

Pieter Mommersteeg's response to [NDP-0207](#)

Comments on PCC response 13 Oct to PW Mommersteeg's submission,
14 Sept *24th Nov 14*

The draft response of the working party to my submission 14 Sept. was approved at the PCC meeting 13 Oct, agreed and subsequently incorporated into a consultation doc. I did not have the opportunity to comment on the working party's document until after the meeting. The comments that follow therefore respond to that working party's submission, abbreviated for convenience in this exercise as WP. Their views are attributed in this report to the Parish Council, which is doubtless correct, but the lengthy discussion, some 3 months, leading up to the WP proposals were held 'in private' by the WP and circulated to PCC members a week before their meeting.

The WP response outlines in more detail its rationale for advocating the designation of local Green Space status for LGS8 and LGS9 than that described in their Pre-examination version of the Neighbourhood Plan. However I believe the main objections put forward by Wilbraham Associates on my behalf still stand. We continue to object therefore to the WPs assessment.

LGS 8 and 9

Briefly, the original draft Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2035 pre examination version refers to two paddocks. In practice, the field has for agricultural reasons been operated as one for some time. Temporary 'fences' have been used in different locations. However, a more permanent fence has been erected between the Church House curtilage boundary and the copse at the corner of Caldecott road and Bidwell Lane. This strip runs parallel to Caldecott Road and some 35-50 metres within.

The original aspirational site S-018 was divided into two *a* and *b*, Caldecott Road and Bidwell Lane; this strip relates to S-018a. For ease of reference, I will deal with the Local Green Space aspects for those areas on that basis.

Caldecott Road.

Listed below are extracts taken from the draft Parish Council responses referring to Caldecott Road.

I quote

*'We agree that this strip afforded no view of the Church and internally at least is not particularly noted for its beauty. However the key important feature is the mature hedge along Caldecott Road and the copse at the end of it. From the road, these are defining street scenes features of this stretch of road.'*¹

The WP's reference to Caldecott Road being an *'open and rural' approach to the Caldecott settlement* is misleading. Firstly, and this is a general point, the NDP is predicated on their being three distinct settlements, Chelveston, Caldecott and Chelston Rise.² Therefore all references to areas or sites within the Caldecott settlement should be noted as *being within* and not *to* so the whole of Caldecott Road therefore lies within Caldecott.

Secondly, I quote *'Caldecott Road is characterised by views across open countryside to one side and distinctive housing or historic buildings on the other This feature contributes to the rural feel of the parish and was considered very important by residents'*³ This may have been significant for some Caldecott residents but was by no means a majority, Thirdly existing associated dwellings comprise some 75% of the length of that part of Caldecott Road. Finally, the WP response 13 Oct, makes particular reference to a small length (7-8m) of hedging in front of the new village Hall car park as *the mature hedge being maintained to preserve the street scene.* As Chairman to the Village Hall Trust, I do not remember any specific discussion taking place which led to that being a particular reason to retain that length. It was a routine common sense decision. In addition, it adjoins a 40 metre length of white plastic fencing.

Community responses S-018a

Caldecott Road S-018a and Bidwell Lane S-018b were essentially 50/50 for/against the development of these aspirational sites. This outcome included

¹ Consultation Version 1.0 with draft Parish council Responses; Sept 2014 p24 of 43

² NDP pre-examination version July 2014 p 6 of 85

³ NDP pre-examination July 2014 H4f Policy statement p45 of 85.

the results from the residents of Caldecott. Perhaps not too surprisingly residents of Caldecott, namely those closest to the proposed development, voted clearly 60% against 30% for with 10% no opinion; figures taken from the site utilisation poll. The results quoted are quite specific in that they sought individual's views on specific aspirational sites over a certain timescale. The question of designated *Local Green Space* applicable to Caldecott Road is another question. A recent straw poll of Caldecott residents⁴ showed; 60% against the necessity of LGS status, 30% for, 10% no opinion. This indicates the danger of translating site utilisation poll results to views on LGS. The arbitrary weighting of Caldecott residents against the remainder of the Parish will be discussed later.

Emphasis has been placed on the details of the results of the site allocation poll throughout the WP report and its recommendations. Some of these are open to question. For example in the case of S-018a Caldecott Road two out of ten 'reject' responses for AR/AT sited views of the Church. In practice, there are no such views of the Church.

