

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6th August 2008

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

S/0686/08/F - COTTENHAM
Erection of Thirteen Dwellings at Land North of Orchard Close
For Kelsey/Dominion Housing Association

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 9th July 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 outside the village framework. It was withdrawn from the 2nd July 2008 agenda.

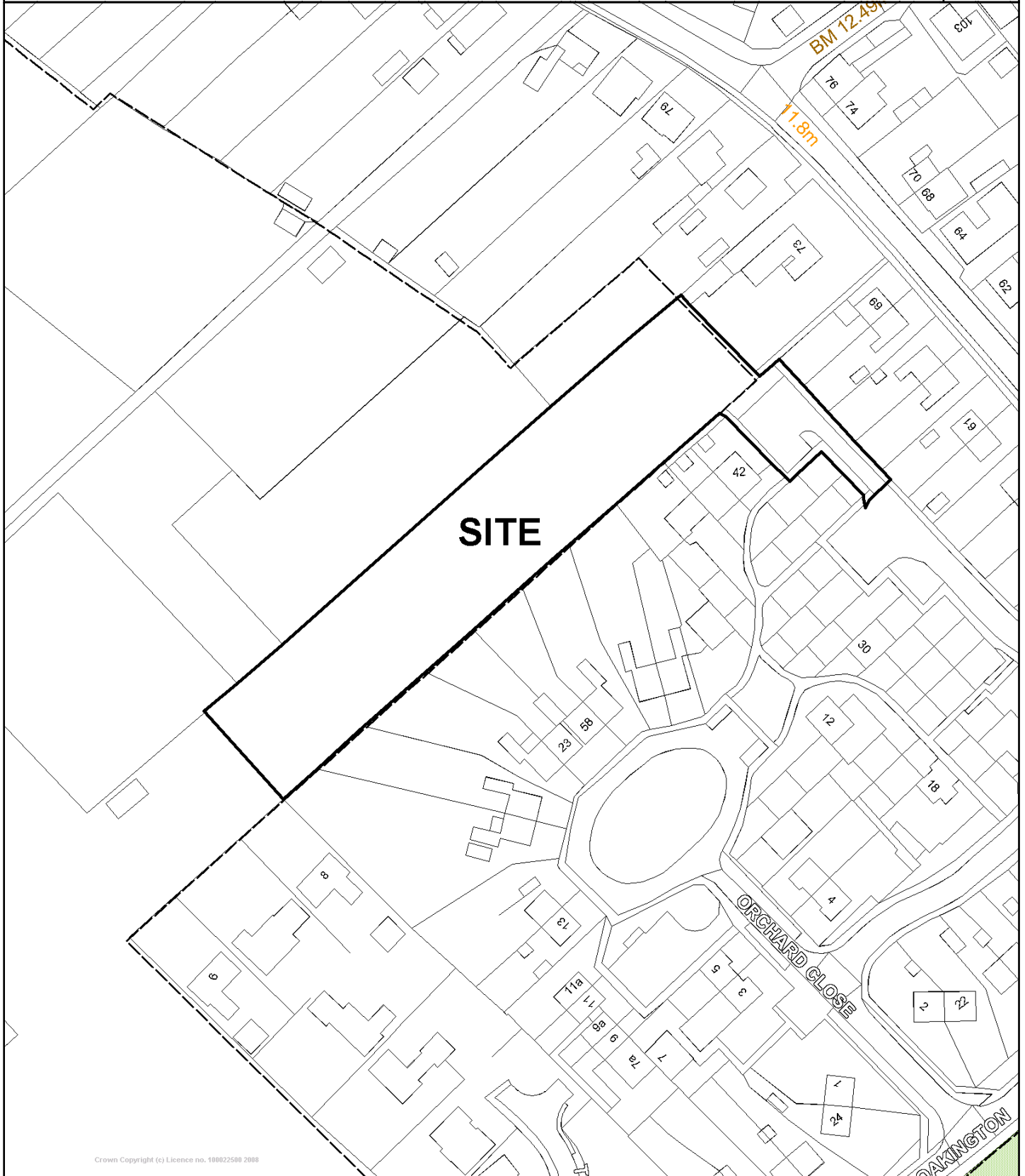
Members will visit this site on 6th August 2008

