

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

3rd December 2008

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

S/1584/08/F- LITTLE EVERSDEN

Erection of Two Dwellings following Demolition of Existing House at 16 Lowfields for West Peak Developments Limited

Recommendation: Approval subject to Highway Concerns

Date for Determination: 7th November 2008

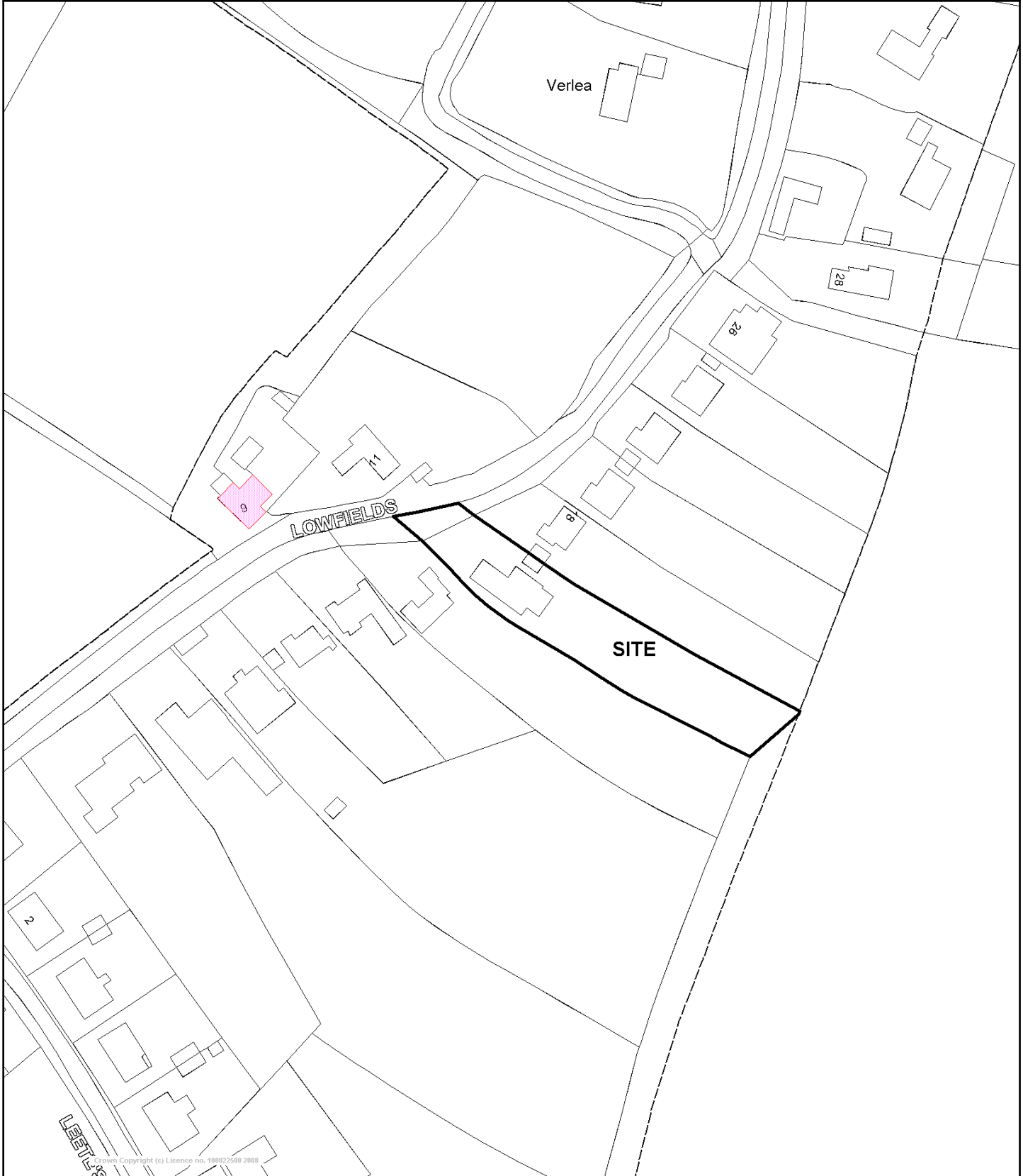
Notes:

This Application has been referred to the Planning Committee for determination by the Chairman's Delegation Meeting of 3rd November 2008.

Members will visit this site on 3rd December 2008.

