

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 2nd February 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/2069/04/RM - Longstanton
Erection of 153 Dwellings and Ancillary Works on Land West of Longstanton
(Phase 2 - Home Farm) for
Cofton Ltd, Peter Stroude, George Wimpey East Anglia and Kings Oak Homes Ltd

Recommendation: Approval
Date for Determination: 7th January 2005

Site and Proposal

1. This open and largely featureless site extends to 6.4 hectares (15.8 acres) and has, until recently, been in agricultural use. Over Road bounds the site to the west. Agricultural land extends to the north, beyond a watercourse. High Street is situated to the east, beyond an awarded watercourse. Along its Over Road frontage, the site is bounded by an established hedge. A Public Footpath crosses the site from southwest to northeast.
2. This reserved matters application, received on 8th October 2004 and amended by plans date stamped 18th January 2005, provides details of the siting and design of, the means of access to and landscaping for 153 dwellings on the second of three phases that are intended to provide 500 dwellings (outline planning permission S/0682/95/O). The proposed density is 24 dwellings per hectare.
3. The proposal (as amended) includes five areas of open space within the development which would accommodate Local Areas for Play (LAPs).
4. The development would be comprised of 12 (8%) no. 2-bedroom dwellings, 35 (23%) no. 3-bedroom, 58 (38%) no. 4-bedroom and 48 (31%) no. 5 plus-bedroom houses.
5. Approximately 50% of the dwellings (77) would be 2-storey, 38.5% (59) 2½ storey and 11.5% (17) would be 3 storey. The ridge heights of the proposed dwellings range from 6.8 to 10.5 metres with one pyramid roof on a 3-storey element rising to 11.7m.
6. The access would be off Over Road, and this would serve a number of secondary roads, shared surface access ways and 'Home Zones'.
7. The application is accompanied by a Planning and Design Statement.

Relevant Recent History

8. Outline planning permission for comprehensive phased development to provide B1050 Bypass for Longstanton and related road works together with housing (21Ha), a business park (6.3Ha), extension to village recreation ground (2.8Ha), village green including land for local shop and surgery, open space, landscaping and related infrastructure` on land west of Longstanton, including the application site, was granted in October 2000 (**S/0682/95/O**). The Decision Notice was issued following the signing of a legal agreement relating to education contributions and highway

works. Condition 16 restricted development to no more than 500 dwellings unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

9. An application to vary conditions 2 and 3 of **S/0682/95/O**, which relate to the timescales for the submission of details and the commencement of development, was submitted under reference **S/1268/02/F**. This application has been treated as withdrawn.
10. **S/1762/03/RM** - 91 dwellings and ancillary works (Phase 1) - approved 22.12.03.
11. An appeal against a refusal to vary condition 16 of the Outline Planning Consent **S/0682/95/O** to allow the construction of more than 500 dwellings was dismissed by an Inspector's letter dated 29th November 2004.
12. **S/0246/04/RM** - Duplicate application for 200 dwellings (Phase 2) - Appeal pending against non-determination.
13. **S/0696/04/RM** - Duplicate application for 200 dwellings (Phase 2) - Refused for the following reasons:
 - “1. The proposed density at 31.25 dwellings per hectare, which exceeds the approved density of Phase 1 (29.3 d/h), would be contrary to the development principles of the Adopted Development Brief for Home Farm, would fail, in the absence of an appropriate master plan, to coherently implement the phased provision of 500 dwellings over the whole Home Farm site as required by the Outline Planning Permission, reference **S/0682/95/O** dated October 2000 and would not reflect the character of the existing built environment; consequently the proposal would be contrary to Policies P1/3 - Sustainable Design in Built Development of the Approved Structure Plan 2003 and HG5, HG10 and Longstanton 1 of the approved South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.
 2. The design and layout of the proposed development fails to achieve a sufficiently high standard of design and a sense of place as required by Policies P1/3 - Sustainable Design in Built Development of the Structure Plan 2003 and HG10 of the Local Plan 2004 and by the adopted Longstanton Development Brief 1998.”
14. **S/0625/04/RM** - Reserved Matters application for the construction of on-site roads and sewers (Phase 2) - In progress.
15. **S/0845/04/RM** and **S/1429/04/RM** - Duplicate Reserved Matters applications for 103 dwellings on part Phase 3 - In progress.
16. **S/1864/04/F** - Application for balancing pond and scheme of ditch widening to serve development approved by virtue of outline planning permission **S/0682/95/O** - subject of another item on this agenda.
17. An application to vary Condition 16 of the Outline Planning Consent **S/0682/95/O** to allow the construction of 630 dwellings is in progress.