Site and Proposal

1. The application site, measuring 0.46 hectares, is a field to the north of Orchard Close on the western side of the village. It comprises an existing roadway serving a small car parking area and an arable field. There are gardens adjoining to the southeast, northeast and the northwestern end of the site. Orchards and fields beyond the site to the northwest and southwest bound the remainder of the site. The site is accessed via the car parking court off Orchard Close. A small number of trees mark the car park edge and a field hedge to the northwestern boundary. A post and rail fence marks the southwestern boundary.
2. This full planning application received on 9th April 2008, amended on 27th June 2008, proposes the erection of thirteen affordable homes at a density of 28.26 dwellings per hectare (dph), comprising:
 - 7 no. 2-bedroomed bungalow/houses;
 - 4 no. 2-bedroomed flats;
 - 1 no. 3-bedroomed houses and;
 - 1 no. 4-bedroomed house.

Access will be via the existing point off Orchard Close and will require the alteration of the existing access point and re-provision of 5 resident parking spaces. 29 parking spaces to serve the development are proposed, including 5 that are to replace some of the spaces lost from the existing parking court.

3. The application was discussed at an affordable housing panel on 18th June 2008 and following this discussion and the submission of representations was amended to address issues with the layout and house types. Further information was provided in relation to a number of queries.



Crown Copyright (c) Licence no. 100022500 2008



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 22/7/2008

Centre = 544364 E 267209 N

Planning Committee Aug 2008

4. The application is accompanied by a Design Statement, Disabled Access Statement, Sustainability Appraisal, Water Conservation Strategy Statement, Health Impact Assessment, Affordable Housing Statement, Renewable Energy Statement and a Tree Report.

Planning History

5. The existing residential development at Orchard Close extended a post-war scheme of housing, approved in the 1970s under planning permission ref. **S/0846/74/O**.

Planning Policy

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007

6. **Policy ST/5 – Minor Rural Centres** identifies Cottenham and states development and re-development of up to thirty dwellings will be permitted within village frameworks. For larger schemes of over 9 houses section 106 agreement may be used to secure contributions towards appropriate village services.
7. **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.
8. **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.
9. **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.
10. **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.
11. **Policy DP/6 - Construction Methods** states where practicable, development which by its nature or extent is likely to have some adverse impact upon the local environment and amenity during construction and/or is likely to generate construction waste should, inter alia:
 - (a) Recycle construction waste.
 - (b) Prepare a “Resource Re-use and Recycling Scheme” to cover all waste arising during the construction.
 - (c) Be bound by a “Considerate Contractors Scheme” or similar arrangement, including restrictions on hours of noisy operations.
12. **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.
- 13. **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.
- 14. **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.
- 15. **Policy HG/5 - Exceptions Sites for Affordable Housing** states:
 - 1. 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.
- 16. **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.
- 17. **Policy SF/10 - Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments** states all residential developments will be required to contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space (including children's play space and formal outdoor sports facilities) and Informal Open Space to meet the additional need generated by the development in accordance with the standards in **Policy SF/11**.
- 18. **Policy SF/11 - Open Space Standards** states the minimum standard for outdoor play space and informal open space is 2.8ha per 1000 people, comprising:

- (a) Outdoor sport 1.6ha per 1000 people.
 - (b) Children's Playspace - 0.8ha per 1000 people.
 - (c) Informal Open Space - 0.4ha per 1000 people.
19. **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.
20. **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.
21. **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.
22. **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.
23. **Policy NE/12 - Water Conservation** states that development of more than 1000m² or more than 10 houses all practicable water conservation measures will be required to be submitted in a water conservation strategy.
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/3 - Mitigating Travel Impact** requires applications for major residential development to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment.
27. **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 – responses to initial application proposals

