Public Meeting: 1st September 2015
Proposed Rampton Road development
Agenda

Introduction

How the proposal might affect Cottenham:
  • A Neutral view
  • The Residents’ views

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Introduction

• Although called by the Parish Council, this is NOT a Parish Council Meeting

• Councillors present are expressing personal opinions not in any way approved or endorsed by Council, and without prejudice to any discussions at any Council or Planning Committee meeting

• The meeting cannot instruct Council or Councillors but views expressed will be minuted in general terms and taken into account by Parish Councillors

• The “neutral view” is not approved or endorsed by the Parish Council. It has been prepared and reviewed for this meeting by the Parish Council Working Party which met Gladman representatives and has studied the Gladman application

• It is especially important that Councillors understand any concerns not covered in the “neutral view”
A neutral view

Proposed Rampton Road development
Background

• In normal times, any significant development proposal has to comply with a range of public policies, including:
  • National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  • Local Plan for the district
  • Neighbourhood Plan for the locality
• These are not normal times:
  • The emerging Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire is partially invalidated by inadequate house-building over recent years
  • Our own Neighbourhood Plan is still at an embryonic stage
• With no valid Local Plan, the Planning Authority (SCDC in our case) MUST grant permission unless the application is unsustainable
• Developments still have to comply with:
  • the NPPF sustainability criteria, affecting public services, especially
    • Economic - infrastructure
    • Social – housing and services
    • Environmental
    • (possibly) some parts of the emerging Local Plan
• The Parish Council, in its advisory capacity to SCDC as the Local Planning Authority (and ultimately DCLG), applies nine development principles (from our Neighbourhood Plan) to evaluate development proposals
• SCDC, or ultimately a Planning Inspector at appeal, may think differently
Our development principles

We think Cottenham residents need:
• 1 More affordable homes
• 2 More pre-school places
• 3 Better medical and day care facilities
• 4 More local employment
• 5 Improved leisure and recreation facilities
• 6 Easier movement into, out from, and around the village

We also understand that Cottenham residents do not want to:
• 7 Compromise our conservation area and the character of our village core
• 8 Increase noise and pollution from our busiest roads
• 9 Overload our Primary School

Any individual reaction is likely to be affected by the relative value placed on each of these principles
We think Cottenham residents need:  

1. More affordable homes

Why does this matter?

• Homes near Cambridge, even when available, cost 5x to 6x of average incomes
• Cottenham has a known approximate 70 home shortfall in affordable housing
• Our young families and our older residents are struggling to stay within the village due to these costs
• Unchecked, Cottenham will become a dormitory town for affluent, healthy, mobile middle-aged Cambridge or London commuters

What does the proposal offer?

• The proposal’s suggestion of up to 40% of the proposed homes being affordable approximately matches the known local need
We think Cottenham residents need:

2. More pre-school places

Why does this matter?

• Cottenham has a known shortage of pre-school places

• Demand will increase further from 2016 as free places are offered for longer (30 rather than 15) hours per week and to younger children (from 2yo) over more of the day (7.30 to 18.30)

• Adding 225 homes at a rate of about 50 a year from 2017 is likely to increase pre-school demand from around 200 to 220 places

• The proposal is currently unsustainable since many parents will be prevented from working unless availability and cost of pre-school provision are improved

What does the proposal offer?

• This proposal does not yet address these consequences

• The builder may choose to contribute to the cost of a larger pre-school school facility, preferably adjacent to the Primary School grounds
We think Cottenham residents need:

3. Better medical and day care facilities

Why does this matter?

• Cottenham already has a significant proportion of elderly and less-mobile residents (with around 400 residents greatly limited and another 600 less so)

• Our current provision is at capacity and our Tuesday Day Care Centre session is held in the Village Hall, which is not designed for the type of security necessary to protect vulnerable elderly

• The expansion is likely to increase pressure for a purpose-built medical centre with GP and day-care facilities

What does the proposal offer?

• This proposal includes 70 residential care places and many of those may well be taken up by better-off Cottenham residents currently living in less-than-ideal situations

• Some additional provision seems necessary for sustainability
We think Cottenham residents need:  

4. More local employment

Why does this matter?

• Without increased local employment, traffic generation is likely to worsen especially in rush hours as residents commute to Cambridge, Ely or London

• Unchecked, Cottenham is likely to become an unsustainable dormitory town for affluent, healthy mobile middle-aged Cambridge or London commuters

What does the proposal offer?