Planning Policy

18. The site forms part of the 21 hectare area of land allocated for some 500 dwellings on land north of Over in South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: 2004 **Policy HG5**.

19. The principles of development are encapsulated in **Policy Longstanton 1** of the Local Plan 2004. The supporting text at Paragraph 67.17 states:
- "The District Council has granted outline planning permission for residential, employment and recreation uses, which includes the provision of a development related bypass. The bypass between Hatton Road, Over Road and Station Road would provide access to Over or Willingham and onto Fenland without passing through the village. The District Council considers that the provision of the bypass is crucial for the village and therefore allocated a larger area for a housing estate than would otherwise be appropriate. In this instance there is no requirement for affordable housing as set out in **Policy HG7** because of the need to ensure the provision of the bypass and other community facilities such as a village green, shop and surgery".
20. Longstanton is defined as a Group Village in South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: 2004 (**Policy SE4**).
21. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P1/3** requires all new developments to incorporate high standards of sustainability and design and to provide a sense of place which:
- "Responds to the local character of the built environment;
 - Is integrated with adjoining landscapes;
 - Creates distinctive skylines, focal points, and landmarks;
 - Includes variety and surprise within a unified design;
 - Includes streets, squares and other public spaces with a defined sense of enclosure;
 - Includes attractive green spaces and corridors for recreation and biodiversity;
 - Conserves important environmental assets of the site;
 - Pays attention to the detail of forms, massing, textures, colours and landscaping."
22. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P5/3** states that densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable "Local Planning Authorities should seek to maximise the use of land by applying the highest density possible which is compatible with maintaining local character".
23. Local Plan 2004 **Policy HG10** states that residential developments will be required to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes (including 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings) and affordability, making the best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs. It also states that the design and layout of the scheme should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape and schemes should achieve high quality design and distinctiveness, avoiding inflexible standards and promoting energy efficiency.
24. Local Plan: 2004 **Policy TP1** states that the Council will seek to promote more sustainable transport choices and one of the ways this can be achieved is restricting car parking for residential developments to a maximum of an average of 1 ½ spaces per dwelling with a maximum of 2 spaces for 3+ bedroom dwellings in poorly accessible areas.

25. A development brief for the Home Farm site, covering matters such as development aims, design philosophy, scale of development, built form (advocating a series of townscape zones including greenways, village lanes, village streets and hamlets), architectural form and open space was adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 1998. Whilst design guidance has evolved since this brief was adopted, many of the principles contained within the brief remain relevant.
26. Government's **Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 3**, "Housing" (March 2000) aims to avoid developments which make inefficient use of land (those of less than 30 dwellings per hectare). In terms of village expansion, development should be designed sympathetically and laid out in keeping with the character of the village. Design and layout should be informed by the wider context, having regard to the townscape and landscape of the wider locality.