Site and Proposal

1. The site comprises 1345m². The front of the site is occupied by an existing two-storey dwelling and is located in the village framework for Little Eversden. Green Belt land is to the east and north west beyond No. 11 Lowfields. There are residential properties to the north east and south west. The rear garden measures approximately 60m in length from the rear of the existing house and abuts Green Belt land. The property to the north east, No.18 Lowfields, is a bungalow that measures approximately 6 metres to the ridge with a first floor in the roof, only evident from the rear elevation. The property to the south west is a two storey dwelling measuring 6.2 m to the ridge. This dwelling measures approximately 1.7 m from the (assumed) shared boundary at its closest point and 3 m from the proposed development at its closest point. Other properties in the immediate area are a variation of single and two storey units of varying style and design.
2. Entrance into Lowfields is from the main road that runs through Little Eversden. Lowfields is almost single width in some areas and, though covered in tarmac, it takes on a rural character that peters out into a track into the countryside.
3. The application received 12th September 2008, as amended by plans franked 28th October 2008, proposes the demolition of the existing detached property and replacement with two semi-detached two storey units. The unit to the north (unit 1) of the application proposes a 2 bedroom property comprising 161m² of floor space and the other unit to the southwest (unit 2) a 4 bedroom property comprising 190m² of floor space. The height to the ridge of unit one measures 6.2 m and the ridge height of unit 2 measures 6.5 m at their highest points.
4. The density of the scheme equates to 14 dwellings per hectare.



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Scale 1/1250 Date 19/11/2008

Centre = 537623 E 253604 N

Planning Committee December 2008

Planning History

5. Application reference **S/0802/08/F** was submitted in May 2008 for the demolition of the existing dwelling and replacement with two detached, two storey 3 and 4 bedroom units. The application was withdrawn before determination following negative feedback from officers.

Planning Policy

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies adopted July 2007:

6. **Policy ST/7 'List of Infill Villages'** sets out the requirements for new dwelling in infill village frameworks. Development in such villages will be restricted to not more than two dwellings comprising (relevant to the application site) b. The redevelopment or sub-division of an existing residential curtilage,
7. **Policy HG/1 'Housing Density'** aims to ensure that residential developments make best use of land by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment.
8. **Policy HG/2 'Housing Mix'** sets out the requirements for residential developments to make the best use of sites in addition to be informed by the wider character and context of the surrounding area.
9. **Policy DP/2 'Design of New Development'** sets out the criteria for new development. It states, in part, that all new development must be of high quality design and should preserve or enhance the character of the local area and be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area.
10. **Policy DP/3 'Development Criteria'** sets out specific criteria that all development should meet. It states that planning permission shall not be granted where the proposed development would have an adverse impact on residential amenity or village character
11. **Policy DP/7 'Village Frameworks'** sets out the requirement for new dwellings to be located within village frameworks
12. **Policy TR/2 'Car and Cycle Parking Standards'** sets out the criteria for car and cycle parking standards for all new developments across the district
13. **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**.
14. **Policy SF/11 'Open Space Standards'**. The minimum standard for outdoor play space and informal open space is 2.8 hectares per 1,000 people, comprising:
 - (a) Outdoor Sport - 1.6 hectares per 1,000 people
 - (b) Children's Playspace - 0.8 hectares per 1,000 people
 - (c) Informal Open Space - 0.4 hectares per 1,000 people

Consultation

15. **Little Eversden Parish Council** – Recommends that the scheme is refused.

'The small adjustments made to this unsustainable development in no way reduce the Councils opposition. Shoe horning a pair of semi-detached houses on to this very restricted and unsuitable located site results in the northern one lying permanently in the shadow of the southern, gives both a very narrow garden and still results in a serious parking problem in the front garden and no possibility of parking on the road or in a garage. It is requested that a site visit by the Planning Committee be arranged so that, amongst other considerations, the layout of the road at this site can be fully appreciated'.

16. **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** – Has no objection, though recommends that any consent granted be conditional to limit the impact upon neighbour amenity through the hours of operation of power operated machinery and the construction of foundations.

17. **The Local Highways Authority** – Comments have not yet been received following the amendment at the time of writing the report and shall be reported verbally to Committee. Initial comments received 23rd October requested the following:

- (a) The applicant show visibility splays with dimensions of 2.4m x 90m as measured from and along the nearside edge of the carriageway on both sides of the access. The area within each splay to be kept clear of any obstruction exceeding 600mm in height at all times.
- (b) That two 2m x2m visibility splays be provided on all drawings, again this is to be kept clear of all planting, fencing, wall and the like exceeding 600mm high. The LHA also requested that dimensions for the proposed car parking spaces are shown measuring 2.5m x 5 m with a 6m reversing space.
- (c) Manoeuvring space must be kept clear at all times.
- (d) No unbound material should be used for the hard surfacing.
- (e) The access should not be laid at a gradient exceeding the 4% for the first 4 metres from the Highway boundary and not exceeding 8% thereafter.
- (f) Details to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing the means to prevent surface water from the development onto the Highway.
- (g) The applicant must define the parking arrangements on the drawing at the boundary with No. 18 Lowfields as the LHA is concerned that the entrance and exit for No. 18 could be obstructed by the proposed arrangements as shown on Drawing No. P2.
- (h) A site traffic management plan must be submitted and agreed prior to demolition.