• The proposal does estimate the direct and indirect employment created during the build stage and subsequent services needed by residents

• The longer-term additional population may well help retain businesses in the village
We think Cottenham residents need:

5. Improved leisure and recreational facilities

Why does this matter?

- Cottenham is in “catch-up” mode as regards leisure and recreation facilities
- Our young families and our older residents rely on leisure and recreation facilities within the village
- If not addressed, more of our mobile residents will choose to travel to Cambridge for facilities, disadvantaging our young, elderly and less mobile

What does the proposal offer?

- This proposal offers some 47% open space and some facilities to complement those at the Recreation ground across Rampton Road
- Adding 10% residents to an under-provided village will increase pressure to replace the Village Hall and add all-weather MUGA (multi-use games area) -style sports facilities
Why does this matter?

• Traffic is already problematic, especially in rush hours, as traffic channels via Histon Road, towards Cambridge, and Denmark Road towards the station at Waterbeach

• The new station at Cambridge Science Park may well deflect some traffic from Denmark Road onto the already pressed capacity of Histon Road

• The new development is likely to increase rush-hour traffic by around 10% or more, especially around Rampton Road, Oakington Road and Histon Road

What does the proposal offer?

• The proposal only offers minor changes to speed controls on Rampton road, improvement of the Oakington Road / Rampton Road roundabout and some promotion, including financial contribution, of cycling and walking into and within the village

• To improve sustainability, better cycle and footpath links to the High Street and schools appear necessary, including a safe crossing point, a 40mph buffer zone, and “off-road” routes to the schools
We think Cottenham residents do not want:

7. To compromise our conservation area & the character of our village core

Why does this matter?

- The High Street with its concentration of mid-Victorian, often listed buildings and retail and other premises epitomises the character of Cottenham

- The 1993-designed traffic calming has ceased to have much effect and demand for parking far exceeds the limited available supply

- An increased population, even with efforts to promote cycling or walking to the shops/businesses, is likely to lead to increased instances of poor/dangerous parking

What does the proposal offer?

- This proposal ‘s travel plan encourages walking and cycling into the village’s amenities and some finance is offered to improve these facilities

- Without some remodelling of the High Street to provide more on-street parking, any additional traffic is likely to threaten sustainability
We think Cottenham residents do not want:  
8. Increased noise and pollution from our busiest roads

Why does this matter?

• Our arterial roads are already busy, especially in rush hours, creating considerable noise, pollution and inconvenience to residents

• Many of the houses on those roads are segregated from the highway by only a narrow pavement and Conservation Area restrictions make sound insulation difficult and costly

• Adding 225 homes at a rate of about 50 a year from 2017 could increase road usage by 10%, or more if there is no local increase in employment and facilities, including public transport

What does the proposal offer?

• This proposal recognises that noise reduction will be a design factor if increased road noise from Rampton Road is to be acceptable

• It suggests that effort will be made to attenuate the noise inside key parts of the new dwellings but has no suggestions for existing Rampton Road residents
Why does this matter?

• Our recently-expanded Primary School has over 600 pupils on roll

• Adding 225 homes at a rate of about 50 a year from 2017 could increase demand by 50 to 100 pupils

• Left unchanged the Primary School may have to reduce its catchment area to exclude both Rampton and Smithy Fen, leaving children from those areas disadvantaged by being bussed considerable distances

What does the proposal offer?

• This proposal does not yet address these consequences

• The builder may have to contribute to the cost of an Infants school adjacent to the Primary School grounds as a “least-worst” expansion option
Have your say, by commenting via:

The South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Portal at www.scambs.gov.uk using reference S/1818/15/OL
OR
In writing to: Andrew Fillmore, Planning & New Communities, SCDC, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6EA
OR
Email: Andrew.fillmore@scambs.gov.uk

Don't be late, there are only a few weeks left to influence this decision at South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Residents’ views
1. The Parish Council will review the application on 3rd September.

2. The Parish Council and members of the public send comments to SCDC.

3. This decision is likely to be referred to a Committee of SCDC councillors.

4. If so, the meeting will be advertised and members of the public can attend and make comments (but possibly only one speaker in favour and one against).

5. There is no guarantee that any Committee decision will be in line with Cottenham Parish Council’s comments.

6. If permission is refused, or is granted subject to conditions, the applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (an independent body).

7. Neither Cottenham Parish Council nor anyone else opposed to a planning application can appeal if planning permission is granted.

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