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# GREAT AND LITTLE EVERSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

*Clerk*

Mrs L A Volans  
1 Cotton's Field  
Dry Drayton  
Cambridge CB23 0DG  
Tel: 01954 780042

*Chairman*

Mr J C P Dalton  
Rectory Farm  
Little Eversden  
Cambridge CB23 1HE  
Tel: 01223 262361

22nd June 2009

Paul Sexton Esq  
Planning Department  
South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
CAMBRIDGE  
CB23 6EA



Dear Paul,

## Low Close, Little Eversden, Deed of Variation

I am writing on behalf of the Joint Parish Council of Great and Little Eversden. We are very deeply concerned that you are unwilling to support an application for a Deed of Variation to allow residents of Great Eversden to be considered equally with those of Little Eversden when the time comes to allocate the affordable houses now being built in Low Close, Little Eversden.

From the moment in May 2004 when these plans for affordable housing in the Eversdens were first discussed it has always been assumed that the two villages were being treated in common. The projected need for at least 20 houses would be shared between two sites, with perhaps ten houses on each site. Initially it was thought that the two sites could be developed at the same time, but, as you know, the Great Eversden site has been let and application for planning permission has not yet been made.

You will see from the diary of events attached that in April 2006 we held a very well attended Public Meeting of both villages about the proposals for these two sites. At that meeting the assumption was implicit that no difference would be made between residents of the two villages when it came to allocating the houses. It was never even discussed. Our Councillor Liz Heazell was present and spoke at that meeting and has been fully involved with plans throughout.

The Parish Council was not, however, consulted about the wording of the section 106 agreement for Low Close. When we consulted Charles Clay and Julie Fletcher about it their answer revealed some ambiguity in the two parts. They went on to suggest that provided the request came through Accent Nene removing it would be no problem. Now, however, it seems this is not to be the case and the residents of Great Eversden will lose their priority.

Historically the.../

Historically the two villages have always been treated as one. They share a Parish Council, a Village Hall, a Recreation Field and a precepted Council Tax. In all discussions with SCDC the numbers established by the separate housing surveys have been regarded as a total to be divided between the villages without discrimination.

If this is not to be the case, both the Parish Council in its discussions with SCDC and with Nene Housing, and the residents who attended the 2006 public meeting believe they have been seriously misled.

We ask you most earnestly to reconsider your decision and to support a Deed of Variance in the interests of equity and public trust.

Yours sincerely

*Clive*

J C P Dalton *Chairman.*

Enclosed:

Summary of recent references to Affordable Housing in the Eversdens

3 page report on the Public Meeting of 18th April 2006 including survey results.

Summary of references to Affordable Housing in PC Minutes and communications with SCDC

- 5.4.04 Possible sale or lease of OSP 148 raised by Cllr Heazell.
- 3.10.05 Presentation by Gill Anderton of Nene Housing
- 14.11.05 Parish Council Meeting . 20 members of public present
- December Petition received
- 19.12.05 Parish Council Discussion on petition
- 23.1.06 Formal Response to petition
- 
- 13.3.06 Proposal of Public Meeting – Villages survey set up.
- 18.4.06 Public Meeting – Report and Survey Results attached
- 24.4.06 Agreed to publish report of Public Meeting on web-site.  
Meeting to be arranged with SCDC
- 5.6.06 Report on meeting with SCDC (23.5.06)
- 16.10.06 Report on meeting with Highways
- 27.11.06 Report on meeting with SCDC (28.11.06)
- 20.2.07 Report on meeting with SCDC (30.11.06)
- 3.9.07 Report on plan for Harlton Road
- 25.2.08 Plans for OSP 148 discussed
- 8-10 12.08 emails between JCPD and Charles Clay and Juliet Fletcher
- 14.1.09 email exchange with Nene about Deed of Variation
- 13.5.09 email from JCPD to Paul Sexton about Deed of variation
- 22.5.09 email from PS to JCPD. Will not support Deed of Variation
- 17.6.09 email exchange between JCPD and Jill Anderton. Sarah Ellmer now responsible. email to SE.
- 22 .6.09 Letter to Paul Sexton asking to reconsider support for Deed of Variation

## Great and Little Eversden Public Meeting on Affordable Housing held in the Village Hall on 18th April 2006 from 8.pm to 9.15pm

The meeting was well attended by more than 80 residents. It was chaired by Clive Dalton, Chairman of the Parish Council. All members of the Parish Council were also present except for Tony Bane and Barbara Sach who sent apologies. Cl. Liz Heazell, Chairman of the SCDC Housing Committee was also present.

There was a lively discussion and many valuable questions were raised and some useful comments made. These are summarised below and divided into categories.

The Chairman explained the situation that the SCDC Survey had revealed a future need for 21 Affordable Houses in the Eversdens. The Parish Council had a responsibility to suggest possible sites to SCDC for the consideration of their Development Department.

The PC could only suggest sites which were known to be available. These were:

OSP 148 in Great Eversden owned by SCDC.

The Harlton Road Site, called Low Close, whose owner was willing to sell.

A further site (Watson's Close) had been investigated, but the owners were not willing to sell.