Consultation

27. **Longstanton Parish Council** comments:

"The new application proposes house numbers consistent with achieving a maximum of 500 homes on Home Farm. The Parish Council has no objection to the numbers or to the proposed layout of the homes but recommends refusal on the following grounds:

- **Sewerage:** Anglian Water has stated to SCDCC that any homes beyond Phase 1 would require significant infrastructure improvement. The improvements proposed by both Anglian Water and the Home Farm developers included a new drain to Utton's Drove. The current Phase II plan, however, does not include sewerage infrastructure improvements. Given the village's recurrent problems with sewage flooding and Anglian Water's statement that a new drain is needed, Phase II must only be permitted if these improvements are made before homes are occupied. Improvements to the pumping station only get the village back to an acceptable level of risk *without* the Home Farm development.
- **Surface Drainage:** The Parish Council stated previously that the Home Farm drainage strategy is sufficient for Phase I, but any further development must require a diversion of Longstanton Brook. The Cofton plan includes no such measure. This failsafe flood risk mitigation measure is the only way to ensure Longstanton (including Home Farm) is not put at greater risk due to the development. We especially note that the latest Environment Agency risk assessment has increased the area within the village deemed to be at risk, and includes areas in the Environment Agency's highest risk category."

28. **Swavesey Parish Council** objects to this application, as with previous applications for development at Home Farm on the following grounds:

- Local sewage system - additional pressure from increased development will be put onto the local sewage system, which is currently believed to be at capacity.
- Future flood risk to the surrounding area resulting from the proposed development. In the light of recent flood events around Swavesey, concern over future flood risk is high.
- Further development in this area will lead to an increase in traffic levels along Ramper Road, Swavesey. This road is currently deteriorating rapidly and cannot cope with further increased traffic use and is becoming increasingly dangerous

for use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. Improvements to Ramper Road are urgently required if this housing development is to be approved.”

29. **Willingham Parish Council** recommends refusal for the following reason:

“**Willingham Parish Council** has maintained for some time that major development along the B1050 between Earith and Bar Hill should not take place until Willingham village is by-passed. The existing route of the B1050, through the centre of the village is already heavily congested and further developments can only cause more environmental damage as well as increase the risk of accidents. In maintaining a consistent approach WPC therefore refuses this application.”

30. **Bar Hill Parish Council** recommends refusal “because of traffic implications and that future flooding has not been taken into consideration”.

31. **Over Parish Council recommends** refusal:

“Concerns that by-pass needs to be in place prior to development starting. We reiterate our concerns regarding flooding in this area, and we do not see why such a high level of additional housing is necessary when an additional even larger development is planned at ‘Northstowe’.

Yet more traffic flow onto the A14!

We would like to see if this development does go ahead what measures will be put in place to ensure this does not ‘sprawl’ out onto other villages”

32. **Environment Agency** has no objections from the Land Drainage/Flood Defence point of view. It has stated, in respect of the earlier application for 200 dwellings, that the submitted plans and associated documentation satisfactorily demonstrates to the Agency that the development proposals are in line with the agreed drainage strategy. The agreed strategy involves certain channel modifications to the local watercourses to allow additional capacity within the receiving system and the construction of a balancing pond downstream. Details are the subject of a current application (see Paragraph 16 above). It is recommended that a condition be imposed requiring a scheme of pollution control to be agreed.

33. **Middle Level Commissioners** comment: “The Commissioners, on the Board’s behalf, have recently concluded negotiations with the applicant’s consultant and the Environment Agency to ensure that the Home Farm development does not detrimentally affect the Board’s area. It has been agreed that a flow-balancing pond will be constructed near Gravel Bridge to accommodate flows within Longstanton brook whilst Webb’s Hole Sluice is closed during periods of high water levels in the River Great Ouse System. This pond was the subject of planning application S/1864/04/F.

During the above negotiations, it was agreed that:

- i) The plans submitted with this planning application meet the Board’s approval and are based upon the current proposals for 500 houses at Home Farm.
- ii) The balancing pond must be completed to its maximum dimensions and the necessary flow-regulation structures installed and operational before work on the Home Farm development commences on site, i.e. not a phased construction to match the various development stages.”

34. **Anglian Water** had no objections to raise in principle but requested that a condition requiring the submission of details of foul and surface water drainage be imposed, in respect of the earlier application for 200 dwellings.

Anglian Water also stated that the current infrastructure can accommodate Phase 1 development but capacity will not exist for the remaining properties until improvements in the infrastructure have been completed. Anglian Water is currently working on a scheme.