28. **Cottenham Parish Council** – recommends refusal. It lists as its concerns:
- (a) Potential adverse impact upon the amenities of Rampton Road properties due to the location of the access road to the rear causing noise and disturbance by vehicular movements.
 - (b) Plot 1 will be sited 12 metres from 73 Rampton Road – the bulk and mass will result in loss of light and privacy. It notes a similar relationship to no. 75 Rampton Road.
 - (c) Impact on mixed hedge (not just hawthorn) along the garden boundary of no. 75 Rampton Road with the site.
 - (d) Proximity to nos. 38, 40, 42, and 46 Orchard Close, resulting in an adverse impact upon the amenities of Rampton Road properties due to the location of the access road to the rear, causing noise and disturbance by vehicular movements.
 - (e) Loss of parking for existing residents, including removal of dropped kerb for a disabled person.
 - (f) The site is known to frequently have standing water on it.
 - (g) The narrow width of 3.5m width is below the 5 metre standards acceptable carriageway. This is totally inadequate and unacceptable.
 - (h) Lack of footway beyond 38 and 40 Orchard Close – residents will have to share the same space as the vehicular traffic.
 - (i) Lack of infrastructure provision required under policies DP/4, SF/10 and SF/11 (these relate to public open space).
29. **Environmental Health Officer** – recommends conditions relating to the hours of use for power driven machinery during construction, location of extraction equipment and pile driven foundations. An informative relating to bonfires during construction is also suggested. Concern that the parking layout relies on double parking, which is likely to increase incidents and resentment between neighbours that may manifest themselves in complaints is also raised.
30. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – has met the occupiers of 73 Cottenham Road in respect to:
- The Maple which is at the proposed access to the site is significant when viewed from the rear of 73 Cottenham Road, while it is unrealistic to retain the tree, this rear boundary will require significant screening to buffer the new development.
- In the rear garden/ boundary of 73 Cottenham Road there are two young Oak trees with the potential to grow into mature specimens, plot 1 is very close to the boundary of 73 to accommodate the future growth of these trees. I would like to see the footprint of Plot 1 moved further away from this boundary and/or reduced in size with details of any proposed driveway and foundations designed to accommodate the future growth of these trees. The visual impact of the gable end will require screening

and I would suggest a line of pleached hornbeams, which would provide a narrow green screen.

75 Cottenham Road shares a part of the north western boundary of the proposed development site, this rear boundary encroaches into the site significantly; details of the boundary treatment to be considered and submitted as to reduce the hedge back to the boundary will potentially be detrimental to the existing hedge.

While I have no objections to the proposal, areas [that need] to be reconsidered due to their impact on the neighbouring properties and trees are:

- (a) Size and Location of Plot 1, including screening; and
- (b) North western boundary treatment.”

31. **Ecology Officer** – “I wish to place a holding objection to request further investigation of the arable plants upon this site. I believe that I have observed:

- (a) Pheasants eye - Nationally rare; species of conservation concern and UKK BAP priority species
- (b) A penny cress - species have varying distribution from widespread to nationally rare
- (c) Rough poppy - local distribution
- (d) Prickly poppy - local distribution
- (e) Corn marigold - widespread

This site needs urgent investigation by an experienced botanist”.

N.B. confirmation is awaited from the Ecology Officer that these species are not present on site, having carried out further investigation.

32. **Landscape Design Officer** – “I have no objections to these proposals. I should like to see a landscape plan in due course”.

33. **Local Highway Authority** – No objection raised and requests conditions relating to:

- (a) The development shall not be occupied until the car parking area indicated on the approved plans (the vehicular hardstandings shall have minimum dimensions of 2.5metres x 5metres) including any parking spaces for the mobility impaired has been hard surfaced (the vehicular hardstandings shall have minimum dimensions of 3.5 metres x 5metres) sealed and marked out in parking bays. The car parking area shall be retained in this form at all times. The car park shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development.
- (b) Two 2.0 x 2.0 metres visibility splays be provided and shown on the drawings. The splays are to be included within the curtilage of each new car parking space that is to exit directly onto the proposed adopted public highway. One visibility splay is required on each side of the access, measured to either side of the access, with a setback of two metres from the highway boundary along each side of the access. Please also show the splays for each parking space or block thereof. This area shall be kept clear of all planting, fencing, walls and the like

exceeding 600mm high. Please forward the amended drawing showing the above visibility splays to the Highway Authority for approval.