The only sites available for low-cost housing will inevitably be in the Green Belt and will only be allowed as 'exception sites' negotiated by Section 106 agreements and approved by the Parish Council and SCDC.

### *Is there a need for more affordable housing in the Eversdens?*

The South Cambs District Council (SCDC) survey had revealed a need for 21 houses in the Eversdens, 9 in Great and 12 in Little Eversden.

It was alleged that there was little need as there were 43 affordable houses in the two villages and these should provide enough as their present residents moved.

*(but only 8 of these were of the kind under discussion)*

The Eversdens were listed as 'LOW' in need for affordable housing, needing only 0%-1.2% a year.

It was pointed out that it was probable that the need for 21 houses revealed by the survey was likely to be an underestimate, as some might not have replied.

There were some 4,000-5,000 people on the waiting list in the area.

A couple earning £30,000 between them could raise a mortgage for £150,000. Yet there are few houses in the Eversdens available for under £250,000.

The only way young professionals or others could acquire a house in this area was through schemes such as these for affordable housing.

### *Legality and Planning Regulations*

A detailed resumé of the planning legislation on rural housing was made in support of the claim that no houses should be allowed on OSP 148.

It did not appear to alter the situation outlined by the Chairman at the start of the meeting.

### *The Eversdens now have few amenities. Are they therefore suitable for expansion?*

There is now no shop, pub, school and only a limited bus-service.

It was argued that people should not be encouraged to come to a village which had few facilities and the need for them to drive to work was environmentally undesirable.

It was pointed out that most of the objectors themselves used their cars to get to work and to shop.

Villages need to grow and develop. They cannot be Museum Villages. They need a community of young people. The current situation in the Eversdens is very good for young families. There are excellent schools within reach and a new children's playground is much used. People must have the freedom to move as their circumstances change.

### *What is the present situation as regards planning?*

Two sites have been mentioned to SCDC. Their Development and Planning committees will consider them in due course. If they decide they are suitable, the normal planning procedures will follow, including consultation with the immediate neighbours and the Parish Council.

### *Who is eligible for these houses?*

Initially, only those with connections with the Eversdens. In the very unlikely event that not enough of those eligible could be found, SCDC could consider others.

There is an agreed points system for this.

### *What happens when the first owners leave?*

This depends on the initial agreement. Recent regulations say that the houses should remain as Affordable Houses and should not be sold on the open market. The Parish Council was strongly committed to this principle and SCDC was likely to support it.

### *Objections to OSP 148*

Difficulty of access.

Desire to retain it as green belt land. The 1991 inquiry had confirmed the land as Green Belt, but Mrs Heazell pointed out that conditions had changed considerably since that time.

Objections of neighbouring residents.

**Objections to Low Close (Harlton Road)**

Dangers of access.  
 Fear that if part of Low Close were to be used for housing, there would be pressure to extend the development further.  
 Loss of attractive landscape views.  
 Objections about lack of consultation by the PC (and one claim of misinformation) before the PC mentioned the site to SCDC.

**Why not 20 houses on one site instead of 10 on two?**

Consideration for existing residents means that the addition of 10 houses is less burdensome than 20 would be.

**Are there any other sites available?**

None have come to the notice of the PC since October 2005, when this matter was first discussed. But at the meeting David Ellis said that he would consider offering the field between Bucks Lane and Finch's Field as an alternative. He had initially thought it less suitable, and had therefore offered Low Close in preference.

**Results of Survey of Village Households**

A leaflet had been circulated about the Public Meeting which invited people to state their views if they could not come to the meeting. There was probably some overlap between those who answered the survey and those who came to the meeting. But the results of the survey were:

47 responses	OSP 148 Gt. Eversden	Low Close Lt. Eversden
In favour of Both sites - 30	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 32	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 34
In favour of Little only - 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 13
In favour of Great only - 2		
Not in favour at all - 11		
Great Eversden Households – 19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4
Little Eversden Households – 28	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 9

Note: There was an important misprint in the Report on the Parish Council in the last Tail Corn (Winter 2006). The section on Affordable Housing should have read:

*Although there were NO firm plans at present as to what could be done with the Harlton Road site, points to be noted were...*

Apologies are due to all who were alarmed by the error and thanks to John White who noticed it

THE SECOND SCHEDULE

1. There shall be constructed upon the property only dwellings for occupation either  
(a) upon assured tenancies at affordable rent;  
or  
(b) upon shared ownership leases, as defined by Section 622 of the Housing Act 1965
2. The occupation of any dwelling shall be limited to a qualifying person
3. Qualifying persons from Great Evernden shall have priority of allocation before qualifying persons from other neighbouring parishes in the District of South Cambridgeshire and if there shall be none found at the time of allocation in such neighbouring parishes then in the remaining parishes in the administrative district of the Council
4. "Qualifying person" shall mean an individual falling within one of the groups (1) to (4), and preamble, described in Policy H23 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan set out in the THIRD SCHEDULE hereto (or any adopted modification thereof) and shall include any dependant relative of him/her living with him/her and his or her widow or widower
5. "Affordable rent" shall mean a rent or other payment for use and/or occupation ... in accordance with the National Federation of Housing Associations' Indicator Rent for that type of dwelling in the