

Cottenham Parish Council: Application for Area Designation

Neighbourhood Plan:

Information for application to have Cottenham Civil Parish declared as the designated area

1	Name of parish	Cottenham
2	Address	Cottenham Parish Council Right Side Entrance Cottenham Community Centre 250a High Street Cottenham CAMBRIDGE CB24 8RZ
3	Contact name & position	Jo Brook, Parish Clerk; Frank Morris, Chair
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6	Additional Parish Contacts	N/A
7	Name of Neighbourhood Area	Cottenham

8	Proposed neighbourhood area	<p>Cottenham Parish Council proposes the designation of Cottenham Parish as the Neighbourhood Area for their Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The Civil Parish, as shown on the map, is bounded by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Great Ouse, Haddenham, Wilburton and Stretham to the North • the A10 and Waterbeach Parish to the North East • Beach Ditch and Landbeach to the East and South East • Rampton and Willingham to the West • Westwick to the South West • Histon to the South
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		<p>Context</p> <p>Cottenham, a working fen-edge village of 6,200 residents, has developed along what is now the B1049. This road links Haddenham and villages along the A142 and Ely in the north with Histon & Impington, the A14 and Cambridge to the south.</p> <p>In addition the busy, congested A10 route, linking Ely with Cambridge, runs parallel to the B1049.</p> <p>The fen-edge landscape is essentially flat, making drainage challenging. Parts of the village, especially to the north and west are at moderate risk of flooding and depend on Cottenham Lode to carry off excess surface water flowing, with pumped assistance, north out of the village to the Great Ouse which forms the northern village boundary. Both these waterways catch surface water from villages to the west and south-west.</p> <p>The High Street and five main access roads have around 500 houses, some dating from 1600, many immediately adjacent to the road. Many pavements are narrow and uneven or absent.</p> <p>The village has a designated conservation area with a rich collection of over 80 mostly mid-Victorian Grade II Listed Buildings, mostly along the High Street, and a scheduled ancient monument (Crowlands Moat). The conservation area in particular has a well-loved collection of mature native trees.</p>
		<p>History</p> <p>The Cottenham area has been occupied since Neolithic times. More recently the Romans implemented a number of landscape drainage features.</p> <p>The Enclosure by Agreement of 1596 saw Cottenham become a democratically run town with six manors.</p> <p>On 22nd April 1845, Parliament passed the Act enclosing all Cottenham land, closing down many local footpaths and making allotments to various parties.</p> <p>Cottenham Parish Council first met in April 1895. Today it is actively engaged, with its partners in South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and others in developing or improving facilities in the village.</p>

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		<p>Economy</p> <p>Cottenham, with a history of fruit production, has a high level of employment. There is a good range of shops and businesses offering services and employment. The village has four public houses, an Indian restaurant and several take-aways.</p> <p>Cottenham has three industrial areas – mostly at the northern edge of the village, supporting a number of light industrial businesses – with agricultural, office and retail employment at Watson’s Yard and other small sites scattered throughout the village core. Education is another important employer.</p> <p>Cottenham retains a substantial amount of agricultural, retail and industrial activity, although most residents now work outside the village, often in nearby Cambridge or Ely, or further afield in London.</p>
		<p>Education</p> <p>Cottenham provides a spectrum of educational opportunities for local children up to the age of 16 with 6th form provision mostly in Cambridge.</p> <p>Cottenham Village College and Cottenham Primary School are very well supported, attracting children from neighbouring villages to the east and west. The recently-expanded Primary School is the largest in Cambridgeshire and operates at its physical capacity.</p> <p>There are facilities for pre-school and out-of-school groups, although demand exceeds supply in these age ranges.</p> <p>The library, operated by Cambridgeshire County Council, is well supported.</p> <p>Expansion of the village places considerable pressure on educational provision in the village. Concentration on single sites for primary and secondary education helps with village cohesion but at a price in terms of scale.</p>

