

Councillor John Williams
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Fulbourn
CB21 5ER

Planning & New Communities
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

28 October 2014

Dear Sir

**PLANNING APPLICATION S/2273/14/OL LAND AT TEVERSHAM ROAD,
FULBOURN**

I write to object to this planning application for the following reasons:

1. The planning history of this site shows it to be unsuitable for housing development given its high ground water table; it is therefore not providing a sustainable development nor is it recognising the future impact of climate change in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
2. The site is also an open public amenity and its development would be detrimental to the rural character of Fulbourn village and destroy an area of natural tranquillity contrary to NPPF guidance.
3. The housing development proposed is inconsistent with the housing needs of Fulbourn as identified by its Housing Needs Survey and Local Plan and does not therefore accord with NPPF policy in "reflecting local demand".
4. The design of the development fails to meet NPPF guidance.

High Ground Water Table

There is consistent planning history to this site which has demonstrated that it has a high ground water table, which is not challenged by the applicant. This not only affects the design, construction and use of the buildings and supporting infrastructure, but also the surface water drainage systems. Indeed the Environment Agency (EA) in responding to the South Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment advised there is a high probability of periodic groundwater flooding occurring at the site. This EA evidence is not disputed by the applicant. The applicant also accepts that because of this high ground water table, developing the site would involve abnormal costs. This makes it clear that its economic sustainability is doubtful. There is likelihood of more extreme weather occurrences

in future with high levels of rainfall over short periods and its high ground water table makes this site vulnerable to flooding from such events. The NPPF makes it clear that development should be directed away from areas at high risk of flooding. The high ground water table therefore makes this development unsustainable and prone to the adverse affects of climate change contrary to NPPF policies.

Loss of open public amenity

The two fields affected by the development which are not fenced have been used to my knowledge for over 20 years as a recreational amenity. This has been recognised by a Magistrates Court in a recent court case and South Cambridgeshire District Council has designated the land as a Local Green Space in its submitted Local Plan given its purpose not only as an area of importance to the village landscape and its rural character, but also as an area of tranquillity for local residents. The development would destroy this amenity and again would go against the NPPF.

Housing types

The NPPF makes it quite clear that new housing should reflect local demand and that by using evidence based identification it should meet the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations. Fulbourn has a Housing Needs Survey and a Local Plan which identify the local housing demands, particularly for affordable homes. The proposed development does not accord with the demand identified (particularly with regard to the provision of affordable homes both locally and in the council district) and therefore fails to meet the expectations of the NPPF.

Design

The NPPF expects the design of the development to “function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.” It also should “create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.” The outline design of the development fails to meet these criteria. Due to the high ground water table and the high risk of flooding the roads and footpaths are not of highway standard and cannot be adopted and maintained by the highway authority. This poses risks to asset management in the long term, particularly with regard to the broad-walks and stewardship of the fen areas. There is also a high risk of personal safety with the high number of drainage ditches and the location of the balancing pond; and the design of the development heightens the fear of personal crime.

Conclusion

This application is inconsistent with NPPF policies on a range of matters as indicated above. Permission should be refused because of this.

Yours sincerely

Councillor John Williams
cc. Fulbourn Parish Council