

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

5 December 2012

**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

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### **S/1855/12/OL – GREAT WILBRAHAM**

**Residential development to provide six dwellings comprising three two-bedroom dwellings, two three-bedroom dwellings and one four-bedroom dwelling and vehicular access (outline planning permission including details of access, layout and scale).**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 5 November 2012**

#### **Update to the report**

#### **Agenda report paragraph number 4 – Site and Proposal**

Correction: the density of development is 18 dwellings per hectare.

#### **Agenda report paragraph number 11 – Ecology Officer**

The Ecology has responded to the ecological objections raised to the proposed development. The site is a meadow that consists of improved pastures. The Ecology Officer does not attach a significant biodiversity value to the flora of the meadow as during his visit in autumn 2011 there were very few herbs apparent. The grassland was not of a tussocky nature suggesting that it is topped throughout the year (tussock grassland can harbour large numbers of small mammals that provide prey for birds and larger mammals).

The site's most valuable features are its boundary hedges and trees all of which are shown to be retained.

He notes that it is reported that the church provides a roost for brown long-eared bats. The boundary trees will help to mitigate any light spill that may result from the development and the retention of boundary trees and hedges will retain some flight paths around the sites should bats still need to traverse the area. He does not consider Gt Wilbraham to be so densely developed that this dark area represents the only flight and feeding area for bats in the locality. Gt Wilbraham has other areas of rough grassland nearby that in his view can also be used for feeding (to the NW of this site and at Temple Springs)

He notes reports of owls calling from the trees. Tawny owls will often call from trees in gardens and this is not a reason to object to the development.

He notes that snakes, weasels and hedgehogs have been reported from the site but he does not believe that they live entirely in the site. He has no objection to this site's development on ecological grounds

#### **Agenda report paragraph number 13 – Trees and Landscape Officer**

The Trees and Landscape Officer has provided additional detailed advice following a meeting with the agent:

- a) 'The trees along the south-western boundary T2 – T13 and G1-G2 are predominantly conifer species of varying size and structural integrity, while they do provide some screening along this boundary in the context of the proposed development their retention is not desirable in terms of their integration therefore I have no objections to their removal. The boundary treatment discussed for this edge was close board with replacement trees proposed to include Silver birch where shading into the garden of plot 6 needs to be considered and Beech to provide tree cover which will provide a majestic specimen in the future with Wild service tree and Field maple to be planted near to the access.
- b) 'The trees on the north-eastern boundary are a mix of Sycamore, conifer species and Ash the following were discussed as an appropriate approach once again taking into consideration suitability of retention with proposed layout, longevity – while this will not prevent the gardens from being shaded it will allow for more light to penetrate: -  
T017 – Crown lift to 5m remove ivy  
G005 – Remove  
G004 – Group of 3 Sycamore identified from left to right as G004A, B & C, G004 A & C remove, CB retain remove ivy and crown lift to 5m  
T016 – Retain, remove ivy and crown lift to 5m  
T017 – Retain, remove ivy crown lift to 5m, inspect union of large lower lateral on south east side and if not structurally compromised thin out the limb by 15%  
G003 – Remove
- c) 'The boundary treatment for this edge was discussed with the agent and proposed to be of a post and wire/stock fencing with a mixed native hedge consisting of, Field Maple, Hornbeam, Guelder Rose, Wayfaring and Spindle (20% of each) planted at 60cm centres along a double staggered row. This is to enable the rural aspect to be retained from the fields beyond. To be included along this boundary is a Beech near the eastern corner as it is likely that the longevity of the Ash may be limited due to the current Ash die back situation.
- d) 'The proposed will alleviate some of the shading issues while providing replacement planting to help integrate the development into this rural aspect without enclosing it within fencing or over planted and seems to be deliverable by the agent.'

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