

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

2nd September 2009

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

**S/0629/08/F – LITTLE EVERSDEN
Erection of 10 Affordable Dwellings Together with New Access
Land adj 52 Harlton Road for Beechdale Homes**

Recommendation: No change to existing Section 106 Agreement

Date for Determination: Not applicable

Background

1. In November 2008 planning consent was granted for the erection of 10 affordable dwellings together with new access on land adj 52 Harlton Road, Little Eversden.
2. The application was considered by Members at the July 2008 meeting (Item 8). Prior to the issuing of planning consent the applicant entered into a Section 106, which amongst other elements, secured the provision of the affordable housing in line with Local Development Framework policy.
3. The wording of the Section 106 Agreement gives priority of allocation to qualifying persons from Little Eversden before qualifying persons from neighbouring parishes.

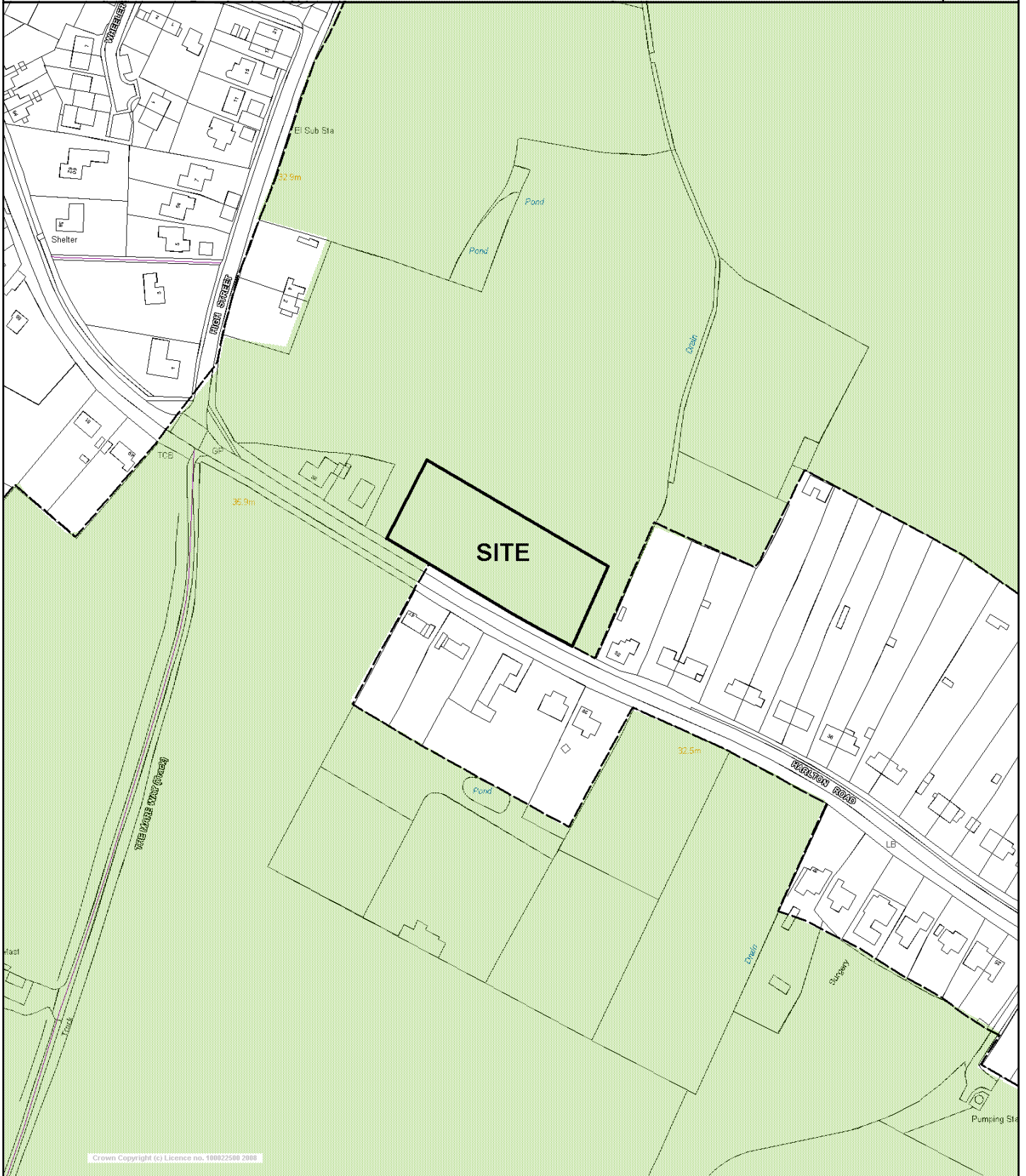
Representation

4. I have received representations from Great and Little Eversden Parish Council which requests an amendment to the wording of the Section 106 Agreement so that qualifying persons from both Great and Little Eversden are given priority of allocation.

The full content of these representations are attached as appendices.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

5. The wording of the existing Section 106 Agreement does not preclude occupation of the permitted dwellings by qualifying persons from Great Eversden, but does give priority of allocation to qualifying persons from Little Eversden before those of neighbouring Parishes, and it is the standard agreement.
6. Policy HG/5 of the adopted Local Development Framework states that schemes for 100% affordable housing may be granted as an exception to the normal operation of the development of the plan, where such schemes are designed to meet identified local housing needs. The text of the policy states that the needs of a particular village must be carefully surveyed and assessed before a scheme is progressed.
7. The issues to be considered here is whether the Great and Little Eversden can be considered as one village for the purposes of Policy HG/5, and if not, are there any other overriding considerations.



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8. The Policy Core Strategy lists Great Eversden and Little Eversden as separate villages and each has its own village framework. This site is not located between the two village frameworks and is visually part of Little Eversden
9. There are separate housing needs surveys for both villages. The application was assessed against the housing needs survey for Little Eversden, in May 2005, which demonstrated a need for 12 units. The need for a development to be assessed against the needs of a particular village is mentioned in Policy HG/5
