

Cottenham Village Design Group

Planning application comments

S/1186/13/FL

Erection of entrance piers to Pelham Grange housing development granted planning permission reference S/2317/11

The Design Group objects to this application, these entrance piers are unnecessary; being both out of character with the location and without precedent in the village (they would be the only ones of their type in the village or surrounding area).

This type of feature is very urban in nature and in this predominantly rural edge of village location, fronting areas of green belt would be both out of keeping with this location as well as bringing undue emphasis to this development on the village edge.

As the position and prominence of this development site was a key matter for the village it would have been preferable for these to have been presented as a part of the main proposals, especially due to the loss of much of the existing hedgerow on the frontage in the position that these are now proposed for.

We also respectfully highlight that the Design and Access Statement misleadingly states "The brick piers are small-scale in nature just above 1 metre in height" but the detailed drawing shows the brick part of the construction to be 1.575m with an additional 10cm or so for the coping. This is a significant disparity given that the hedge on the village-side is supposed to be 0.9-1.2m high.

The materials would however be appropriate and would match the character and materials used in the development.

'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.*
- *There is considerable room for the improvement of wildlife habitat and protection. This creates opportunities for developers to address these aspects within their schemes and enhance the assets of the village.'* (Design Statement p.6)

'L/3: New developments on the village edge should give high priority to landscape design and management of light pollution, to protect and enhance the external view of the village.

- *Do not form a stark edge to the village, or spoil the outside view by neglecting the backs of gardens or buildings.*
- *Shelter and contain the edge using appropriate native broadleaf species.*
- *Achieve well-designed compositions using hedge and woodland screens.'* (Design Statement p.6)

'L/4: Action by landowners, community groups and individuals.

- *Plant native and/or locally typical species to retain landscape character and to benefit wildlife within the village.*
- *This is a landscape of wide views and open spaces. Efforts should be made to minimise impact of developments on the character of this landscape.'* (Design Statement p.6)

'L/7: Protect vistas that contribute to the character and attractiveness of Cottenham.

- Design should respond to the qualities of affected views with sensitivity and imagination, bearing in mind that scenery changes with weather and lighting conditions (such as length of shadow or phase of the moon), and seasonal changes in the natural and cultivated environment.*
- 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/2: New developments need to be integrated with the village and form part of a linked overall pattern.

- Protect existing views within the village, and into the countryside.*
- Create vistas into and within the newly developed areas.*
- New infrastructure should not detract from the appearance of the village or surrounding area.'* (Design Statement p.7)

Applications viewed and comments prepared on behalf of Cottenham Village Design Group by Alex Darby, Alex Thoukydides and Mike Smith, August 15th 2013. 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.