35. **Local Highways Authority** comments are awaited:
36. **The Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service** asks that adequate provision is made for fire hydrants by way of Section 106 agreement or condition.
37. **Cambridge Water Company** has no objections and is able to make water available to the whole of the proposed development by reinforcing the local mains network. The Developers have been made aware of the likely costs.
38. **County Council's Definitive Map Officer (DMO)** has discussed with the applicants improvements of Public Footpath No. 3 necessitated by the Development specifically in regard to surfacing in the central open space to the north, replacement bridge where the path joins the open space and a link between the open space westwards to the new public bridleway/leisure walk.
39. The DMO is disappointed that the applicant has decided not to create a public link from Phase 2's recreation area alongside the drain to Phase 1 (northeast site boundary). This may be a "lost way". It would make good use of an existing natural feature and would pre-empt the public's acquisition of a right of way through prescription.
40. It is also regretful that a public footpath link from the access to Phase 2 along Over Road to link with Public Footpath No. 2 Longstanton has not been proposed. This would have fulfilled the duties under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 and the environmental policies of the Structure Plan to improve the rights of way network by providing a safe link between existing rights of way facilitating better access to both community facilities and the countryside.
41. The developers in their revised plans have incorporated Public Footpath No. 3 Longstanton, which is directly affected by the development, largely along its original line. No separate legal order would be required to accommodate the footpath, provided that the sections affected by the access road **fully** incorporate the footpath as public highway through a Section 38 Agreement, and that the line of the current path is not obstructed in any way.
42. A landscaped 'table' has been provided at the T-junction, where the current footpath crosses. In order to ensure the safe passage of pedestrians, not only of those moving within the estate but also those passing through it on the footpath, it is recommended that a demarcated crossing is provided. It would be most logical to locate the crossing on the northern side, so that pedestrians only have to cross the road once in order to continue along the footpath. The demarcation should take the form of coloured, raised bricks and line-marking. This, however, is not to imply that there should be no other crossing round the table should that be considered necessary.
43. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** has no objections.

44. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** comments as follows:

“Whilst a degree of permeability is seen as necessary for community interaction too many footpaths and through routes in a development make crime easier to commit by providing additional escape routes and the anonymity offenders seek. The path between plots 8 and 9 linking the parking court to the footpath and the public open space beyond should be removed with the additional benefit of providing clearly identifiable defensible space to protect the side elevation of plot 8. The path between plots 10 and 11 should be incorporated within the curtilage of plot 10, while the path to the front of plots 15 and 18 linking the two parking courts could benefit by being brought to an end at a point close to each front door. Given the planting adjacent to Over Road and the little likelihood that the path would be used to any great extent by users other than the occupiers it will benefit from only low levels of natural surveillance through use.

45. There are areas where the nature of the space is not clear so that conflict can arise over whether the space is public. Such is the case between the dwelling/garage block of plot 10 and the path leading to Over Road. The railings effectively fence off the front garden suggesting that the area beyond the front garden is not private. Given the fact that there is to be an additional side window the area should be incorporated within the curtilage of the dwelling. A similar issue arises on the other side of the public open space with plot 73. In relation to plot 11 a screen wall splits the side garden again leading to difficulties over definition of the spaces to either side.

46. While some of the dwellings in the home zone in the area of road 2 benefit from areas of private or semi private space others, most notably in the home zone around Road 4, do not. This can lead to conflict between occupants and those using the space immediately outside their dwellings as public space. It is not clear as to the status of the land next to side elevation of plot 21 between the plot and Over Road. If the space is not private than the exposed elevations are vulnerable to damage such as graffiti. Although the insertion of a window in the side elevation may improve natural surveillance it has the potential to increase the level of disturbance perceived by occupants from people outside. Similar issues are likely to arise in relation to plots 2, 11 and 12.

47. The gates providing access to the rear gardens of plots 16 and 17 should be brought forward as close as possible to the front build line. It is recommended that in order to facilitate this, and in any case that utility meters are positioned on front elevations thereby increasing legitimate street activity and reducing the reasons for people to be using side alleys and paths.

