

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee

3<sup>rd</sup> August 2005

**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/1121/05/O - Teversham  
Erection of Village Meeting Hall, Recreation Ground Car Park,  
High Street for Teversham Parish Council**

**Departure Application  
Recommendation: Approval  
Date for Determination: 6<sup>th</sup> September 2005 – Major Application**

**Members will visit the site on Monday 1 August.**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. Existing car-park, 0.15 ha in area, on the south-eastern edge of the village. There are houses on High Street to the north-west; to the rear and opposite, is arable land. The north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries are well screened by existing hedges and trees, whilst the north-western boundary is defined by a concrete road which leads to the Recreation Ground and the Teversham sewage works.
2. The outline application, received 7 June, proposes the erection of a Village Meeting Hall which will consist of a basic hall, plus kitchen area, storage facilities and toilets. A garden area will be provided (for play groups etc) and the car-park, at present unsurfaced, will be properly laid out. It is anticipated that approximately 28 parking spaces could be achieved. All matters are reserved other than means of access.

### **Planning History**

3. Access to the car-park was originally taken off the concrete road but in 1996 consent was granted for a new vehicular access direct to High Street.

### **Planning Policy**

4. The site lies in the Green Belt and outside the village framework. As such the following policies are relevant.
  - i) Structure Plan. **P1/2 Environmental Restrictions on Development.** Restricts development within the countryside unless it can be demonstrated to be essential.  
**P/3/4 Rural Services and Facilities.** Encourages village shopping facilities and key community services.  
**P9/2a Green Belt.** Restricts inappropriate development within the Green Belt to maintain its openness and character.
  - ii) Local Plan: **GB1 Green Belt.** Seeks to protect the character of Cambridge.  
**GB2 Green Belt.** Inappropriate development will not be permitted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

### **Consultation**

5. **Teversham Parish Council** “unanimously supports the application”.
6. The **Local Highway Authority** recommends refusal, stating:
7. “The site is located right on the edge of the village, hardly convenient for most residents. As a consequence, it is highly likely that most trips to the hall will be by motor car.
8. Visibility to the north of the existing access is severely restricted. The High Street is subject to a 30mph speed limit requiring a visibility ‘y’ distance of 90.0m. Due to the horizontal alignment of High Street, the actual visibility that can be achieved to the north is only some 41.5m.
9. In addition, on-street parking within High Street in association with the houses on the east side adds to the problem.
10. I acknowledge that the access exists and that it serves the parking area for the recreation ground. However, a village hall is likely to generate substantially more vehicular traffic, on a daily basis, than could be expected to be generated by the recreation ground. As in other villages, various village groups will be encouraged to utilize the facility during the day and evening to make the hall viable.
11. I appreciate that, when football matches are played on the recreation ground, the car park is sometimes full and indeed on-street parking occurs. However, this is a scenario that occurs very occasionally and the incidence of on-street parking illustrates that the existing parking area should not be reduced.
12. I realize that the Parish Council has investigated other sites, and that my negative comments and recommendation will not be welcome. However, due to the access problems, it remains my view that this is not the right location for this facility and this application should be resisted unless and until the visibility to the north is improved.”
13. **The Environment Agency** requests the imposition of conditions requiring the submission and agreement of details of both foul and surface water drainage.

#### **Representations - Applicant**

14. Attached as Appendix 1, is a supporting statement from the Teversham Village Hall Committee.
15. Attached as Appendix 2, is a breakdown of comments from the village survey.
16. Also submitted with the application were letters of support from the SCDC Returning Officer who would be interested in using the Hall for all future elections, James Paice, MP, County Councillor Robert Turner, the Secretary of Teversham Terriers FC and the headteacher of Teversham Primary School. There were also two letters from residents.