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		<p>Community</p> <p>The village has Anglican, Baptist and Salvation Army churches. In addition to various church halls, there are also a number of facilities offering hubs for recreational and social activities, including the Cottenham Club, Cottenham Community Centre, Cottenham United Sports & Social Club, and the Village Hall.</p> <p>The race course hosts several point-to-point meetings each year.</p> <p>Cricket, football and rugby thrive in the village and are expected to develop further once the new Sports Pavilion opens in October 2015. There are a number of other clubs and societies active in the village as evidenced in the articles and adverts in the bi-monthly Cottenham Newsletter.</p> <p>The Womens' Institute will celebrate its 90th year in 2016.</p> <p>Cottenham is a large, diverse village with many small-scale specialised activities and clubs.</p>
		<p>Housing</p> <p>Housing style varies across the village and includes many Grade II Listed Buildings, many mid-Victorian villas, modern estates and mobile home parks</p> <p>Proximity to Cambridge, limited land supply within the Local Development Framework and the constraints of a Conservation Area drive house prices beyond 5-6X average incomes. This leads to a very low supply of new homes, especially those regarded as "affordable".</p> <p>This challenge is particularly acute for those facing diminished incomes on retirement or separation and the young.</p> <p>There is still a considerable amount of Local Authority housing in Cottenham and some Housing Association properties although this could diminish as Right to Buy initiatives progress.</p> <p>Three Sheltered Housing schemes in Stevens Close, Franklin Gardens and Coolidge Gardens provide homes for a considerable number of older residents as does the small group of Alms Houses known as Little London.</p> <p>There are also three village-edge areas for static caravans, one of which is an extensive Traveller site.</p>

		<p>Transport infrastructure</p> <p>Poor public transport links mean that cars are a necessity for most residents. Average ownership - above two per household - causes considerable congestion, especially around the primary school in peak times. Parking provision is inadequate, especially in the older parts of the village where on-street parking is the only choice.</p> <p>Heavy agricultural vehicles can cause considerable noise and vibration nuisance at night during harvest or ploughing seasons.</p> <p>Although technically only a Local Access route for HGVs, this is frequently ignored.</p> <p>Traffic is often heavy, especially on its arterial roads during rush hours with significant numbers of HGVs and other vehicles using the village as an alternative to the A10, especially when that road becomes over-congested.</p> <p>Cottenham has no railway connections so most rail commuters have to travel via Waterbeach by car.</p> <p>There is a frequent but meandering Citi8 service into Cambridge and an infrequent 106 service to and from Ely on Thursday and Saturdays. A quicker X8 bus service connects the village to Cambridge but only on weekdays and only once in each direction.</p> <p>There is only limited public transport provision to or from neighbouring villages, increasing car usage and pressure on parking.</p> <p>The Cambridge to St Ives Guided Busway is frustratingly close but not readily accessible even by car due to limited parking provision.</p> <p>Significant areas of the village, even within the village framework, are not well served by public transport.</p> <p>Of the neighbouring villages, only Histon is accessible via a cycleway.</p>
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		<p>Health</p> <p>The village has two NHS GP practices, a dentist and a pharmacy to cater for primary care and some provision of residential care for the elderly.</p> <p>More significant health interventions require road travel, usually to the Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge. An ageing and expanding population stretches the capabilities of these practices.</p> <p>The Mobile Warden and CareCar schemes, while limited in scale, both help mitigate the challenge of living in a village with limited health amenities.</p>
		<p>Noise & Pollution</p> <p>The combination of many houses in close proximity to arterial roads used by HGVs and heavy agricultural vehicles often at unsocial hours can make Cottenham a noisy place for many of its residents.</p> <p>Some residents are also affected by noise from speed bumps installed in 1993 as part of a traffic-calming strategy.</p> <p>Pollution is becoming a concern in some vulnerable congested streets due to the high proportion of diesel-powered vehicles.</p>
		<p>Environment</p> <p>The parish provides a varied environment including agricultural land (mostly arable) and light industrial estates, woodland (Fen Reeves and Les King Wood), open spaces (Brenda Gautrey Way, Broad Lane Recreation Ground, Crowlands Moat (which has a colony of Great Crested Newts), King George V Recreation ground, Tenison Manor, The Village Green, Victory Way, WARG field).</p>
		<p>Safety & Security</p> <p>Cottenham is generally a safe environment with little crime and few traffic accidents.</p> <p>Inevitably there are occasions when a small number of people cause serious issues for a few residents, especially if little action appears to be taken against the perpetrators.</p> <p>However residents can feel unsafe when pavements, adjacent to heavy or large road vehicles, are narrow or uneven pavements or in areas of poor illumination at night.</p>

