

Case No: 0802417OUT (OUTLINE APPLICATION)

Proposal: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Location: ST IVES CARAVANS OLD RAMSEY ROAD

Applicant: ST IVES CARAVANS

Grid Ref: 530387 273638

Date of Registration: 16.10.2008

Parish: ST IVES

RECOMMENDATION - REFUSAL

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

1.1 The site has an area of 0.47 hectares and is located on the western side of Old Ramsey Road, 250m north of the junction with Hill Rise and Marley Road. It is currently the base for a caravan sales and repair business which operates from a range of portacabins and a small workshop. Caravans are displayed for sale on part of the open land. The application is in outline with all matters reserved and is for 9 dwellings of 1 or 1½ storeys. The site is surrounded by trees and hedges.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

2.1 **PPS1: "Delivering Sustainable Development" (2005)** contains advice on the operation of the plan-led system.

2.2 **Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change - Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (2007)** sets out how planning, in providing for the new homes, jobs and infrastructure needed by communities, should help shape places with lower carbon emissions and resilient to the climate change now accepted as inevitable.

2.3 **PPS3: "Housing" (2006)** sets out how the planning system supports the growth in housing completions needed in England.

2.4 **PPS7: "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas" (2004)** sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.

2.5 **PPG13: "Transport" (2001)** provides guidance in relation to transport and particularly the integration of planning and transport.

2.6 **PPG16: "Archaeology and Planning" (1990)** sets out the Secretary of State's policy on archaeological remains on land, and how they

should be preserved or recorded both in an urban setting and in the countryside.

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 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

3.2 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 high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.

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

- **H23:** “Outside Settlements” – general presumption against housing development outside environmental limits with the exception of specific dwellings required for the efficient management of agriculture, forestry and horticulture.
- **En12:** “Archaeological Implications” – permission on sites of archaeological interest may be conditional on the implementation of a scheme of archaeological recording prior to development commencing.
- **En17:** “Development in the Countryside” - development in the countryside is restricted to that which is essential to the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services.
- **En18:** “Protection of countryside features” – Offers protection for important site features including trees, woodlands, hedges and meadowland.

- **En25:** "General Design Criteria" - indicates that the District Council will expect new development to respect the scale, form, materials and design of established buildings in the locality and make adequate provision for landscaping and amenity areas.

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)

- **HL2** – “Allocated Sites” – allocates housing sites in and around the Market Towns.
- **HL5** – Quality and Density of Development - sets out the criteria to take into account in assessing whether a proposal represents a good design and layout.
- **HL6** – Housing Density - indicates that housing development shall be at a density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.
- **HL7** – “Reusing Brownfield Land and Buildings” - indicates that the District Council will seek to maximise the re-use of previously developed land.
- **OB1** – “Nature and Scale of Obligations” – will relate to the size of development and the impact on physical infrastructure, social and community facilities and services.

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

- **P8** – “Development in the Countryside” – Outside the defined limits of the Market Towns development will be restricted to: that which is essential to the efficient operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry, or required for the purposes of outdoor recreation; the alteration, replacement or change of use of existing buildings in accordance with other policies; limited and specific forms of housing, business and tourism development, as provided for within the Local Development Framework; or land allocated for particular purposes.
- **H2** – Housing Density - lists the minimum density standards housing developments should achieve. Within or adjacent to key centres: 35-55 dwellings per hectare.
- **B1** – Design Quality - developments should demonstrate a high quality of design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character of the area.
- **B9** – “Sites of Archaeological Interest” – a proposal that could affect a site or area of archaeological interest should; be accompanied by a suitable assessment of the nature and significance of any remains; not cause harm to remains or their

setting which are recognised or identified as being of national importance and allow for their preservation in situ; or make satisfactory arrangements for the physical preservation recording or removal of other remains, as appropriate.

- **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.
- **G2** – “Landscape Character” - development proposals should respect and respond appropriately to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.
- **G3** – “Trees, hedgerows and other Environmental Features” - development proposals should minimise risk of harm to trees, hedgerows or other environmental features of visual, historic or nature conservation value.

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.

- **CS2**: “Strategic Housing Development” – during the period 2001 – 2026, a total of at least 14,000 homes will be provided in the District, including 500 homes in the St Ives Spatial Planning Area. Of these, at least 100 homes will be on previously developed land and about 400 on greenfield land. The general locations that have been selected for development are in a significant greenfield development to the west of the town and in the redevelopment of previously developed land within the built up area of the town.
- **CS3**: “The Settlement Hierarchy” – states that any areas not specifically identified are classed as part of the countryside, where development will be strictly limited to that which has essential need to be located in the countryside.
- **CS10**: “Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements” – proposals will be expected to provide or contribute towards the cost of providing infrastructure and of meeting social and environmental requirements, where these are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

3.7 The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007 is also relevant.

3.8 The St Ives Market Town Transport Strategy is also relevant.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 9100900FUL Retrospective planning permission for ‘retention of use of land for caravan sales, stationing of portacabins for office and storage use and retention of workshop. Personal planning permission 1991.

4.2 0702871OUT Residential development. Withdrawn.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **St Ives Town Council – OBJECTION** (copy attached) Proposed development is outside the development boundary of the town and therefore considered to be inappropriate.

5.2 **Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways) – NO OBJECTION** subject to:

- (i) the imposition of conditions including the provision of a footway and street lighting to Hill Rise/Marley Road;
- (ii) a contribution to the Market Towns Transport Strategy.

5.3 **Cambridgeshire County Council (Archaeology)** – The site is in an area of high archaeological potential where Roman settlement is suggested by local finds and there is a Roman cemetery to the north. Prehistoric activity is also apparent in the vicinity. It is considered likely that important archaeological remains survive on site and that these would be severely damaged or destroyed by development. The site should be the subject of archaeological investigation before any development commences secured through a condition.

