

OTHER APPLICATIONS
(Reports by Development Control Manager)

Case No: 0802995FUL (FULL PLANNING APPLICATION)

Proposal: RETENTION OF USE OF LAND FOR AMENITY SPACE AND OCCASIONAL/OVERFLOW CAR PARKING FOR VILLAGE HALL

Location: LAND REAR OF EASTERN WESTERN COTTAGES HIGH STREET

Applicant: HEMINGFORD ABBOTS VILLAGE HALL

Grid Ref: 528251 271014

Date of Registration: 13.10.2008

Parish: HEMINGFORD ABBOTS

RECOMMENDATION - REFUSAL

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 This site is located in the centre of the village, to the side and rear of the village hall. It is an undeveloped piece of land, devoid of features apart from two trees towards the rear of the site. The boundaries are defined by a mix of 1.8m close boarded fence, and hedges. The access from High Street is 3m wide and 26m long. Apart from the village hall, the area is largely residential in land use, although there is a public house on the opposite side of the road.
- 1.2 The proposal is to provide additional amenity space for the village hall on the rear half of the site and additional overflow car parking on the front part, immediately behind Eastern and Western Cottages. The plans show 10 car parking spaces.
- 1.3 The site is within the built-up area of the village. It is also in the Conservation Area and the land is liable to flood.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 **PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)** contains advice on the operation of the plan-led system.
- 2.2 **PPG13 Transport (2001)** provides guidance in relation to transport and particularly the integration of planning and transport.
- 2.3 **PPG15 – ‘Planning and the Historic Environment’ (1994)** sets out Government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas and other elements of the historic

environment. It explains the role played by the planning system in their protection.

- 2.4 **PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk (2006)** sets out Government policy on development and flood risk. Its aims are to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall.

For full details visit the government website <http://www.communities.gov.uk> and follow the links to planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Policy.

3. PLANNING POLICIES

Further information on the role of planning policies in deciding planning applications can also be found at the following website: <http://www.communities.gov.uk> then follow links Planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Information and Guidance, Planning Guidance and Advice and then Creating and Better Place to Live

- 3.1 East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008) Policies viewable at <http://www.go-east.gov.uk> then follow links to Planning, Regional Planning then Related Documents

- **ENV7** – Quality in the Built Environment – requires new development to be of a high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration

- 3.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) Saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> follow the links to environment, planning, planning policy and Structure Plan 2003.

- None relevant

- 3.3 Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995) Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95

- **En5:** “Conservation area character” - development within or directly affecting Conservation Areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character or appearance.
- **En18:** “Protection for countryside features” – offers protection for important site features including trees, woodlands, hedges and meadows.
- **CS8:** “Water” – satisfactory arrangements for the availability of water supply, sewerage and sewage disposal facilities, surface water run-off facilities and provision for land drainage will be required.

3.4 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002) Saved policies from the Huntingdon Local Plan Alterations 2002 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan - Then click on "Local Plan Alteration (2002)

- None relevant.

3.5 Policies from the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning, then Planning then Planning+Policy then Informal policy statements where there is a link to Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007.

- **B4** – Amenity – developments should not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of existing and future occupiers.
- **B8** – Conservation Areas – states the criteria against which developments within or affecting a conservation area should be assessed.
- **G3** - Trees, Hedgerows and other environmental features – development proposals should minimise the risk of harm to trees, hedgerows or other environmental features of visual, historic or nature conservation value.
- **T1** – Transport Impacts – development proposals should be capable of being served by safe convenient access to the transport network and should not give rise to traffic volumes that exceed the capacity of the local transport network.
- **T2** – Car and Cycle Parking – development proposals should limit car parking and provide cycle parking facilities to the levels set out in the Council’s parking standards.
- **P10** – Flood Risk – development should: not take place in areas at risk from flooding, unless suitable mitigation/flood protection measures are agreed; not increase the risk of flooding to properties elsewhere; make use of sustainable drainage systems where feasible; be informed by a flood risk assessment where appropriate.

3.6 Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning then click on Planning and then click on Planning Policy where there is a link to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

- **CS1**: “Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire” – all development will contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development, having regard to social, environmental and economic issues. All aspects will be considered, including design, implementation and function of development.