Returning to the basic WP's reasoning, we reconfirm our view that this 'green' area is NOT demonstrably special to a local community and does not hold particular local significance. (NPPF Para 77) as outlined in Wilbraham Associates response.⁵ We see no substantive evidence to support the Council's aspiration for this part of LGS9. We feel the argument put forward is weak and disingenuous. We therefore maintain our objection.

Bidwell Lane

Our view is that the Parish Council's basic aspirations are to maintain views across the paddock but we consider the designation of the site as Local Green Space is not the appropriate manner in which to achieve this aspiration.⁶ The Parish Council's aspirations can best be summarised by the following quotes.

⁴ The two households in which a member sits on the working party were by the results of the WP recommendations counted for as for. The PCC clerk being neutral as 'no opinion'

⁵ Wilbraham Associates submission on behalf of PWMommersteeg

⁶ Wilbraham Associates on behalf of PWMommersteeg p10

'The views of the Church across this land from Bidwell Lane are the key to its significance'⁷

'Lovely views of the 13th century grade II church in a pastoral setting'⁸*

Results of the site allocation poll showed 50/50 for/against development. For example, in the case of S-018a Caldecott Road two out of ten 'reject' responses for the AR/AT post codes sited views of the Church; in practice, there no such views of the Church. Similar analysis of the responses to S-018b showed three (out of 10) concerns about views for AR/AT post codes and eight overall for the village out of 123. Not included in these figures are references to over or unsuitable development. In the responses as expressed in the factors 'you like most living in the village' taken from the site allocation poll, the feeling of 'peace and quiet' was prevalent. This is quite wide ranging expression and covers a very general feeling. As mentioned above, the poll has been used mistakenly as supporting data for the WP's view that the designation of LGS 8&9 are appropriate measures to achieve the objectives laid out and expressed as part of Policy Hf. Whilst the WP is entitled to do this, the point I wish to draw attention to is the wide discrepancy between a 50/50 split for specific sites, S-018 a & b, with clear outline boundaries (site allocation poll) on the one hand and the WP's proposal, on the other. This is for an order preventing any development at all on a 1.7ha site for a period which transcends any unlikely changes in the Core Strategy. I also wish to draw attention to the fact that it is WP's interpretation and defining of Policy Hf which would seem to have led to the Local Green Space designation as their preferred solution. I believe that this is essentially their opinion and it is not necessarily shared by the community (as indicated in the recent poll for Caldecott p3)

I wish now to progress to something more positive, notwithstanding all my strong objections expressed above. It is the views from Bidwell Lane to the Church which are stressed in the WP proposal and are repeatedly mentioned in their response; a key factor and one I believe lies at the heart of the

⁷ NDP-0207/v1.0 Oct14; p24of43 PCC 14Oct
⁸ „ p26of43 „

problem. I am more familiar with that aspect of Bidwell Lane than anyone, having walked along it regularly for over 40 years and am aware that the Church has become more visible in recent years.

However, I have re-considered this aspect and now propose that

a strip 25 metre along the boundary on Bidwell Lane will be maintained for 'open views' and so will be free of any development. This represents some 30% of the appropriate section of Bidwell Lane.

A diagram, with approximate measurements, is attached.

It answers comments which include;

The views of the Church across this land from Bidwell Lane are the key to its significance.⁹ The views from and of the Church are important to the community

My proposal offers a sensible and appropriate solution answering any misgivings some residents may have. It responds to the provision of maintaining views and the visual amenity of the Church.

References are also made in the consultative document to views *from* the Church, I believe such views are covered by the proposal put forward above. I question the origin of this comment below and how widespread it was. I query the conclusion drawn;-

'Had ...S-018b been accepted, there would have been views from the Church into back gardens and onto the back walls and roofs of house. This was one of the factors that led the electorate rejection of the proposition.¹⁰ I cannot determine the source of this opinion. Also, the proposed dwellings are in fact bungalows not houses and at 150m distance unlikely to be a major visual handicap and can readily be screened if necessary.

As stated, S-018b was not accepted in the site allocation poll so any development is frozen for 20 years, until 2035.

⁹ NDP-0207/v1.0 Oct 14 p24 of 43
¹⁰ " " P 26 of 43

The proposal of the ‘open’ section of Bidwell Lane does not however imply acceptance of the designated status of either this site or that at Caldecott Road.

Planning Policies.

