

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 2nd November 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/1744/05/F – Thriplow
House and Garage on land Adjacent 22 Middle Street for S Hurst

Recommendation: Approval
Date for determination: 8th November 2005

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. The site, which extends to approximately 0.07 hectares/0.18 acres previously formed part of the garden area of No.22 Middle Street, a brick, boarding and large flat tile two-storey dwelling with part of the roof dropping to single storey eaves height. A detached double garage currently sits on the site. To the south of the site is No.24, a monopitch roof detached bungalow with a gable end pitched roof garage to the front and a utility room door and utility room, bedroom, en-suite and secondary living room windows in its north elevation facing the site. There is a 2.5m high hedge along the site's road frontage save for the existing access at the southern end of the frontage. A separate new access to serve No.22 has recently been completed. The boundary between the site and No.24 is marked by fencing of varying heights and a new 1.8m high fence has been erected along the boundary between the site and No.24. There is a holly tree within the site close to the boundary with No.24.
2. This full application, received on the 13th September 2005, proposes the erection of a 4-bedroom detached house and detached triple garage on land to the south of No.22 Middle Street. The triple garage would serve the proposed dwelling (two bays) and No.22 (one bay). The main two-storey part of the house would measure 6.9m to ridge and 4.2m to eaves with an attached 4.2m to ridge and 2.2m to eaves single storey element to the side. The house would be faced with timber boarding over a brick plinth. The main part of the house would have a slate roof. The single storey element would have a pantile roof. The garaging building, which would stand gable to the road behind the frontage hedge, would be faced with bricks with a pantile roof. It measures 4.5m to the ridge and 2.2m to eaves. The density equates to 14 dwellings to the hectare.

Planning History

3. Planning permission for the erection of a part two-storey (7.5m high), part one-and-a-half storey house, and a double garage with a ridge running parallel to the road, on the site was refused in November 2004 under reference **S/2036/04/F** for the following reasons:

“This part of the Thriplow Conservation Area is relatively loosely spaced, with the spaces between the buildings being almost as significant to the character of the street scene as the buildings themselves.”

1. *The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its scale, design and detailing, together with the fact that it would almost completely fill the gap between Nos. 22 and 24 Middle Street, would have a detrimental impact upon the street scene and would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In addition, the design, detailing, siting and orientation of the proposed garage in relation to the road would not be in keeping with the character of its surroundings. Consequently the proposal would contravene: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 Policies P1/3 which requires a high standard of design that responds to the local character of the built environment, and P7/6 which requires development to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment; and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policies EN30 which states that permission will be refused for schemes within Conservation Areas which do not fit comfortably into their context and SE5 which requires new development to be sensitive to the character of its surroundings*
2. *The visual impact of the garage, and its subsequent harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, would be compounded if the garage was built back-to-back with that proposed under planning reference: S/2035/04/F.*
- 3: *The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its height and proximity to the southern boundary of the site, would be an overbearing presence when viewed from the living room, dining room and bedroom windows in the north elevation of No.24 Middle Street. These windows would also be overlooked by the first floor bedroom window in the south elevation of the new dwelling to the detriment of the privacies of the occupiers of the neighbouring property. Consequently the proposal would contravene South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policy SE5 which requires new development to be sensitive to the amenities of the locality.”*
4. At the same time, planning permission was refused for a double garage for No.22 which was proposed to be attached to the double garage for the dwelling proposed under reference **S/2036/04/F** and new access for No.22 under reference **S/2035/04/F** for the following reasons:
 1. *“The proposed garage, by virtue of its design, detailing, siting and orientation in relation to the road, would have a detrimental impact upon the street scene and would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Consequently the proposal would contravene: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 Policies P1/3 which requires a high standard of design that responds to the local character of the built environment, and P7/6 which requires development to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment; and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policies EN30 which states that permission will be refused for schemes within Conservation Areas which do not fit comfortably into their context and HG12 which resists additions to dwellings that would have an unacceptable impact upon the street scene.*
 2. *The visual impact of the garage, and its subsequent harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, would be compounded if the garage was built back-to-back with that proposed under planning reference: S/2036/04/F.”*

5. Permission was granted for a new access for No.22 in November 2004 under reference **S/2034/04/F**.
6. Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the existing garage and shed was granted in December 2004 under reference **S/2242/04/CAC**.
7. Permissions for extensions to No.22 were approved in 1984 and 1996 under references **S/0484/84/F** and **S/0660/96/F** respectively.

