstrated to be in line with the proven local need for the village. I will report the comments of the Housing Development and Enabling Manager on this point.
35. An Affordable Housing Panel will need to be convened to discuss the proposal.

36. I am of the view that the site complies with the criteria in Policy HG/5 in that it is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and that the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village. Although one of the neighbours has pointed out that the existing dwellings on this side of Cambridge Road are semi-detached, I do not consider that a well-designed small terrace of three dwellings would be inappropriate.
37. As an infill village the level of facilities and services are limited but existing development on the opposite side of Cambridge Road extends beyond the site to the south west so I consider it to be as well related as existing properties.
38. Provided there is a high quality of design achieved, with appropriate landscaping I consider that the development will not materially harm the character of the village or the rural landscape although I will want to look at the maximum height of the units proposed to ensure that it is keeping with the existing properties to the north east
39. I note the comments made about highway safety, including those of the Local Highway Authority. An amended plan will be sought increasing the width of the access as required. As the site can be said to be in a poorly accessible areas, and acknowledging the difficulty of parking on the A603, I am of the view that, as the dwellings proposed are 3-bedroom, the provision of two parking spaces per dwelling should be sought. This is in line with the adopted standards of the Local Development Framework and an amendment to the existing layout will be sought.
40. The Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) requests a condition regarding the investigation into possible contamination of the site. Although the applicant has indicated that this work has been carried out as part of the conditions attached to the planning consent for the erection of the two market dwellings the Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) is of the view that insufficient investigative work would have been carried out in this part of the site and further work needs to be done.
41. I have written to Anglian Water requesting that it confirms whether or not the existing foul water drainage system is adequate to cater for the additional development proposed. I will reports the comments received.
42. The views of the Trees and Landscapes Officer and Ecology Officer will be reported at the meeting. Both officers have been involved in the existing planning consents for this site and are therefore aware of this possible development.
43. I have asked the applicant to comment on the local concerns about flooding of this part of the site and if necessary a flood risk assessment will be requested.

Recommendation

44. Provided that the Housing and Development Manager supports the scheme and that any issues regarding access, parking, drainage, ecology and landscaping can be resolved I will seek delegated powers to grant outline planning permission subject to safeguarding conditions.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007
- Planning Files Ref: S/0805/08/O, S/1407/07/F and S/0031/06/F

Case Officer: Paul Sexton – Principal Planning Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713255