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		<p>Flooding & Drainage</p> <p>Cottenham Lode which runs through the parish, drains a large catchment, which includes Bar Hill, Girton, Histon, Oakington, Westwick and Rampton as well as Cottenham. It is protected by flood banks the length of its course; these were most recently reinforced in 1985 although there are questions over the efficacy of the banks at the north end of the parish.</p> <p>A lot of storm water enters the surface water drainage system which ultimately discharges, via Cottenham Lode, into the embanked Great Ouse (also known as the Old West River), emerging several days later at Denver Sluice on its way to the Wash.</p> <p>Surface water drains, overcharged by road gullies, have struggled to cope with demand at times, resulting in localised flooding due to blocked drains on Broad Lane, Denmark Road and Rampton Road.</p> <p>The flat, fertile landscape means the drainage systems need regular attention if their performance is not to be compromised by the build-up of silt or growth of weeds, or even trees. Agricultural and other debris aggravates the problem.</p> <p>Systems in new developments are designed to limit flows to that from the previous green field and attenuate the release of peak flows following exceptional downpours. Long-term maintenance is sometimes neglected and these flows sometimes rely upon very old drains of disputed ownership along some of their course.</p>
		<p>Summary</p> <p>This combination of character, history and challenges is unique to Cottenham Parish and justifies its designation as a Neighbourhood Area for which a Neighbourhood Plan will be developed.</p>

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<p>9</p>	<p>Local publicity about proposal to develop a Neighbourhood Plan</p>	<p>Early days Cottenham Parish Council has been openly considering development of a Neighbourhood Plan since early 2015 following a response to SCDC’s consultation on Service Level Agreements and attendance at a Neighbourhood Planning MasterClass in December 2014.</p> <p>A Neighbourhood Plan Working Party was formally initiated in January 2015 and has met monthly to formulate a preliminary approach and recommendation.</p> <p>The topic appears regularly in minutes and agenda report packs of Parish Council meetings and these are all in the public domain via our website with copies held in the Cottenham Library.</p> <p>In April 2015, Officers from SCDC attended a public meeting of Cottenham’s Planning Committee to explain the rationale and process for developing neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Rampton Parish Council were advised of our probable intentions to test interest in a possible joint proposal.</p>
		<p>Going public Following a resolution at a Council meeting, the topic was included in the Annual Report presented at the well-attended Annual Parish Meeting in May 2015</p> <p>More detail was provided on the Council’s stand at the Fen Edge Family Festival held in June 2015. This “soft launch” of the Neighbourhood Development Plan focused on an A4 flyer outlining the reasons why a Neighbourhood Plan seems necessary led to many discussions, nearly 50 survey responses and 19 volunteer consultees on the day.</p> <p>The topic has been regularly mentioned in our Clerk’s report included in the bi-monthly Cottenham Newsletter which is delivered to all 2,700 households in Cottenham.</p>

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		<p>More communication</p> <p>The topic was consider at the July Council meeting with a decision to postpone application for area designation in order to get more named consultees, allow Rampton time to consider a joint approach and avoid August as a consultation period.</p> <p>Flyers were distributed to over a hundred residents who attended the public meeting called to discuss a large speculative application by Gladman Developments and more at subsequent Planning Committee meetings to discuss that application and a smaller one from Endurance Estates.</p> <p>Publicity on our website and FaceBook page combined with the advent of speculative development proposals have helped increase the survey response to 100 and more than double the number of “named consultees” to over 50.</p> <p>Combining the above activities, several hundred flyers have now been issued individually.</p>
		<p>Formal decision</p> <p>The Parish Council formally decided to proceed at its September meeting, authorising application for area designation and making an allocation of initial funding.</p> <p>The named consultee group have recently been updated with progress on the plan and encouraged to share the outline plan and other information more widely amongst their contacts.</p>
		<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Currently we are reaching back to the 100 or so volunteers who delivered and collected surveys for our 2003 Parish Plan. That survey yielded a 64% response.</p> <p>A full-page article on the whys and hows of Neighbourhood Planning is included in the Cottenham Newsletter to be distributed in late September, taking our story into all 2,700 addresses within Cottenham. Back issues are also held on their website.</p> <p>We are also developing our house-to-house survey and inviting consultants to help with later stages of plan development.</p> <p>We are planning to promote the SCDC consultation and launch our own detailed house-to-house survey at the Cottenham Feast Parade on 18th October 2015.</p>

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11	Declaration	Name: Frank Morris Signature: Parish: Cottenham Date: 23 rd September 2015
		Name: Jo Brook Signature: Parish: Cottenham Date: 23 rd September 2015