- (c) No unbound material shall be used in the surface finish of the driveway within 6 metres of the highway boundary of the site.
- (d) The access shall be laid to a gradient not exceeding 4% for the first 6 metres from the highway boundary and not exceeding 8% thereafter.
- (e) Prior to commencement of the development details shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing the means to prevent the discharge of surface water from the development onto the highway. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the access is first used and shall be retained at all times.
- (f) The carriageway of the proposed estate road shall be constructed up to and including at least road base level, prior to the commencement of the erection of any dwelling intended to take access. The carriageways and footways shall be constructed up to and including binder course surfacing to ensure that each dwelling prior to occupation has a properly consolidated and surfaced carriageway and footway, between the dwelling and the existing highway. Until final surfacing is completed, the footway base course shall be provided in a manner to avoid any upstands to gullies, covers, kerbs or other such obstructions within or bordering the footway.

It requests an amended drawing showing the above requirements be forwarded to the Highway Authority for approval prior to determination of the application.

An informative regarding works within the public highway is also requested.

- 34. **Cambridgeshire Archaeology (Cambridgeshire County Council)** – Notes that the site lies within an area of high archaeological potential. An archaeological evaluation of the site is required prior to determination of the application.
- 35. **Cambridgeshire County Council** – If all the houses are affordable the County Council will not require any education contributions.
- 36. **Arts Development Officer** – “The development falls under the scope of the public art policy. As the development is small and art interventions limited, [the] developers may prefer to contribute a sum – no less than £6,500 – to a public art scheme within the village through the work of the local arts Development Manager based at Cottenham Village College”.
- 37. **Building Control Officer** – There are no flood risks for this site.
- 38. **Architectural Liaison Officer (Cambridgeshire Constabulary)** – recommends:
 - (a) To better facilitate surveillance of the road into the site, re-orientate plots 2 and 3 through 90° with frontages and front doors onto the road and swap flats (plots 4-7) with the houses (plots 12-13).
 - (b) Where sheds are close to boundaries (plots 9-11) they should be moved away to prevent climbing.
 - (c) Rear boundary fences should be 1.8m high fences/walls topped with trellis to provide additional security.

- (d) Lighting to the road should be by way of column mounted downlighters to BS 5489: Code of practice for outdoor lighting.
- (e) Utility meter cupboards should be sited externally, on or as close as possible to, the front elevations and where they can be overlooked from the public realm.

Consultations – responses to amended application proposals

39. **Cottenham Parish Council** – recommends refusal. It lists as its concerns:

- (a) Inadequate drainage infrastructure – existing drains frequently overflow into gardens. If the existing system is not adopted can further connections to it be accepted?
- (b) Proximity of Plot 1 to 73 Rampton Road – resulting in loss of light and privacy.
- (c) Windows in plots 3 and 4 overlook no. 73.
- (d) Impact on mixed hedge (not just hawthorn) along the garden boundary of no. 75 Rampton Road with the site which will need to be severely cut back. No reference to pleached hornbeams recommended by the Trees Officer or the importance of retaining two young oak trees at the rear of no. 73.
- (e) Proximity to nos. 38, 40, 42, and 46 Orchard Close, resulting in an adverse impact upon the amenities of those properties due to the closeness of development.
- (f) Loss of parking for existing residents, as 7 spaces are regularly used. No. 42 Orchard Close requires two disabled bays as both residents are registered disabled. Parking spaces are on a blind bend, which is dangerous when exiting them.
- (g) The narrow width of 3.5m width is below the 5 metre standards acceptable carriageway and will not be to adoptable standards. This is totally inadequate and unacceptable.
- (h) Increased use of footpaths within a sheltered housing scheme would lead to an unacceptable level of noise nuisance.
- (i) Lack of infrastructure provision required under policies DP/4, SF/10 and SF/11 (these relate to public open space).

40. **Anglian Water** – comments:

- (a) Water is supplied by Cambridge Water.
- (b) The foul flows from the development can be accommodated within the foul sewerage network system that at present has adequate capacity.
- (c) Surface water drainage is not to a public sewer. The views of the Environment Agency should be sought to gauge whether the solutions identified are acceptable from its perspective.
- (d) The foul drainage will be treated by Cambridge Sewage Treatment Works that at present has capacity for these flows.

41. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – The change to plot 1 is acceptable as it will reduce the impact of the future growth and development of the oaks. Foundation detail and any hardstanding for parking will need to accommodate future growth of the trees.
42. **Landscape Design Officer** – No objections to the amended proposals. A detailed landscaping scheme will be required in due course.
43. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – Earlier comments in relation to plots 2 and 3 remain extant.
44. **Local Highway Authority** – has revised its comments on the initial submission drawing. It has not provided comments in reference to the amended scheme and clarification on this point has been sought. It now requires:
- (a) The roadway to be widened to 5m with a 1.8m footway.
 - (b) Parking spaces for mobility impaired should have a hard sealed surface and marked out in parking bays.
 - (c) Condition pedestrian visibility splays.
 - (d) No unbound material shall be used within 6m of the public highway.
 - (e) Access gradient shall not exceed 4% for the first 6 metres and not exceed 8% thereafter.
 - (f) The carriageway of the estate road shall be constructed up to and including at least base course level before commencement of development.
 - (g) Informatives relating to works within the public highway are also requested.
45. **Housing Development & Enabling Manager** – comments awaited. A verbal update will be given.

Representations – responses to initial application proposals

46. **Cottenham Village Design Group** – “This is an edge of village location where it will be important to protect and enhance the external view of the village. We support the intention to include a native hedgerow/buffer on boundaries exposed to open farmland although find the application lacking details of this planting and note that no drawing showing this external elevation has been provided.

We find the proposed buildings acceptable in this location although feel that more could be done to acknowledge their Cottenham context.

A development of this size will have some impact on the local community; consideration should be given to providing some contribution to local infrastructure costs.”

47. **Councillor Bolitho (Local Member)** – “I represent Cottenham as a District Councillor and OPPOSE this development for the following reasons:
- (a) The development takes advantage of SCDC access land marked with a red grid on the map. It seems to be vital to the project as it is the only available access. Yet it seems that SCDC will receive no remuneration whatsoever for allowing

use of this access area. SCDC land is a valuable commodity and should not be given away for nothing. This is a ransom strip that has to be paid for. The last ransom strip sold off in Cottenham that I know about was sold for £500,000.

- (b) The site abuts a potential 700 house development. This site was one of 140 exemption sites viewed by two inspectors between November and March. In a letter dated 25 April 2008 to Mr Miles, SCDC Planning Policy Manager, the inspectors specifically stated that none of the 140 sites should be deleted. The land at Orchard Close should not be developed because existing house owners and occupiers need a green gap/lung between themselves and the mega development coming. If the proposed development is built on, the land north of Orchard Close will become one of the biggest housing estates in South Cambridgeshire.
- (c) I support the building of affordable housing. As affordable housing can be built outside the village framework or envelope, I suggest that houses be built on the pony paddock the other side of the line of poplar trees along Oakington Road. The site is well back from the road and, like both the Orchard Close site and the mega site is not, as far as I am aware, on green belt land.
- (d) I also propose that the builder of any development which increases traffic along Oakington Road (between Cottenham and Oakington) should be responsible for introducing and paying for robust traffic calming measures along that road. It is an extremely dangerous road already and will become more dangerous if more vehicles access it from new developments. Most of the road is flat and straight and I am sure that speeds well in excess of 100mph are possible with no traffic calming until the very edge of the village”.

48. **Letters** of objection have been received from 15 local residents at:

- 1. 18, 38 and 46 Orchard Close
- 2. 55, 67, 69, 73, 75, 83 and 101 Rampton Road
- 3. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 8 The Rowells.

They raise as their concerns:

- (a) Additional traffic to the rear of properties on Orchard Close (nos. 18).
- (b) Children use the access road to play on, as all other areas have been planted up with plants and shrubs.
- (c) The road will become a race track and unsafe for older residents on Orchard Close.
- (d) The road is very narrow and not designed for use as a proper road.
- (e) The road is too narrow for two cars to pass each other.
- (f) Noise and pollution from extra traffic.
- (g) Use of Orchard Close to access properties on Rampton Road.
- (h) Loss of Greenfield land, further eroding the boundary between Cottenham and the new town at Northstowe.
- (i) The density is too high.