48. It is recommended that there is a clear boundary definition between the front gardens of plots 33 and 44. Fencing at least 1.8m high should be placed between plots 41 and 42 and 55 and 56 to prevent unauthorised access to the rear gardens.

49. Given the size of the parking court to the rear of plot 58 and the potential access to rear gardens bordering on to it, it is suggested that access to the parking court is controlled by means of electronically operated gates.”

50. **Council’s Lands Drainage Manager** has commented:

”Under Council’s Land Drainage Byelaws the following applies:

1. No excavating, hedging, fencing, buildings or other obstructions will be allowed within 5 metres of Council’s Award Drain.

2. Maintenance contribution will be required from developer to cover ease of enhanced maintenance work to Award Drain.”

51. **Ramblers Association** comments in respect of Public Footpath 3, which has been largely retained and incorporated into the development:

- (a) Surface should not be unduly disturbed;
- (b) Materials are not stored/dumped on it;
- (c) Vehicles visiting the site should not impede the safe passage of pedestrians; and
- (d) Any footpath signs are not obscured or removed during building works.

52. The Association further comments:

“We would like to recommend that the attractiveness of the housing development would be further enhanced, if an additional footpath were to be provided, following the south bank of the drain along its northern edge. The Planning Layout drawing suggests that there is ample space for such a footpath, outside the railings bounding the housing area, and that it could link into the development by way of the two “footpath links”, and also possibly to the end of the roadway shown as “Road 6”. Eventually we would like to see this footpath extended towards the Over Road, and continued along the back of the drain to cross the road at Gravel Bridge, and provide a link with Footpath No. 12 at Swavesey. Such a link would improve the opportunities for off-road communication to the west of Longstanton, which are at present conspicuously lacking.”

53. **English Nature** reiterates its previous comments:

- “(a) **Bats**
Section 1.1.4 of the Habitat Assessment Report refers to a bat survey being undertaken on trees along the Longstanton Drain and that these trees should be made safe and retained. If these trees are destined to be lost then the trees should be surveyed for bats in line with the statement in the landscape strategy.
- (b) **Water Voles**
We support the provision of a pre-construction water vole survey described in Section 1.1.8 of the Habitat Assessment Report.
- (c) **Badgers**
We support the provision of a pre-construction badger survey described in Section 1.1.9 of the Habitat Assessment Report.
- (d) **Birds**
Section 6.1.3 states “all hedges in the site are potential nesting habitat”. We would wish to learn if any are being lost and if so how will they be removed without impinging on nesting birds. We request that a planning condition is used to prevent scrub and tree removal during the bird nesting season.
- (e) **Landscape Management Strategy**
We would wish to see the Landscape Management Strategy focus on how the scheme would create biodiversity gains and contribute to the targets in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Action Plan.”

54. **The Council's Ecology Officer** comments:

"I do not believe there to be any significant biodiversity interest within the application site itself, thus my comments are limited.

I find it slightly disappointing that the 'sustainability' section of the submitted 'Planning and design Statement' does not make any reference to biodiversity. The conservation of biodiversity is a key test of sustainable development. The following measures could contribute to the sites potential for biodiversity and should be incorporated: erection of specialist bird and bat boxes upon garages and services buildings, fence lifting by 150mm to assist the movement of small animals, increased use of street trees and climbing plants against walls. Greater emphasis could have been placed upon creating green corridor through the site."

55. **The Council's Strategic Development Officer** comments that a Sustainability Appraisal should underpin the planning and design statement. It should consider climate change, energy efficiency, the need to refer to Building Research Establishment's "A Sustainability Checklist for Developments", the importance of renewables in new developments, possibility of car-sharing schemes and car clubs, creation of home zones (incorporated in amended scheme), sustainable urban drainage systems, locally sourced labour, verifiably sustainable materials, the on-site recording and monitoring of waste and local provision and/or access to local shops, services and community facilities.

