



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Form E

Parish Council Views on a Suggested Site (May 2016)

This form is for use by a Parish Council only.

The Parish Council is encouraged to complete a separate form for each site suggested in its parish (or, by exception, a Parish Council may want to comment on a suggested site in an adjoining parish).

Please remember that the suggested sites have been made by landowners, developers and other people. They have not been suggested by ECDC.

The deadline for completing this form is 5pm on 11 July 2016. We cannot guarantee that your views will be taken into account if submitted after this date.

Your Details

Data Protection and Freedom of Information All personal information that you provide will be used solely for the purpose of the exercise. However, the views you express on this Form will be made public and will not be treated as confidential.	
Name of Person completing	
Name of Parish Council:	ASHLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Tel:	01638 -
IMPORTANT: By signing or emailing this form, you are declaring that you have the authority of the applicable Parish Council to submit this Form Signature: (Signature not required if submitting by email, though by sending an email, the above declaration still applies)	Date: 11 July 2016

Form E: Parish Council Views on a Suggested Site

Name of Parish	ASHLEY PARISH COUNCIL		
Site Ref Number	Site 01/01		
Brief Site Address or Site Location	Land to the south and east of Elms Farm, Ashley		
Do you support this site?	YES		
	NO	X	

The Parish Council is opposed to the development for the following reasons:-

1. The significant scale of the development is not evolutionary and will detrimentally impact the character of the village.
2. Public transport to the village is at best mediocre. Consequently, extra car journeys would create significant extra traffic on Church Street where the junction with High Street has already been identified as a problem.
3. The proposed access to the site is considered unsafe as it enters Church Street near a sharp bend that severely limits visibility. The proposed access road also enters the Conservation Area and will require hedging to be removed, which will be detrimental to the aesthetics of the area.
4. The closest school is in Cheveley, about 1.5 miles away. This school is already over subscribed. Secondary schools are even further away.
5. The closest doctor's surgery is in Newmarket, about 4 miles away.
6. There is only one small convenience shop in the village
7. There is little employment in the village for residents.
8. The site would be completely landlocked' with only one access to the village. It would also differ from other existing 'street developments' in the village that have housing all the way around a cul-de-sac that is largely all visible from the end of the access road.
9. This site represents only a small proportion of the landowners holding in the area and we are concerned that this could be part of a 'creeping development'.
10. There is an Environment Agency drought relief pipeline in the area that may be affected by the development.
11. The site is on prime farmland.
12. It is also recognised that if this development and site 01/02 were to both proceed Ashley's population could increase by almost a third. This is considered unsustainable in what is in essence a small rural village.

Please Give Your Reasons Here

(please use a separate sheet if you have detailed comments to make, but please include a summary here)

<p>If you have more than one suggested site in your parish, where would you rank this one? Tick one box</p> <p>(‘First’ would mean this is your most preferred site in your parish)</p>	First	X	<p>Please Note:</p> <p>Even if, as a Parish Council, you don’t like any of the Suggested Sites, it would still be very helpful if you could rank the sites in your parish by order of preference</p>
	Second		
	Third		
	Fourth		
	Fifth or more		

Thank you very much for your time and assistance in helping decide which sites to take forward in the new Local Plan

Supporting Information

1) Village Size and Proposed Development

Ashley is a small village which has around 240 dwellings (including outlying areas of the parish) and a population of just over 600. (Note that this is contrary to the EADC notes about Ashley in the current draft Local Plan.) Adding an extra 30 dwellings on this proposed site in a short time frame would significantly increase the size of the village and would put a significant strain on the village resources and roads.

2011 Census data indicates that 78% of work journeys are made by car, with 9% by foot, 8% working from home, 2% by bus and 1% by bicycle, reflecting Ashley’s rural location. This demonstrates that there will be significant increase in traffic caused by the proposed development.

Much of Ashley is also a Conservation Area, which was created so that the the existing ‘look and feel’ of the village would be preserved.

2) Public Transport

Ashley, in parallel with other villages in the area such as Cheveley, has a poor bus service. There are daily buses into Newmarket at the beginning and end of the working day, and a few random services on other days. There is no direct service to Bury St Edmunds.

Consequently, there will be significant extra traffic and most will pass westwards along Church Street towards Newmarket, which will all pass through the already problematic junction between Church Street and High Street. The Highways Dept have already been involved with the Parish Council regarding this problem, and no obvious solution has been found.