5.4 **Cambridgeshire County Council (Education)** – There is capacity in the local schools. No education contribution is therefore sought.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

6.1 None received

7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

7.1 The main issues are: the principle of development; access; archaeology; infrastructure requirements and the form and scale of the development.

Principle of the development

7.2 The site is in the countryside beyond the clearly defined northern edge of St Ives and it is not in an area allocated for residential development in policy HL2 of the Local Plan Alteration, which rolled forward the original Local Plan's housing strategy. Its development is therefore contrary to the continuing Local Plan policies controlling housing development in the countryside, policies En17 and H23. It is also outside the built-up area of St Ives as defined in paragraph 5.15 and contrary to policy CS3 of the Submission Core Strategy 2008. In respect of all these plans the site is in an area where new housing development is restricted to that which is essential to the efficient operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry or required for the purposes of outdoor recreation. These exceptions do not apply in this case.

7.3 The application could potentially be considered to raise policy issues regarding the options for future growth of St Ives. Whilst suitable land in sustainable locations in and around the market towns is the priority for housing allocations, policy CS2 of the Submission Core Strategy 2008 identifies a significant greenfield development to the west of the

town and the redevelopment of previously developed land within the built up area as the appropriate strategic locations for development at St Ives. This proposal is not supported by policy CS2.

- 7.4 In determining this application it is necessary to consider whether the site's status as previously developed land would override the policy objections that have been identified above. Previously developed land (brownfield land) is defined in Annex B to PPS3 as land 'which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.' There are further qualifications but it is accepted that this site is previously developed land. PPS3 states that the priority for housing development should be 'previously developed land', in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings. However, the definition states there is no presumption that previously developed land is necessarily suitable for housing development or that the whole of the curtilage should be developed.
- 7.5 PPS7 states that new building development in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled. The Government's overall aim is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and to prevent urban sprawl. It also states that priority should be given to the re-use of previously-developed, brownfield sites in preference to the development of greenfield sites, except in cases where there are no brownfield sites available, or these brownfield sites perform so poorly in terms of sustainability considerations (for example, in their remoteness from settlements and services) in comparison with greenfield sites. This site is detached from the built-up area, it is predominantly open and its development with permanent dwellings would detract from the intrinsically open character and appearance of the countryside. It is also physically separated from the existing built up area by 250m and is some distance from community facilities and other services. Its status as previously developed land does not warrant overriding the normal policy objections to new housing in the countryside.

Access

- 7.6 The number of traffic movements likely to be generated by the development is considered to be broadly compatible with the existing use although the nature of the traffic will be different. It is considered that the carriageway is adequate to serve the development. There is no footway or lighting and their absence means that the use of sustainable non-motorised modes of travel (walking and cycling) will be disadvantaged. There is an objection in principle to residential development in this location but, if it were to be permitted, it is considered essential to provide a footway and lighting on one side of the existing carriageway. This could be secured through a Grampian condition. With the provision of lighting and a footway and subject to the imposition of conditions relating to the detail of the development the proposal is capable of complying with Policy T1 of the Interim Policy Statement.

Archaeology

- 7.7 There is a likelihood of there being archaeological remains but no evidence that they would be of sufficient significance to preclude development. PPG16 advises that in these circumstances it is open to planning authorities to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and recording through a negative condition. With this condition the proposal is capable of complying with policy En12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan and Policy B9 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement.

Infrastructure requirements

- 7.8 The proposal for 9 dwellings requires a contribution towards the St Ives Market Town Transport Strategy which provides a programme of integrated transport initiatives to deliver a range of sustainable transport objectives. This can be secured through a planning obligation but in the absence of such an obligation the application would be contrary to policies OB1 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration and CS10 of the Submission Core Strategy.

Form and Scale of the development

- 7.9 The layout submitted with the application shows that the site can physically accommodate 9 dwellings but even this low density results in an urban form of development that would be incongruous in this rural location and the removal of trees. The proposal equates to a density of 19 dwellings per hectare (dpha), which is below the range of 30-50dpha specified in policy HL6 of the Alteration. Policy H2 of the Interim Planning Policy Statement requires a minimum net density of 30dpha or the maximum density consistent with the character of the area. Given the unsuitable location of the site and the need for significant landscaping to act as a screen, the density should not be increased. It merely emphasises the unsuitability of this site for housing development. The development would be contrary to policies ENV7 of the East of England Plan; En18 and En25 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan; HL5 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration and B1, G2 and G3 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement.

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8. RECOMMENDATION – REFUSE, for the following reasons:

- 8.1 The site is in open countryside beyond the built-up area of St Ives where new residential development is restricted to that which has a requirement to be in a rural area. No such justification exists in this case and the development would be detrimental to the open character of the countryside and unsustainable. The proposal is contrary to policies H23 and En17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995; HL2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002; and CS2 and CS3 of the Submission Core Strategy 2008.
- 8.2 The site is in the open countryside and its development for housing in the urban manner proposed would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the countryside and would result in unacceptable loss of trees. The proposal is contrary to policies ENV7 of the East of

England Plan 2008; En18 and En25 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995; HL5 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 and B1, G2 and G3 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement.

- 8.3 In the absence of a planning obligation securing a contribution to the St Ives Market Town Transport Strategy the development would be contrary to policies OB1 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 and CS10 of the Submission Core Strategy.

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 Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007
The St Ives Market Town Transport Strategy

CONTACT OFFICER:

Enquiries about this report to **Mr Nigel Swaby Development Control Team Leader 01480 388370**