56. **The Council's Landscape Design Officer** has made a number of specific comments on particular drawings and inconsistencies between particular drawings.

57. **The Council's General Works Manager** has not commented on this application, but made the following comments in respect of the application for 200 dwellings.

Specifically:

(1) "Will all the numbered lanes and roads be constructed:-

- (a) To take 6 x 4 heavy goods vehicles with a minimum gross weight of 26 tonnes;
- (b) Using materials that will withstand tyre scrub; and
- (c) So that the hammerheads will facilitate turning and reversing without the need to encroach on verges or footways bearing in mind not all residents will have off-street parking.

(2) Could you please confirm:-

- (a) Every dwelling will be provided with suitable and approved storage facilities for a minimum of 2 wheeled bins and a 55 litre kerbside box;
- (b) That the construction of the dwellings facilitates waste collection from the front boundary of each property;
- (c) The purpose of the 'refuse collection points' as shown by blue stars; and
- (d) That every property can be driven passed or up to by a 26 tonnes GVW RCV. It would appear that this is not the case, some are served

by a footpath only (from Over Road) and others by a lesser carriageway (between lane 2 and road 2. Also lane 1 from road 1 does not appear to be accessible). Areas that cannot be easily reached by vehicle will require a location for residents to take their containers for emptying without encroaching on other residents' land or amenity."

58. **The Council's Cultural Services Manager** has commented on issues relating to the discharge of conditions on the outline planning permission (Landscape Management Strategy, Neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) on the recreation ground extension and locally equipped area for play (LEAP) on the central open space). These are not for consideration at this meeting.
59. Of relevance to this reserved matters application are her comments on the LAPs, as follows:
- "(a) I am still concerned about LAP 5 at the most southerly tip of the development (The LAPs were numbered last time). It still relates very much to the property next to it and is unlikely to be used as public space.
 - (b) I would like to see a variety of design features for these LAPs to help stimulate children's movement and play. For example a mix of paved and grass areas with possibly playground surface markings and features. Also some boundary feature to ensure the safety of children playing close to roads.
 - (c) The LAPs should include a bench and bin.
 - (d) Other design features and signage detail would be appreciated.
 - (e) I am still concerned about the electric sub station situated at the LAP to the north west of the development. They create noise and I would like to see detail on the design of this LAP."
60. **County Principal Archaeologist** comments:

"The site has been subject to a programme of archaeological investigation, in accordance with an agreed written scheme of investigation. The investigation revealed settlement related activity of medieval date, and has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the development of the medieval village at Longstanton. The fieldwork phase of this project is now complete and the archaeological contractors (Birmingham Archaeology) are currently undertaking the post excavation analysis of the site. No further fieldwork is considered necessary in this area."

61. The comments of consultees upon the amended drawings will be reported orally.

Representations

62. The Occupiers of three properties in Longstanton object to the scheme on the following grounds:
- Existing foul water problems will be exacerbated by this development. Over Treatment Works is already overloaded;

- There should be no bridleway on Few Lane. Its surface is not suitable. Public footpath status should be retained;
- Public footpath 3 should not cross an estate road which is part of the main route through the estate without a pedestrian controlled crossing being provided;
- It is questioned whether adequate safeguards are in place regarding the bypass and the provision of an extension to the recreation ground;
- To develop the site of the former farm buildings would be an asset to the village but the remainder is ill-conceived and fragmented; it will have no positive benefit to the village. The need for the bypass no longer exists. The coming of Northstowe and a completely new road infrastructure will benefit Longstanton and the surrounding villages in a way that Home Farm never could;
- No consideration should be given to any more reserved matter applications until a master plan has been submitted for both the Home Farm and Northstowe proposed development sites.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

63. The principle of erecting 500 dwellings on the Home Farm site has already been established by the grant of the outline permission. The permission allows for the phased development of the site, and includes conditions relating to the phasing of the residential development, business park, open spaces and the timing/thresholds for the provision of the necessary infrastructure and roads.
64. This reserved matters application provides details of the siting, design, means of access and landscaping structure to Phase 2 of the residential element of the development approved in 2000 (S/0682/95/O) only, and these are the matters to be considered.
65. The key issues are:
- (a) Density and numbers;
 - (b) Design and layout; and
 - (c) Drainage.