3) Site Access

The proposed access to the site is just around the corner from a sharp bend and is therefore considered unsafe for traffic turning into Church Street. Church Street itself, although the main thoroughfare for traffic coming to and from Gazeley and Dalham, is narrow and is itself frequently obstructed by parked cars. The main route out of the village has to pass through the junction of Church St/Newmarket Road and the High Street, by The Crown public house. This has already been identified as a hazardous junction with poor visibility. Consultation with the Highways Agency has not found a solution to this problem and the Parish Council is deeply concerned that the hazard would be multiplied with many more cars passing each day.

Due to poor public transport facilities the majority of newcomers would inevitably use their cars for most journeys, including access to village facilities. Car journeys would be essential for access to medical services, shops and employment, the nearest of which is 3.5 miles away in Newmarket. The proposed number of new houses would possibly generate up to twice the number of vehicles which would exacerbate an already difficult traffic and parking problem along Church Street, - a narrow road but nevertheless, the principal thoroughfare for traffic from the outlying villages of Gazeley and Dalham travelling to and from Newmarket.

The junction of Church Street/Newmarket Road and High Street by The Crown public house has already been identified as a hazardous junction for road users and pedestrians. Consultation with the Highways Agency has not found a solution. The Parish Council is deeply concerned about the danger and difficulty that would be created by even more cars trying to use this junction.

2011 Census data indicates that 78% of work journeys are made by car, with 9% by foot, 8% working from home, 2% by bus and 1% by bicycle, reflecting Ashley's rural location, which supports the expectation of considerable extra traffic through the village and connecting roads.

St Mary's Church also causes significant extra parking at random times, such as weddings and funerals. At these times a significant length of Church Street can have nose to tail parking, which effectively reduces the road to a single file.

4) Schools

The designated primary school is in Cheveley, which is about 1.5 miles away. However, we believe that this school is already over subscribed and has no room for further expansion.

The closest secondary school in East Cambs is in Bottisham, which is a journey of about 11 miles each way.

5) Doctor's Surgery

The closest surgery is in Newmarket, over 3.5 miles away. The irregular bus service is not really appropriate for appointments, so any visit would necessitate a car journey.

6) Shops

There is one small convenience shop in the village. Although it is well stocked and has good opening hours, the amount of produce provided is to some extent limited. Family shopping would need to be in Newmarket or further, which necessitates a car journey.

There is also a pub and a restaurant in the village.

7) Employment

There is little employment in the village for residents, with only a few people who live and work within the village. Adjacent Studs are generally staffed by people who either live on site, or who commute from elsewhere.

8) Landlocked Site

The site adjoins the Conservation Area, where the area around the pond in particular is considered the centre of the village. The majority of any traffic to and from this proposed development would have to pass through this area.

The layout of the site would mean there would be quite a long access road to the site of new dwellings. This would result in a site that is quite isolated from most of the village and would be completely landlocked with only one access. This differs from other older developments in the village where the sites are more rectangular and open, with the houses integrating in more easily with the rest of the village.

The proposed housing density is also well above that which already exists along Church Street, and would give a very different view of the village when approaching from the East along Dalham Road.

9) Creeping Development

This site is situated in open countryside close to the edge of the village and represents only a small proportion of the landowners holding in the area. The Parish Council is concerned that if this site is approved, the principle of development in the area will have been established, causing the adjoining plots to become vulnerable to a creeping urbanisation.

10) Drought Relief Pipeline in the Area

It is understood that an Environment Agency pipeline, part of the London drought relief scheme, passes under this site and will have various restrictions in place on the development that can be done adjacent to the pipeline. The exact route is not known.

11) The site is on prime farmland, which currently is used for grazing.

12) Impact of Development

The impact on the village of developing this site will be very significant. Heavy vehicles that will be used during construction will have a serious impact on congestion, and because of the narrow roads there will likely be significant damage to verges and the edge of the roads. Residents parked cars will also be vulnerable to damage.

If the site was completed, the influx of so many extra residents on what is a small village with a small village infrastructure would also be very disruptive, and is likely to cause significant degradation in the quality of life for existing residents.

The development of both this site and 01/02 would irrevocably degrade the whole character of the village.