1 We query the use of the designation of LGSs to overcome possible future changes of local planning policies. There are existing strict planning controls on development in place, both at national and local planning policy levels. The PC has expressed concern that local planning policies namely the Core Strategy and the ‘saved’ policies of the District Local Plan are timetabled for review. The fact that the Council may have experienced some difficulties in recent planning appeals should not be an issue in this case. We believe that the development plan framework due for revision will not change. I repeat the application of a LGS is inappropriate and, as illustrated above, there are other ways of achieving that goal which have been put forward.

2 The site allocation poll served to reflect the views of the village as a whole. To ascribe extra weighting to the views of those closest to the proposed sites seems to us to be unsound and set a dangerous planning precedence..

Miscellaneous

1 The PCC seeks to ally PRESERVE’s campaign against the erection of 14 wind turbines on the former Chelveston airbase to the street scenes of Caldecott Road.¹¹ Firstly, Preserve was concerned with the effect of the turbines on Chelston Rise and Caldecott along with several other locations within a 15 mile radius and particularly the movement of the turbine blades. The question of their effect on the street scene at Caldecott road was not an over-riding factor. Indeed the house most affected by the turbines is Church House. As the Chairman of Preserve at the time, we took a balanced view and the properties most affected were deemed to be those at Chelveston Rise and Yeldon. Secondly, the choice of position for photomontages was agreed

¹¹ NDP-0207/v1.0 p27 of 43 „

between the District Council and CRE, the company applying for planning permission. This site was one of 20 or so and it is misleading to attribute any weight to Preserve's activities in this respect to the street scene at Caldecott Road.

- 2 I am not clear about the relevance of the reference to 1994 and 2004. I have never applied for planning permission along Caldecott Road. In reply to a request for comments both in 1994 and 2004, I suggested the confines along Caldecott Road be extended to provide a link between the four houses at the start of the road with Bidwell Lane. A view I, along with other parishioners, still hold.
- 3 The report questions the resolution of queries raised in the pre poll public consultation evening. The response to those queries, as I remember it, was that the mature trees will stay and access to Bidwell Lane is for discussion with the Highways Agency. The future of 'important' hedgerows – removal will be very limited and will depend on the details of any future planning application.¹²

Summary

I return to the main issues. The designation of the 1.7 Ha site as Local Green Space, as I maintain is inappropriate, incorrect and contrary to the requirements set out within paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The strip of land parallel to Caldecott Road, which is part of LGS 9 and incorporates S-018a, is a street of no outstanding beauty or special significance. It is situated *within* Caldecott with open countryside on one side and housing comprising some 75% of the section in question on the other. It has the advantage of providing with sympathetic potential development, a link between the existing houses and the remainder of Caldecott. It does not warrant Local Green Space designation.