3.7 The Hemingfords Conservation Area Character Statement is a material consideration.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 0402564FUL. Erection of two bungalows. Refused 23rd December 2004
- 4.2 0702345FUL. Erection of dwelling. Refused 8th October 2007. Appeal dismissed.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **Hemingford Abbots Parish Council** – Have not made a recommendation by reason of an interest in the applicant's acquisition of the land.
- 5.2 HDC Transportation – NO OBJECTION subject to improvements to the width, sightlines and surfacing of the access.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 Neighbours – Three neighbours have replied. The following issues have been raised:-
1. The use has already commenced without the benefit of planning permission
 2. The use of the land for parking has resulted in a loss of amenity to adjoining properties because of increased noise and disturbance.
 3. The proposal will have an adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area and the parked cars will look unsightly. The use of the site will adversely affect the linear pattern of development in the area.
 4. Cars using the access road have parked across the private accesses to two adjacent cottages. These cottages have the right to use of this access road.
 5. The use of the access has resulted in increased hazards to existing road users. This is a busy stretch of road with a considerable amount of turning and slowing traffic, and any increase in the use of the access will exacerbate the situation.
 6. The use of the car park at night could increase crime or the perception of crime.
 7. It is not possible to define 'occasional parking'. If granted planning permission, the land could be used for all events, and on a daily basis.
 8. The sight of cars on the land could lead to the land being assumed to be car park for the village as a whole.
 9. The proposal will have an adverse impact on property values.
 10. The proposal will increase maintenance costs for the adjoining land owners.
 11. The width of the access is insufficient to be used as a commercial car access.
 12. The availability of parking could increase bookings for the hall, thereby increasing the adverse effects referred to above.
 13. The proposal is tandem development.
 14. The precise use of the amenity space is unclear.

7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 7.1 The main issues in this case are the impact of the use on the amenities of the adjoining residents; the impact of the development

on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; the implications of the increased use of the access on traffic using the High Street and flooding.

Residential amenity

- 7.2 The main concern about residential amenity relates to the car parking which is described in the application as 'occasional/overflow' parking for larger functions. The plans show 10 marked spaces but they and the application forms indicate that the whole site could be used for parking and that between 10 and 20 cars could be accommodated. The application is retrospective, the site has already been acquired by the Village Hall and it is being used for parking.
- 7.3 It is not considered possible to have a workable/enforceable definition of 'occasional' use for parking. Whilst the use of the site could theoretically be limited by conditions controlling the maximum number of cars or the hours of use, the proposal has to be considered on the basis that the car park could be in use as frequently as the hall itself. The hall's licensed opening hours are 8am to midnight seven days a week. The hall is a replacement building granted planning permission in 2000 with a small on-site parking area for about 4 vehicles. Given the close proximity of the parking areas and the access to neighbouring residential properties some noise disturbance is inevitable. The use has started and the indications are that it is causing a loss of residential amenity for these reasons as well as concerns about security. It is not considered that the loss of amenity can be satisfactorily mitigated by screening or other measures and therefore the application is contrary to policy B4 of the Interim Policy Statement.

The effect on the Conservation Area

- 7.4 The character of this part of the Conservation Area is open land punctuated by trees. This open land sits behind the frontage development along the High Street and there are glimpsed views into it between frontage buildings which contribute to the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7.5 The use of the land as amenity space will not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The same cannot be said of the car parking which will alter both character and appearance. The area proposed for car parking is at the front of the main part of the site, clearly visible from High Street. It is considered that car parking in the locations shown on the plans, without blocks of landscaping for screening and enhancement, would adversely affect the appearance of the area. The impact of the current scheme on the character of the Conservation Area is also adverse but this has to be weighed against the likely improvement from a reduction in on-street car parking which clutters the street. On balance, it is considered that the proposal as submitted is detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and therefore contrary to policies En5 of the Local Plan and B8 of the Interim Policy Statement.

Parking and access

- 7.6 The village hall has only limited parking within its curtilage and this is reserved for disabled persons. All other users have to park on the road, causing some congestion and hazards for road users as well as inconvenience for local residents. The provision of the proposed spaces is welcomed from a highway aspect, and will help to relieve congestion in the area. The width of the access is substandard, and visibility at its junction with the High Street is poor. The situation could be improved to a degree whereby it would be acceptable in highway terms by widening part of the access (into a landscaped area in front of the village hall), and by building the footway out into the highway to prevent cars parking close to the junction. This will improve the visibility for vehicles leaving the site. These requirements could be secured by condition and the proposal would comply with policies T1 and T2 of the Interim Policy Statement.

Flooding

- 7.7 The Flood Risk Assessment indicates that the levels across this site are very similar to those of the adjoining village hall, for which planning permission has already been granted. The proposal does not include any built development, and is for the change of use of the land. Subject to the flow of surface water from the site being attenuated the development would comply with policies CS8 of the Local Plan and P10 of the Interim Policy Statement.

Conclusions

- 7.8 The development will have an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties and the proposed location and layout of the car parking spaces will have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and be contrary to the policies identified above. The highway benefits of providing off street parking for users of the hall do not outweigh these adverse impacts.
- 7.9 Having regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all relevant material considerations into account, it is considered that planning permission should not be granted in this instance.

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8. RECOMMENDATION – REFUSE, for the following reasons:

- 8.1 The proposal would be unacceptably detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of Eastern and Western Cottages by virtue of the close proximity of the site access and the car parking area to these properties and the noise and disturbance which will be caused to them at unsocial hours. The proposal would be contrary to policy B4 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007.
- 8.2 The proposed car parking would, by virtue of its layout and location within the site and lack of landscaping, have an adverse effect on the

character and appearance of the Hemingford Abbots Conservation Area, contrary to policies En5 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and B8 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations 2002

Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007

Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission

Core Strategy 2008

The Hemingford's Conservation Area Character Statement

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