#### **Representations - Neighbours**

- i) **Support:**
  - a) Will provide a focus for the community
  - b) Facility is essential for all uses
  - c) Will mean the school not having to close for elections

- ii) **Oppose:**
- a) Whilst good facilities must be provided for the youth of the village, a village hall cannot be supported.
  - b) Access is highly dangerous
  - c) Suitability of site has not been discussed by the Village Hall committee
  - d) Parking is already a problem on site, with overflow parking on the farm road and the highway
  - e) The site is rather remote from the village which is why the present Recreation Ground is under-utilised by villagers.
  - f) A more central site should be closer
  - g) Increased noise pollution, traffic and lighting
  - h) Possibility of vandalism

**Other, non-planning, points raised include:**

- a) The site address is Fulbourn Road, not High Street
- b) The adjacent concrete road serves the Sewage Works, the Recreation Ground, various arable fields and No. 105 High Street
- c) Has building been properly costed? - could become a "white elephant"
- d) Problems with hiring the School should first be resolved
- e) A community hall is to be built during the airport development, - this scheme is premature

**Planning Comments**

17. There are two fundamental issues with this proposal, - Green Belt and access, balanced against gain to the community.
- i) **Green Belt**  
 A Village Meeting Hall in the Green Belt is, by definition, "inappropriate development". That said, the building would be sited immediately adjacent the village framework on the edge of the village which here comprises a continual row of 2 storey houses. Neither the character or openness of the Green belt would be affected as the north-east and south-east boundaries are well treed/hedged. Additional planting could be achieved if felt necessary.
- ii) **Access**  
 I cannot dispute what the Local Highway Authority has said with regards the access to the site. Being on the edge of the village it is extremely likely that many of the users of the Hall, despite living in the village, will drive there rather than walk/cycle. Although the access has limited visibility the majority of users will be local and therefore be aware of the situation.
18. It is clear from the statement which accompanied the application, see Appendix 1, that the present facilities in the village are sadly lacking resulting in some groups only meeting for part of the year, others probably not being able to expand/increase membership for lack of space whilst others, perhaps, are never formed because of lack of facilities. Appendix 2 shows the level of support for the scheme.
19. Officers are aware of the length of time, and the difficulties, that the Parish Council has been trying to find a suitable site. As one objector points out, this site is on the

edge of the village and a site more central would be better. Unfortunately there isn't one, nor is one likely to be available.

20. With such support in the village and this site being available I feel able to recommend the scheme for approval with "community gain" outweighing both Green Belt and access issues.

### **Recommendation**

21. As a Departure application, the proposal will be referred to the Secretary of State, subject to the Secretary of State not calling in the application. It is recommended that Members are minded to approve the Village Meeting Hall and car-park subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Condition B - RCB
2. SC1 Reserved matters a) b) c) and d) RC1
3. SC52 Implementation of landscaping RC52
4. SC5 Submission of details:
  - a) Materials "walls and roof" RC5 a) ii)
  - b) s.w. drainage RC5b
  - c) Foul drainage RC5c
  - d) Refuse storage accommodation RC5d)
  - e) Floor levels RC5e
  - f) Hard landscaping RC5f)
  - g) All external lighting RC To ensure excessive illumination does not damage the character of the area, cause nuisance to neighbours or damage to motorists.
5. Before development starts a scheme to acoustically insulate the building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented before the use hereby permitted commences. RC25.
6. SC27 Control of emissions. RC25.
7. The existing trees and hedgerows on the north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the site shall be fenced off and protected during all building operations; details of such protective fencing shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. RC56.
8. SC60. Boundary treatment. RC60.

### **Reasons for Approval**

1. Although the development represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt, it is considered that the provision of an essential facility for the village and the lack of an alternative site outside the Green Belt represent very special circumstances justifying support for the application.
2. The following policies of the Development Plan were taken into consideration in the determination of this application.

### **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**

P1/2 Environmental Restrictions on Development

P3/4 Rural Services and Facilities

P9/2a Green Belt

**Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**

GB1 Green Belt

GB2 Green Belt

2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: **Access, parking, remoteness from village, noise, traffic and light pollution, vandalism**

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

- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003**
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
- Planning File Ref: S/1121/05/O

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