Representations

18. There has been a large amount of interest in the site by immediate neighbours and local residents. The original submission received 12 letters of objection. The amended details were sent out to all of those who commented on the original scheme and the previous planning application. Following the amendments made I have received 10 objection letters from immediate neighbours and other local residents.

The majority of the letters share the same concerns, which are summarised below:

19. On design, scale and character
- (a) Overdevelopment on a small plot
 - (b) Inappropriate development in a village with very limited services (unsustainable)
 - (c) Two units are too large and overbearing
 - (d) 1 unit preferred
 - (e) Poor design
 - (f) Out of character
 - (g) Lack of front garden
 - (h) Set a precedent for other semi detached proposals that are not present in the vicinity
 - (i) Cluttered access with bins, recycling boxes etc
 - (j) Urban frontage with all frontage laid to parking
 - (k) Access to gardens is limited
 - (l) Materials proposed expensive and high maintenance
20. On Highway safety
- (a) Parking bays are inadequate in size
 - (b) Not enough parking
 - (c) No garages
 - (d) No visitor parking
 - (e) Inadequate road infrastructure
 - (f) Blind bends, narrow lane and no turning facilities
 - (g) No room for service/emergency vehicles
 - (h) Construction parking problems
 - (i) Damage to the grass verges due to passing vehicles on a narrow road
 - (j) No scope to increase the road and already in a poor state of repair
 - (k) Disproportionate increase in vehicular movement
21. On neighbour amenity (though some refer to an improvement on neighbour amenity since the amendments the following objections still apply)
- (a) Too close to neighbouring properties
 - (b) Loss of light
 - (c) Overpowering/overbearing
 - (d) Encroaching on privacy of neighbouring units
 - (e) Unit 1 will be dark in side and have limited sunlight for the majority of the day
22. Other objections raised
- (a) Where is the telegraph pole going to be relocated?
 - (b) Inaccuracies in the Design and Access Statement
 - (c) Depicted view of new and existing properties is misleading
 - (d) Bad example made with reference to development at No. 4 Lowfields as the plot size has a considerably narrower width than that of No. 4

Planning Comments – Key Issues

23. Having regard to the presumption in favour of development within the village framework and the housing mix proposed the key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- (a) Impact on neighbour amenity
 - (b) Impact on the character of the surrounding area
 - (c) Impact on Highway safety

Changes since the earlier submitted scheme and subsequent amendments to the current scheme dated 28th October 2008

24. The originally submitted scheme proposed two large detached properties that officers did not support. This was primarily due to the overdevelopment of the site, the impact of the development on the street scene and the adverse impact both properties would have on the amenity of the neighbouring properties No.14 and No. 18 Lowfields. The application was withdrawn.
25. This submitted application still raised concern with reference to impact on neighbours and the street scene. The agent agreed to reduce the height by 0.9m, floor space by approximately 50m², rectified boundary concerns raised by neighbours and reduced the impact of Unit 2 by reducing part of the rear elevation to single storey and pulling the development further away from neighbouring boundaries and the road frontage.

Neighbour Amenity

26. The height of Unit 1 was reduced from the earlier submissions to ensure the occupiers of No. 18 were not adversely impacted by undue loss of light to the rear of the property or suffered from overbearing impact. The proposed development is located further (1.7 m) away than that of the existing property, though the existing property is attached with a single storey flat roof garage and therefore the visual impact is considerably different to what is proposed.
27. The ridge height of unit 1 is 6.4m above ground level at the front of the site, marginally higher than No. 18 that measures approximately 5.6m to the ridge (according to a street elevation submitted with the application). Unit 1 measures 4.7m to the eaves and the rear projects 1.2 metres further than that of the existing dwelling and that of No.18. Although the conservatory at No. 18 is not marked in the drawings, I am of the view that the proposed scheme has successfully attempted to avoid an unacceptable loss of light and overbearing impact to No. 18, particularly as there exists a separation of approximately 5m between the two dwellings.
28. The impact of the development on the occupiers of No. 14 was initially more of a concern for officers in the original submissions; since the amendments have been received the reduction in height the movement away from the boundary and the reduction in size have all positively addressed initial concerns with reference to the impact on No. 14. The existing dwelling has several windows that look directly into the rear garden of No. 14 at ground and first floor. The proposed scheme has no first floor overlooking windows and a bathroom window at first floor would be obscure glazed. The overlooking aspect has been significantly improved.
29. The impact of the proposed south west facing wall has been reduced significantly also, in length, in distance from the boundary and in height. The overbearing impact that was initially a major concern has thus been removed.
30. I am of the view that the impact on neighbour amenity for both No. 14 and 18 Lowfields is acceptable.