- (j) The development will back onto a very attractive double fronted period property on Rampton Road.
- (k) The services in Cottenham are already stretched.
- (l) The positioning, access and size of the parcel of land itself are ill suited to the development proposed.
- (m) Risk of increased flooding to the Rowells due to building on lass and inadequate drainage provision.
- (n) Water stands on this field and does not drain away easily.
- (o) Increased traffic on Oakington Road – increased highway danger due to it being a busy, narrow and fast road.
- (p) Vehicular parking on Orchard Road blocks the narrow road and causes hold-ups, particularly on bin days.
- (q) Issues of HGVs accessing the site.
- (r) Several residents of Orchard Close use the road for mobility vehicles as the pavements get parked on.
- (s) Increased traffic on Rampton Road and loss of the only safe route.
- (t) Ownership of the access road – there may be a need for agreement of additional land owners who adjoin the road.
- (u) Potential loss of a fine Norwegian Maple and subsequent loss of bird habitat.
- (v) Increased pedestrian traffic past elderly persons' homes – noise and disturbance, fear of strangers.
- (w) Loss of 50% of resident parking spaces, especially a disabled space reserved for a disabled resident.
- (x) Loss of mature trees.
- (y) Noise and disturbance from car doors and comings and goings.
- (z) Increased traffic on Oakington Road due to Northstowe.
- (aa) Loss of peaceful countryside feel to the are that is currently enjoyed by residents.
- (bb) Loss of views due to erection of 1.8m boundary fence to existing gardens.
- (cc) Plots 1 and 3 overlook the garden of no. 75, resulting in loss of privacy.
- (dd) Loss of light to the garden of no. 75 Rampton Road.
- (ee) Overlooking from first floor windows of no. 75 Rampton Road's garden.
- (ff) The scale, form, massing and appearance would physically dominate much of the rear of the property at 75 Rampton Road.

- (gg) The thorn hedge to be cut back is in fact plum trees within the garden of 75 Rampton Road that form an important feature within the garden of 75 Rampton Road.
 - (hh) Two trees shown for removal are the property of 75 Rampton Road.
 - (ii) Concern that 75 Rampton Road is not shown on the site layout plans.
 - (jj) A young walnut tree with the garden of 75 Rampton Road will be impacted.
 - (kk) Loss of a mature Acer in the north western corner of the site (by the existing car park).
 - (ll) Inadequate access for emergency vehicles.
 - (mm) Lack of provision for play facilities – notes removal of green play area due to problems and to provide car parking.
 - (nn) Lack of visitor car parking within the scheme, increasing car parking problems.
 - (oo) Overlooking of The Rowells.
 - (pp) Inadequate soakaways mean that The Rowells are often boggy and insect filled.
 - (qq) Overlooking and proximity to 8 The Rowells, plus noise and light pollution.
 - (rr) Concern that bedroom windows may face 8 The Rowells.
 - (ss) Loss of light and visual intrusion to properties on Rampton Road.
 - (tt) Overlooking of 73 Rampton Road.
 - (uu) Development beyond the village edge, which is designed to protect the village from sprawl.
49. A petition signed by 36 local residents objecting to the development. No reasons are put forward.

Representations – responses to amended application proposals

50. Letters of objection have been received from 15 local residents at:
1. 18, 40, 42 and 46 Orchard Close
 2. 55, 56, 67, 69, 73 and 75 Rampton Road
 3. 2, 4, 5 and 8 The Rowells
 4. 12 Oakington Road.

These raise the following concerns:

- (a) Unadopted sewerage system that is inadequate and often blocks, backing up into gardens.
- (b) Parking in Orchard Close is already inadequate; there is also a lack of visitor parking.