Density

66. The density of development on the site is guided by:
- (a) The outline planning permission, condition 16;
 - (b) The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 **Policies SE4, HG5 and 'Longstanton 1'**;
 - (c) The adopted Development Brief for Home Farm;
 - (d) The approved Structure Plan **Policy P5/3**; and
 - (e) **PPG3**, Housing.
67. Condition 16 of the outline permission states that "Not more than 500 dwellings shall be constructed on the site unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority". This equates to approximately 24 dwellings to the hectare. The reason for condition 16 is "To ensure an appropriate balance is achieved between scale of development and the provision of essential services, infrastructure and the Longstanton Bypass". In his January 2002 report, the Local Plan Inspector recommended that Longstanton

be downgraded from a Rural Growth Village to a Group Village in view of its relative poor level of sustainability. The District Council incorporated this change in its adopted Local Plan (**Policy SE4**).

68. The proposed density of 24 dwellings to the hectare on Phase 2 would satisfactorily implement condition 16 of the outline planning permission and would comply with Policies SE4 and Longstanton 1 of the Local Plan.
69. Reserved Matters on Phase 1 have been approved at 29.3d/h. Phase 1 and proposed Phase 2 would leave a residue of some 256 (271 if **Policy SE4** is taken into account) dwellings on 11.5 hectares in Phase 3 at a density of 22.3 d/h (23.6 d/h). This, in my opinion, is realistic having regard to the Development Brief which, envisages greater areas of lower density in the form of 'village lanes' and 'hamlets' in Phase 3, whilst still incorporating some higher density areas of 'village streets'.
70. Having regard to the outline planning permission Condition 16 and the adopted Development Brief's illustrative Master Plan, it is, in my view, appropriate for the density of the whole of Phase 2 to be lower than the approved density of Phase 1.
71. Clearly the approved Structure Plan **Policy P5/3** and **PPG3** advice would support a higher density than that proposed in this application. However the circumstances which led to the imposition of condition 16 on the outline planning permission have not materially changed. The applicants are pursuing the question of density and numbers on the whole site by other means. That will be the opportunity to consider the costs and benefits of any additional dwellings in terms of transport, education, open space and affordable housing obligations, together with impact upon infrastructure capacities. That application would also need to be considered in the context of Development Plan Policies (see above) or those appertaining at the time of determination of the application.
72. 7As a Reserved Matters application, the density is acceptable.

Design and Layout

73. The adopted Development Brief sets out a series of design principles to ensure the new development is appropriate in terms of scale and style. The illustrative Master Plan shows how these principles could be put into practice. This indicates that Phase 2 would contain an element of each townscape zone (greenways, village lanes, village streets, and hamlets) with these more informal, lower density areas located to the west, on the periphery of the site.
74. An assessment of the design and layout proposals of the amended scheme has been carried out for this Council by an experienced Design Architect. I quote below the general comments:
75. "The site itself is split into two zones separated by the main spine road. To the South and East is located the George Wimpey East Anglia Ltd development and to the North and West is the Kingsoak Homes Ltd development. The spine road forms the only access into the site and separates the two developers' proposals. The road pattern around the site is generally acceptable providing a number of styles and grades of roads and accesses. A number of footpaths are provided around and across the site which provide good permeability. Positions of buildings are generally well considered to provide overlooking of public open spaces and footpaths and vista stops at important junctions, however, there does appear to be a lack of focal point buildings around the site (these are detailed in the assessment). The proposed

layout reflects the general concept of density/character zones included in the development brief.