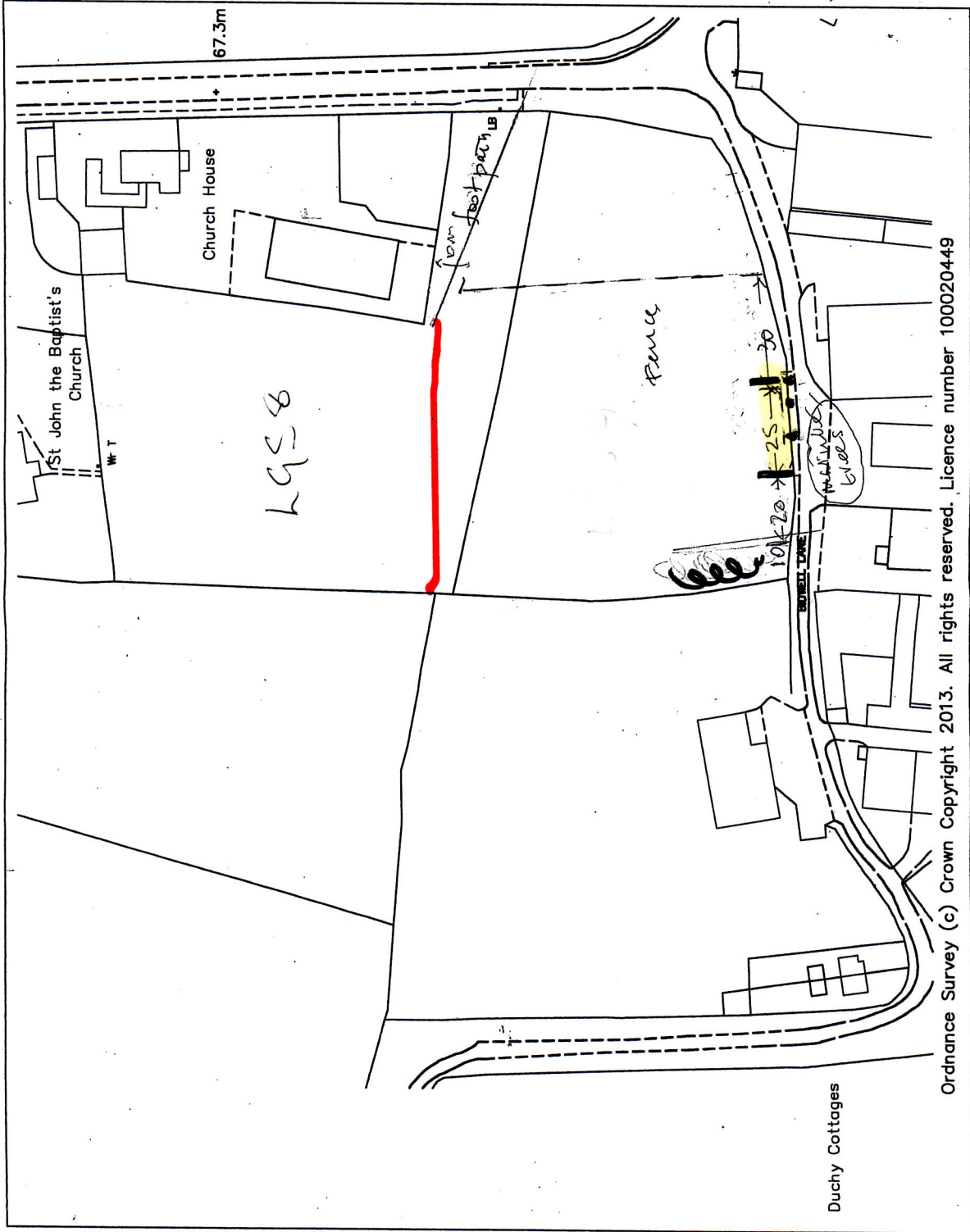
¹² NDP-0207/v1.0

LGS 8 There are already existing strict controls on development in this location (open countryside). Whilst the site is close to the properties along Caldecott Road, it is not within close proximity of the main settlement and other built up areas.

LGS 9 As with LGS8, the same strict controls on development exist and are reinforced by the site allocation plan. We re-iterate our opinion that LGS status is not the appropriate manner in which to achieve the Council's aspirations of maintaining views of the Church across the field. We have however put forward an alternative and more appropriate solution. This is to provide 'open views' of the Church by designating and protecting a 25 metre stretch of Bidwell Lane from which views of the entire Church can be seen. This, I believe, is a more appropriate way to secure the Council's aspirations

Original submission 24th November 2014

Scale 1:1250 When printed at A3



From: [Mommersteeg](#)
To: "[Adrian Dale](#)"
Subject: RE: NDP-0208
Date: 04 January 2015 18:07:00

Adrian,

Basically the planting of the hedge along the 25m stretch does not necessarily affect the proposal.

I would like, however, to stress a key issue, important to me as well as the PCC I suspect, namely the offer to designate the 25m stretch is dependent on my land bordering Bidwell lane not being designated LGS.

The proposal of the 'open' section of Bidwell Lane does not however imply the acceptance of the designated status of either this site or that of Caldecott Road (NDP- 0208 p6) ie one is dependent on the other

Should you (WP) wish to pursue this, I believe it could make sense to discuss this directly and in more detail.

Finally, apologies, an alteration has been made to the plan attached in NDP 2008 and is sent separately here. The change came to light when the hedge was planted. The stretch between the end of the yellow area and the Bidwell/Caldecott 'end' is 15m longer than that given on the original plan - 30>45m I think this has arisen because the line of the fencing is incorrect. Should the details, particularly those of the fence, become an issue, the line of the fence will need to be clarified.