- (c) Orchard close is too narrow and unsuitable for additional traffic, especially due to the blind bend.
- (d) Traffic noise and disturbance to existing residents.
- (e) Safety of elderly people and children.
- (f) Lack of surveillance to the car parking.
- (g) Allocation of resident parking is inadequate. One resident requires two disabled parking bays.
- (h) Danger to cats due to construction traffic.
- (i) Noise from large number of pedestrians and cyclists.
- (j) Provision for bin collections and storage of refuse is inadequate.
- (k) Lack of safe access for Rampton Road residents who use Orchard Close.
- (l) Flooding and standing water.
- (m) Use of the access by additional traffic will require residents' permission.
- (n) Potential to continue the development to the west via the turning head serving plots 7 and 8.
- (o) Loss of maple tree – impact on birds.
- (p) Increase traffic on Rampton Road and Orchard Road will result in Rampton Road properties becoming a traffic island and there has been lack of noise assessment to determine the impact on these properties.
- (q) Loss of light and visual intrusion to no 73 Rampton Road.
- (r) Overlooking from second storey windows in plot 3 of no. 73 Rampton Road resulting in loss of privacy.
- (s) Trees and Landscape Officer's comments have not been assessed.
- (t) Lack of consultation with housing re drainage issues. There is a need to improve the Council's private system.
- (u) Reversing from car parking spaces onto a blind bend.
- (v) Police Architect Liaison Officer's comments have not been addressed.
- (w) Amenity of 75 Rampton Road.
- (x) Removal of boundary planting in no. 75 Rampton Road's garden.
- (y) Proximity to the boundary of no. 75, overlooking and loss of light to the garden.
- (z) Highways' comments conflict with pre-application advice on the file regarding the pavement.
- (aa) The site is not well related to the facilities and services of the built area.

- (bb) The proposals contravene the renewables policy as no solar panels are proposed.
- (cc) Increased pressure on local services.
- (dd) Cumulative impact of small development in Cottenham is the same as if one major development.
- (ee) Proximity of development to The Rowells resulting in overlooking, noise and light pollution.
- (ff) Bedroom windows in plot 13 rather than bathroom windows appear to face 8 The Rowells.
- (gg) Increased antisocial behaviour.
- (hh) Issue re access for construction vehicles.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

51. The key issues in determining this planning application are: affordable housing provision; layout and design; neighbouring amenities; trees, landscaping and ecology; highways and car parking; public open space; drainage; and archaeology.

Affordable housing provision

52. An Affordable Housing Panel meeting was held on the 18th June 2008. The key points arising from the discussion were:
- (a) The need and tenure (50% socially rented/50% shared equity) were discussed and agreed as acceptable.
 - (b) Plots 2 and 3 should be one and a half storeys. Plot 1 should be single storey if developed.
 - (c) Could the Acer tree in the verge of the existing car park be moved or the road layout re-adjusted to accommodate its retention, as it is a valued specimen?
 - (d) Is the access to the site i.e. Orchard Close public highway or privately owned? This could require notice being served on all affected land owners.
 - (e) There should be a wall to the rear boundaries adjoining the access road.
 - (f) Soakaways will have to work, as the site is known to have standing water on it frequently.
 - (g) Anglian Water should be consulted to check if it is possible to connect to the main foul drain, as this is known to be inadequate as it is.
 - (h) A gate should be provided to the existing path that provides access to the rear gardens of nos. 42, 44 and 46 Orchard Close.
 - (i) The Parish Council's preference is, ideally, for the scheme to be reduced to twelve and dwellings moved further away from the boundary with properties on Rampton Road.

The mix and tenure will be secured through a condition requiring a scheme to be submitted (usually a section 106 agreement). As an exception site the dwellings will be occupied by families with a tie to Cottenham and not to meet the wider, district, need.

Layout and design

53. The layout is dictated to a degree by the shape of the site, being long and narrow. Amendments have been received that address issues raised initially through consultations and the points raised at the Affordable Housing Panel. It is now considered acceptable having addressed issues of neighbouring amenity (see section below), access, car parking and bin storage.

