

# Cottenham Village Design Group

## Planning application comments

**S/1768/10**

### **Recreation Ground, Lambs Lane, Cottenham – Erection of single storey building for field sports changing rooms**

The Cottenham Village Design Statement recognises the importance of developing and improving community facilities within the village.

*“The increasing population ... adds to the demand for improved community facilities, such as rebuilding the Sports and Social Club...”* (p.2)

The Design Group therefore welcomes the provision of much-needed new changing facilities. The improved disabled access is particularly welcome. However, there are some aspects of the proposal which we feel less able to support.

The Design Statement identifies the playing fields as one of the spaces which *“play a positive role in the village landscape”*, and in this respect the positioning of the building seems unfortunate. At present, when arriving at the sports field, visitors are presented with a wide and attractive view. The proposed building would block that view, presenting a plain rear façade and, due to the positioning of the building, only limited planting will be possible to soften and screen it. An alternative siting that avoids interrupting the view and which gives less prominence to the rear façade would be preferred.

The appearance of the building has been designed to match the existing buildings on the site. However, the existing hall, in particular, is a building of no architectural merit. We would prefer to see a design that better evokes – in materials at least – the distinctive architectural traditions of Cottenham. A more distinctive and original contemporary design could also be better.

The new facilities are likely to put additional pressure on the already poor access arrangements to this site. This access is heavily used, but is not wide enough for two cars to pass without risking straying onto the pedestrian area. Turning in and out of the access can also be problematic. We feel that the positioning of the proposed building, very close to a bottleneck area, risks limiting scope for future access improvement.

We suggest that there is an opportunity here to present an integrated proposal for the site as a whole, addressing the quality of new and existing buildings, the access arrangements, and landscaping options.

*‘S/2: Protect existing views within the village, and into the countryside.’* (Cottenham Village Design Statement p.7)

*‘O/1: A coherent overall strategy is needed to increase the extent and variety of public spaces suitable for informal recreation.’* (Design Statement p.9)

*‘O/2: Landscape design advice should be obtained for the planning of open spaces.’* (Design Statement p.9)

*‘O/3: Improve the accessibility and appearance of existing spaces.’* (Design Statement p.9)

*'B/3: Relationships between buildings are as important as the design of buildings themselves. Make skilful use of spaces between buildings: this can help new developments to be assimilated successfully.'* (Design Statement p.19)

*'L/1: 'Landscape design criteria should form a key aspect in the layout, form and urban design qualities of new developments' Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (Cambridgeshire County Council).'* (Design Statement p.6)

*'L/2: Essential elements of the parish's distinctive Fen Edge landscape character should be protected. New developments should minimise the impact on existing landscape qualities and features. New developments should contribute positively to the quality of the landscape and enjoyment of the environment.'* (Design Statement p.6)

*'L/7: Protect vistas that contribute to the character and attractiveness of Cottenham. Prevent undue damage to the view either by blocking, or unacceptably imposing on, a landmark or by creating an intrusive element in the view's foreground or middle ground.'* (Design Statement p.6)

## **S/1765/10**

### **22 Rampton Road, Cottenham – Erection of single storey dwelling and garage**

This is an interesting proposal for a contemporary dwelling which works well in this location. Materials and proposed finishes are appropriate to the design. We welcome the addition of the green sedum roof due to its environmental and visual benefits. We note that visibility of this development from the street will be minimal.

*'B/1: High-quality contemporary architecture is encouraged. Imaginative and original design can extend and renew the distinctive character and traditions of Cottenham's built environment. Encouragement will be given to well-designed buildings on appropriate infill plots.'* (Cottenham Village Design Statement p.18)

*'B/3: Relationships between buildings are as important as the design of buildings themselves. Make skilful use of spaces between buildings: this can help new developments to be assimilated successfully.'* (Design Statement p.19)

*'B/6: New developments should acknowledge their Cottenham context and avoid pattern-book designs. Developments can maintain and strengthen the visual cohesion of the village, and help to renew the specific architectural traditions of Cottenham. Respect local characteristics and context of the particular site. Use good quality materials – whether modern or traditional – which are appropriate to Cottenham.'* (Design Statement p.19)

## **S/1890/10**

### **19 Pelham Way, Cottenham – Single Storey Front Extension**

We have no comment on this application.

**S/1820/10**

**13 High Street, Cottenham – Alterations - Raise chimney from 1.1 metres to 1.8 metres and install two flue liners**

and

**S/1785/10**

**13 High Street, Cottenham – Increase in height of chimney from 1.1 metres to 1.8 metres.**

We have no comment on these applications.

Applications viewed and comments prepared on behalf of Cottenham Village Design Group by Steven Poole and John Williams, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2010. All quoted text is taken from the Cottenham Village Design Statement, Supplementary Planning Document: <http://www.cvdg.org/design-statement-2007.pdf>. Comments are based solely on the principles and guidelines set out in this document.