10. In the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application, although reference was made to the housing needs survey of both Little Eversden and Great Eversden, it was stated that the Housing Society 'would like to develop this site in response to the current need for new dwellings in Little Eversden as identified by the District Council Housing Department.
11. In the report to Planning Committee officers addressed a representation that had been received suggesting a site in Great Eversden, owned by the District Council, should be used to meet the housing needs of both villages. Officers commented that this site was also in the Green Belt and that it was the officers view that it was quite appropriate for a site to be found in Little Eversden to meet its housing needs.
12. Policy HG/5 accepts that consent for exception sites can be granted in the Green Belt but states that the District Council will implement this policy with caution.
13. In 1997 planning consent was granted for a scheme of 6 affordable dwellings in High Street, Great Eversden. The Section 106 Agreement that accompanied that gives priority of allocation to qualifying persons from Great Eversden. Little Eversden is not referred to.
14. Great and Little Eversden Parish Council states that it has had a joint Parish Council since 1945, and that during the course of informal discussions leading up to the submission of this application no mention was made of any scheme in Little Eversden being limited to persons from that village. It also comments that it was not consulted on the wording of the Section 106 Agreement.
15. The views of the Legal Officer and Housing Enabling and Development Manager have been sought and will be reported to the meeting.
16. I have sympathy for the views of the Parish Council in this case, and it is clear that the housing needs from both parishes will not be met by this scheme. Nevertheless, in coming to a recommendation officers have to have regard to the policy context and the way that this has been implemented in other cases. The fact that this site is within the Cambridge Green Belt means that a strict interpretation and consistency of approach is necessary.
17. Having balanced the issues and noting that the application attracted several letters of objection to the principle development from local residents, I am able to recommend to Members that the wording of the Agreement be changed, on the basis that if other sites exist, and come forward, they can help meet the overall unmet need.

Recommendation

18. My recommendation to Members is that the wording of the Section 106 Agreement is changed in this instance.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework – adopted 2007
- Planning File Refs: S/0629/08/F and S/0026/97/F
- Letters from Little Eversden Parish Council

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