Neighbouring amenities

54. A number of concerns relating to neighbouring amenity have been raised. The amended scheme is considered to be acceptable in terms of amenity.
55. The revised plans address the relationship of plot 1 to nos. 73 and 75 Rampton Road, through the replacement of plot 1 as a bungalow, set off the boundary with no. 73. The reduced scale and distance from the boundary with no. 73 is sufficient to ensure that no significant loss of amenity in terms of light or overbearing impact will result. It is acknowledged that the view this property currently enjoys of the field will be affected, however the loss of a private view is not a material planning consideration and can be given no weight in the decision making process.
56. The alteration of plots 2 and 3 to chalet houses now results in a less prominent form of development and adequate separation from the main private amenity areas and habitable rooms (The latter is approximately 47metres back to back) of no. 75. The relationship of the development with these two dwellings is such that the impact is now considered acceptable. The issue of boundary planting is a matter between the owners and has not been raised as an issue by the Trees and Landscape Officer, although works to it should be part of the detailed landscaping scheme.
57. The impact on short rear gardens to nos. 42, 44 and 46 Orchard Close is minimised by providing a greater landscaped buffer and 1.8m high fencing to the boundary. In response to the Parish Council's initial comments, plots 2 and 3 have been replaced by chalet houses to reduce the visual impact upon these neighbouring dwellings, contrary to the request of the Police Architect Liaison Officer, however on balance this was considered preferable. The access road, for the majority of its length runs to the end of long rear gardens and noise and disturbance from its use is considered to be minimal subject to appropriate boundary treatment.
58. The rear of 8 The Rowells is sited approximately 30 metres from the side wall of plot 13. A first floor bedroom window is proposed in its southern elevation. However, given the separation distance, is considered to achieve an acceptable relationship.

Trees, landscaping and ecology

59. Generally the scheme is acceptable. Conditions suggested by the Trees and Landscape and Landscape Design Officers are recommended. The layout has not addressed the issue of one of the large Acer trees, as this required a re-alignment of the road that was not possible to achieve. A second Acer is retained. The Landscape Design Officer has not objected

Highways and car parking

60. The road has been designed, having sought pre-application advice from the Local Highway Authority, which had, in initial comments on the application, considered it to be acceptable. The layout has been designed to reduce traffic speeds and to ensure that the access is safe for pedestrians and vehicle users. Although the road narrows it is passable by fire and rescue vehicles. If necessary the access can be amended, although this is likely to result in the loss of the Acer tree.
61. A disabled car parking space will be allocated to an existing disabled tenant and a reduced number of parking spaces re-provided. The scheme is provided with 29 car parking spaces, 3 of which are reserved for visitors and 5 adjacent to no. 42 are to likely to be utilised by existing residents of Orchard Close. This equates to approximately 1.6 spaces per new dwelling (excluding the 5 referred to above). The revisions address the crime prevention officer's initial comments and more car parking is provided in small courts rather than on plot.

Public open space

62. The site layout currently does not provide on-site open space. The agent accepts the requirement for public open space and has confirmed that this will be met off site through a financial contribution.

Flooding and Drainage

63. The site is not in an area of high or medium flood risk identified by the Environment Agency. As operational development on a site of less than 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1, standing advice to Local Authorities is provided that SUDS are the preferred method for surface water drainage.
64. Soakaways are proposed and are an accepted form of SUDS by the Environment Agency and under Building Regulations. The suitability of these is a matter to be dealt with under Building Regulations and the Building Control Manager has not expressed a concern with this approach for the site.
65. Anglian Water has responded regarding the suitability of connection to the main foul sewer and is satisfied that the system is adequate to accommodate the additional needs of the development. In light of local concerns however, the Drainage Manager's response will be sought to ascertain if this is an issue with which he is concerned and a verbal update will be given.

Archaeology

66. The agent has been advised of the County Council's requirements for pre-determination assessment of the site. The applicant is awaiting the outcome of this meeting before undertaking such work. Further guidance will be sought from the County Council once such an assessment has been undertaken.

Other matters

67. The adjacent objection site (No. 15) for housing is not a material planning consideration in determining this application. It is to be assessed on its planning merits against the adopted local development framework as part of the site specific policies.

Recommendation

68. **Delegated approval** is sought subject to the satisfactory resolution of outstanding issues of foul drainage, further archaeological assessment and clarification of the Highway Authority's requirements; appropriate safeguarding conditions, including schemes to secure the affordable housing provision and public open space infrastructure provision.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- Planning File Refs: S/0686/08/F and S/0846/74/O
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings

Contact Officer: Mrs Melissa Reynolds - Team Leader
Telephone: (01954) 713237