Regards,

Pieter

From: Adrian Dale [mailto:adrianrdale@gmail.com]
Sent: 02 January 2015 11:00
To: 'Mommersteeg'
Cc: Clerk@chelveston.org.uk; 'Andrew Seaman (Chair)'
Subject: NDP-0208

Pieter,

In your last communication ([NDP-0208](#)) you offered to designate and protect a 25m stretch of Bidwell Lane to maintain views of the Church. I notice that you have now planted a new hedge along the full length of Bidwell Lane including across the 25m zone on your map. How does this affect your proposal?

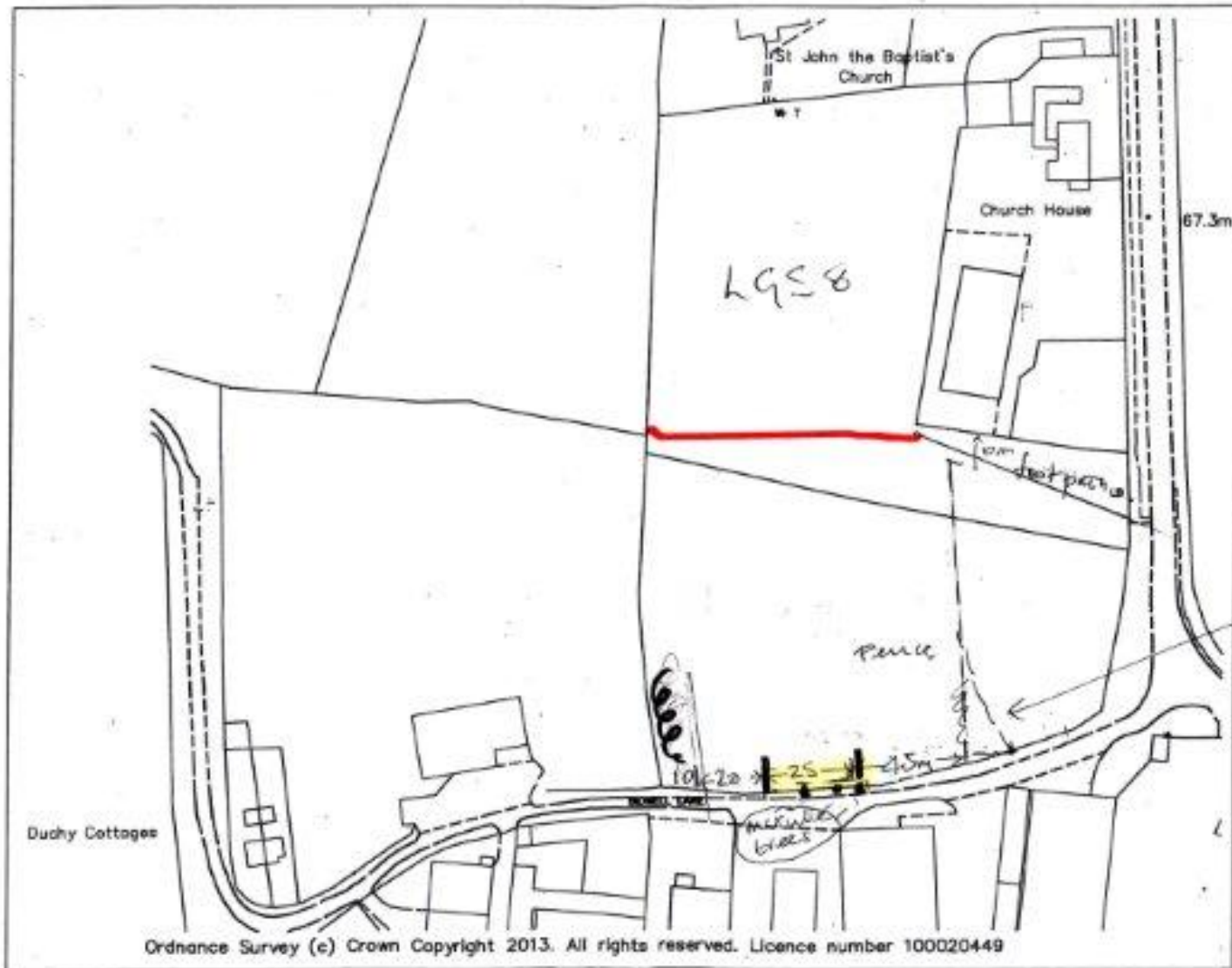
Thanks in advance

Cllr Adrian Dale
Chairman of the Parish Council
Chelveston-cum-Caldecott

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