Character of the Surrounding Area

31. The character of this part of the village is quite rural; the units along this stretch of road are detached and benefit from reasonably sized plots. The house type and design varies considerably in style, materials, height and age. The scheme is

proposing two semi detached properties that are not present in the existing street scene, though I am of the view that this does not necessarily present a problem if all other development criteria can be appropriately addressed. Policy promotes best use of land and I am of the view that two semi detached units can be achieved successfully on this site, particularly as at the front of the site the dwellings are staggered by some 6m.

32. The design of the units has been influenced by the neighbouring properties in terms of height, design and siting. Though this scheme represents a tighter form of development and quite modern in its approach I am of the view the design is acceptable in terms its neighbouring units and not incongruous with the local character. As for setting a precedent, each application is assessed individually on its merits and therefore do not believe this to be the case.
33. The amendments have addressed officer concern regarding impact in the street scene by reducing the forward projection on unit 2 by 1.5 metres allowing more frontage to the site and an improvement visually when viewing the site from the north east. The development would be barely visible when approaching from the south west due to the projection of No. 14.
34. The agent has shown the existing footprint of the original dwelling on the plans, specifically drawing P3A (amended 28th October). The development outside of this footprint is minimal albeit height, size and design has changed. I am of the view that all three areas have been appropriately addressed and do not have an unacceptably adverse impact on the character of the area.

Highway Safety

35. The scheme proposes one 2 bedroom unit and one 4 bedroom unit. The maximum requirement for off road parking is set by the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies adopted July 2007 under Policy TR/2 and appendix 1 to reduce over reliance on the car to promote more sustainable forms of transport. For new dwelling houses it states that developments must have an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling across the district (up to a maximum of 2 per 3 or more bedrooms in poorly accessible areas). With 2 spaces per dwelling as proposed this would meet the tests of this policy. If two spaces can be achieved along with the correct dimensions, the correct visibility splays and distances required by the Local Highway Authority I am of the view that Highway safety concerns can be adequately addressed.

Recommendation

36. Approval subject to meeting highway requirements
 1. SCA - (RCA)
 2. No development shall commence until details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - a) the materials to be used for the external wall(s) and roof(s).
 - b) refuse storage accommodation
 - c) finished floor levels of the building(s) in relation to ground levels.

(RC 14)

3. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment [for each dwelling] shall be completed before that/the dwelling is occupied in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.
(Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
4. During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions.
(Reason – To protect the occupiers of adjacent properties from an unacceptable level of noise disturbance during the period of construction.)
5. Notwithstanding drawing P1A franked 28th October 2008 showing access details and visibility, no development shall commence until further details showing a revised scheme for the junction of the proposed access with the existing road have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with the Local Highway Authority.
(Reason – To ensure the access is not unnecessarily wide and does not have an adverse impact on the street scene in accordance with the requirements of DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)
6. Before development commences, a plan specifying the area and siting of land to be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during the period of construction shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; such space shall be maintained for that purpose during the period of construction.
(Reason – In the interests of Highway Safety.)
7. The first floor window in the southwest elevation of the building on Plot 2, hereby permitted, shall be fitted and permanently maintained with obscured glass.
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining property in accordance with Policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)
8. The first floor windows in the northeast elevation of the building on Plot 1, hereby permitted, shall be fitted and permanently maintained with obscured glass.
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining property in accordance with Policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)
9. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall

also include specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

10. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
11. No additional windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted in the first floor south west elevation of Unit 2 or the first floor north east elevation of Unit 1 of the development, hereby permitted, unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining properties and in accordance with the requirements of Policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.)

Informative

1. During demolition and construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation
2. Before the existing property is demolished, a Demolition Notice will be required from the Environmental Health Department establishing the way in which the property will be dismantled, including any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains and establishing hours of working operation. This should be brought to the attention of the applicant to ensure the protection of the residential environment of the area
3. Should pile driven foundations be proposed, then before works commence, a statement for the method of construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies 2007
- Planning Files Ref: S/1584/08/F and S/0802/08/F

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