76. **General Comments**

1. Pavement widths and road widths around the scheme should be varied in order to provide an informal arrangement and variation in streetscene;
2. The implementation of semi-mature landscaping features should be considered in order to provide an established sense of place to focal areas within the site;
3. The scheme would generally benefit from some further variation in street scenes by the introduction of some frontages tight to the back edge of the pavement and some further gables positioned on to the street;
4. The detailing of front garden areas needs to be carefully considered along the tree lined spine road, the use of front walls and/or railings should be considered along with brick garden walls of varying heights around the scheme. It is important to recognise that the use of front boundary garden treatments of this type can act as a good device to break down the scale of the buildings behind whilst also providing defensible space to the dwellings themselves. The use of walling in particular allows pinch points to be created within streetscapes when positioned hard along the back edge of pavement or road edge.
5. The submission of streetscenes, particularly for key road junction areas, would be useful.
6. Details of proposed materials and finishes to be provided.
7. The scheme would benefit from the introduction of further landscaping and in particular tree and hedge planting, to reinforce it's green village imagery."

77. The assessment incorporates detailed comments and suggestions which are aimed to improve the quality of the scheme and to highlight weaknesses within it. There are also detailed comments on, and suggested improvements to, house types, particularly those in the Kingsoak Homes Ltd development. One house type is considered to be completely inappropriate. In two cases, building proportions need to be adjusted and one house type should be used in groupings of four. The remainder are considered to be generally acceptable subject to suggested elevational improvements.

78. Wimpey house types have been considered to be acceptable.

79. The above assessment, coupled with comments and concerns of the Council's Landscape Design Officer have been discussed with the applicants. At the time of preparing this report I am hopeful that many of these comments will be addressed, either in the amended drawings or by conditions.

Drainage

80. Conditions attached to the outline permission state that no development shall commence until a phased scheme of foul and surface water drainage has been approved by the Local Planning Authority and constructed. Discussions between the applicants and the relevant parties (Environment Agency, Council's Drainage Manager, Middle Level Commissioners and the Longstanton Residents for Dry

Homes Group) have concluded in the agreement of a surface water drainage strategy. This strategy does not impact upon the layout of this reserved matters application but is to be taken forward by virtue of the application referred to in Paragraph 16 above and which has been the subject of discussion at the Land Drainage Advisory Group on 14th December 2004.

81. Although the capacity does not yet exist in the foul water drainage system to cater for development in excess of some 100 dwellings, condition 23 of the outline planning permission precludes further development commencing until the necessary improvements to the infrastructure have been completed. These comprise an upgrade to the existing pumping station, which will then pump all the sewage to Utton Drove Sewerage Treatment Works via a new rising main.
82. All necessary conditions are already imposed on the outline planning permission. No further drainage-related conditions are necessary or appropriate at this reserved matters stage. Therefore, there is no reason to withhold approval of reserved matters on this ground alone.

Other Matters

83. A condition of the outline planning permission requires the provision of fire hydrants.
84. Any improvements to Ramper Road, between Longstanton and Swavesey are outside the scope of the consideration of this application.
85. The outline planning permission does not provide for a Willingham bypass. This application cannot be withheld for that reason.
86. Further consideration is to be given to the road crossings of Public footway No. 3 having regard to comments from the County Council's DMO. A bridleway through the perimeter landscaping area will provide wider links and pedestrian routes between Phases 2 and 1 will provide links to Over Road and the Recreation Ground to the south.
87. The applicants have indicated that they will respond to the Council's General Works Manager's comments, although the application is accompanied by a refuse collection layout.
88. Although the number of LAPs provide satisfactory coverage, their design appears to warrant further attention. This is the subject of further consultation.
89. There is no reason to withhold the grant of reserved matters, which complies with the requirements of the outline planning permission and the Development Plan, on the grounds of awaiting a Master Plan for Northstowe.

Recommendation

90. I shall report progress on the submission of amended drawings and the representations received in relation to those drawings. But I anticipate being in a position to recommend approval of details of siting, design, means of access and the landscape structure for the erection of 153 dwellings and ancillary works.

Background Papers:

Reserved Matters Applications File Refs S/2069/04/RM and S/0696/04/RM

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
Development Brief for Home Farm, Longstanton 1998

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