

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE – 22 OCTOBER 2013 AT 1.30PM
LIST OF PERSONS WISHING TO SPEAK

Agenda Item No.	Page No	Application	Name	Objector/Applicant/Agent/ Supporters/Parish Council/Town Council/Neighbourhood Representatives
3.1	3	13/01069/FUL – LAND TO THE NORTH OF 29 MAXEY ROAD, HELPSTON, PETERBOROUGH	Councillor David Over Parish Councillor Joe Dobson Seagate Homes Ltd. (TBC)	Ward Councillor Helpston Parish Councillor Applicant

BRIEFING UPDATE

P & EP Committee 22 October 2013

ITEM NO	APPLICATION NO	SITE/DESCRIPTION
1.	13/01069/FUL	Land To The North Of 29 Maxey Road Helpston Peterborough , Construction of 5 x 5 bedroom dwellings with associated roadways, hard and soft landscaping

Two bats surveys have been carried out (February & September) which indicate that a small number of bats are using two trees at the front of the site during the Summer/Autumn. Given the proximity of the trees to the proposed development, and given that the trees are of no public amenity value, the updated Ecological Survey (15.10.13) states the trees shall be removed and sets out a methodology for tree removal and bat mitigation. The Wildlife and Landscape Officers have raised no objection.

Two habitat boxes shall be incorporated into one of the dwellings. The trees shall be removed at an appropriate time of year (December – February), they will be treated as if bats were in residence and the works will be supervised by a licenced bat worker.

C1. Notwithstanding the submitted information and prior to the commencement of any development or site clearance, a plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority indicating the plot(s) and exact location that the bat habitat boxes are to be positioned. Thereafter the bat mitigation, including the fitting of bat habitat boxes, and tree removal works shall be undertaken in accordance with the submitted Ecological Survey (Hiller Ecology Ltd, Seagate Homes Ltd, September 2013) received 15.10.13.

Reason: In the interest of protecting protected species, and to accord with Policy CS21 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) and PP16 of the Peterborough Policies DPD (2012).

An amended drawing (JDA/2012/85/HT (2) Rev B) has been received relating to Plot 2 which has repositioned windows on the front elevation to Bed 2 to overcome any unacceptable issues of overlooking to No. 29. Note the side 'arrow slits' on the south elevation are proposed to be obscure glazed. To prevent any additional openings being introduced into Bed 2, the following condition shall apply;

C2. Notwithstanding the submitted information no windows, other than those indicated on Drwg JDA/2012/85/HT (2) Rev B, shall be installed on the front (east) elevation of Plot 2.

Reason: In the interests of protecting neighbour amenity and to accord with Policy CS16 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) and PP3 of the Peterborough Policies DPD (2012).

Submission to the Planning Committee meeting to be held on 22nd October 2013 (re. 13/01069/FUL ... Land to the North of 29 Maxey Road)

1. The proposal that this piece of land should along with others be included within an enlarged village envelope to facilitate development was vigorously objected to by Helpston Parish Council.
2. The reference by the applicants to what is known as Eastwell Court on Maxey Road , and used as a precedent by them , was also opposed by the Helpston Parish Council.
3. Notice should be taken of the submission by Mr and Mrs Valentine and the points they raise which Helpston Parish Council fully support

Applicants Design and Access Statement

1. Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) CS1 Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside and CS8 Meeting Housing Need

The Applicants comments that the site is located within a Limited Growth Village may well be satisfied under PCC Planning Policies but HPC have never been able to establish what the terminology “Limited Growth” means when applied to Helpston. We will have seen 172 new houses built in the last ten years, a 50% increase on the original housing stock. Most of these houses have been of the “executive type” that the applicant proposes which do not serve the needs of first time buyers with affordable housing. Despite the small size of this development and the arguments the applicant puts forward, the continued acceptance of small “high end” developments within our “limited growth “ area denies the opportunity for affordable housing , limits the range of property size and does not meet the needs of all members of the community.

2. Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) CS10 Environmental Capital

Apart from affirming that the buildings will exceed the Building Regulations in force at the time of permission being granted, the applicant proposes no other measures that contribute to the aspirations of the Peterborough Community Strategy to become the Environmental Capital of the UK. There is no suggestion that PV panels for example should be installed. As the use of PV generating facilities are a priority for PCC one would have thought this would be compulsory for all new builds. No indication has been given that facilities for “electric plug in and other low emission vehicles” have been incorporated.

3. Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) CS16 Urban Design and the Public Realm and PP1 Design Quality

The Applicants affirm that the development has been designed to a high standard, which is not disputed, and that account has been taken of the “sensitive rural setting”. The Applicants refer to the layout of Willow Brook farm for comparison and the “crew yard” theme they claim is in evidence in the area. There are no crew yards in Helpston. Given the open aspect of the north end of Maxey Road towards Maxey, the bungalows opposite the site and the East Coast Main Line, the appearance of large buildings visible from the road on two sides coming into the village with those facing the road beyond the existing building line is hardly “sensitive”. Throughout the application reference is made to one and two story buildings, yet the plans submitted indicate two and a half story buildings. The heights of these building will have to be augmented as were those on the Eastwell Court development,

so the indicated height on the plans may well be incorrect which would make the eventual development even more overbearing than presently proposed. The plot size is smaller than that of Eastwell Court and a simple viewing from the road side of this development will witness its overbearing nature.

4. Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) T8 Connections to Existing Highway Network

Maxey Road has witnessed an increased through traffic use over the past few years with commuters travelling from north to south during the rush hour period in the morning and visa versa in the evenings. A traffic survey requested by HPC did not materialise so, only a subjective assessment can be made of actual traffic flow. Parts of Maxey Road are very narrow especially its junction with the centre of the village. The intermittent raising and lowering of the level crossing gates produces a similar flow of lines of vehicles whilst waiting and passing through the village. This may have an impact on the possibility of occupiers of the development entering and leaving. The increase vehicle movements that this development will bring and its proximity to the level crossing will exacerbate the problems already experienced. One assumes that all visitor parking will take place off road on the property being visited as there is no other adequate parking facility on site or on the adjacent road.

Summary

The application has been presented in considerable detail and John Dickie and associates must be commended for this work on behalf of their clients. One of the shortcomings of all planning applications that come before HPC is that none of the plans submitted are drawn to include neighbouring properties or environment so each application appears in isolation devoid of contextual evidence. The present application satisfies all pertinent policies but does so in contextual isolation. Within the confines of Maxey Road, the built environment and rural context this development presents as an over imposing set of buildings that would transform this entrance to the village with detrimental visual impact. A preferred solution would reflect the low level built environment within the adjacent area. Eastwell Court should not be used as a precedent nor comparisons made with other developments.

Helpston, as many other rural villages on the edge of Peterborough, should be seen and appreciated as a vital contribution to the greater amenity value that such villages bring to Peterborough. They are indeed an asset and their maintenance within a rural context should not be compromised by the urbanising influence of unnecessary or inappropriate developments such as this.