Planning Policy

8. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P1/3** requires a high standard of design for all new development which responds to the local character of the built environment.
9. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P7/6** states that Local Planning Authorities will protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
10. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SE5** states that residential developments within the village frameworks of Infill Villages, which includes Thriplow, will be restricted to not more than two dwellings comprising, amongst others, a gap in an otherwise built-up frontage to an existing road, provided that it is not sufficiently large to accommodate more than two dwellings on similar curtilages to those adjoining, and provided the site in its present form does not form an essential part of village character, and development is sympathetic to the historic interests, character, and amenities of the locality.
11. Local Plan 2004 **Policy EN30** states that proposals within conservation areas will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation areas in terms of their scale, massing, roof materials and wall materials. It also states that the District Council will refuse permission for schemes within conservation areas which do not specify traditional local materials and details and which do not fit comfortably into their context.

Consultations

12. **Thriplow Parish Council** recommends refusal stating "Thriplow Parish Council is strongly opposed to this application.
13. Comments received from Parish Councillors are:

Whilst appreciating that this proposed dwelling is smaller than the previous proposal, this design is ugly and feather edged boarding is inappropriate in this location. It does not blend in or complement in any way the houses to either side.

Any development on this garden plot detracts strongly from the approach to No.22 as it was, and therefore its appeal to buyers. It would completely cramp the style of a once attractive dwelling. It is pointless for planners to argue over design features, it is the principle of building on this piece of land anything larger than a small bungalow, with a shared access to Middle Street, that should receive prior consideration.

Whilst the proposal shows greater separation between the proposed dwelling and No.24, the proximity to the existing No.22 is unacceptable.

This is not 'land adjoining' 22 Middle Street, it is part of what has always been 22 Middle Street.

The proposed dwelling appears to be squeezed onto this plot. A smaller house would fit better onto the site and the village does need some smaller homes.

A shared access with No.22 would be preferred. Putting an additional access on to Middle Street on a difficult bend will have safety implications on what is now a busy through-road.

Parish Councillors are unanimous in their opposition to this proposal and would ask that it be refused.”

14. **Conservation Manager** raises no objections to the proposal. He states that the current application follows on from a refusal for a similar scheme (but to a different design) last year and the current scheme has evolved from his discussions with the applicant and agent. He is broadly satisfied that the issues he previously raised have now been addressed and that the current scheme would not harm the Thriplow Conservation Area. He would wish to see conditions attached to any approval requiring samples of materials, the agreement of the size and details of the rooflights and the removal of permitted development rights.
15. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** raises no objections subject to safeguarding conditions to protect residents from noise disturbance during the construction period.
16. At the time of application S/2036/04/F, the **Trees and Landscape Officer** raised no objections to the loss of the holly tree.
17. At the time of application S/2036/04/F, the **County Archaeologist** requested that a standard archaeological condition be attached to any consent.

Representations

18. Objections have been received from the occupiers of Nos. 24 and 24a Middle Street. The main points raised are:
 - a. The spaces between buildings is almost as significant to the character of the street scene as the buildings themselves;
 - b. The proposed garage siting would create a solid mass of building which would have a detrimental effect on the street scene and conservation area;
 - c. The existing southern boundary fence would provide insufficient privacy from the french doors in the rear of the proposed dwellings;
 - d. The landing window would have a direct view into No.24's principal rooms;
 - e. The bedroom window in the southern elevation would have views into No.24's bedroom and kitchen;
 - f. Probable loss of a substantial holly tree;
 - g. Bland, overbearing and out of proportion elevation facing No.22;
 - h. A hip or half-hip should be incorporated at the southern end of the single storey element;
 - i. A two-metre high wall with tiles on top, to match the existing wall along No.24's southern boundary, should be erected along the boundary between the site and No.24;
 - j. The original No.22 and its grounds should not be allowed to be divided into two properties;
 - k. Inadequate storm water drainage;
 - l. Another entrance would increase the likelihood of more accidents in this notorious black spot; and
 - m. Little has changed since the previous refusal.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

19. The main issues in relation to this application are: the impact on the street scene and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and impact on neighbours. With regards to some of the other issues raised: a new access to serve No.22 has previously been approved and the existing access that previously served No.22 is to be used to serve the proposed dwelling only; and the Trees & Landscape Officer has raised no objections to the loss of the holly tree.
20. This scheme (which is lower, simpler in design and fills less of the space between Nos. 22 and 24 Middle Street than the scheme refused under reference S/2036/04/F) is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and street scene. The proposed garage, being gable end to the road like the garage at No.24 to the south, albeit sitting behind the front boundary hedge rather than on the frontage like the garage at No.24, is also considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and street scene.
21. This scheme, by only having a single storey element projecting towards No.24, also overcomes the third reason application S/2036/04/F was refused (impact on occupiers of No.24). That said, I consider it important to ensure that a 1.8-2m high boundary treatment along No.24's boundary be provided to protect the privacy of the occupiers of No.24. Ideally, this would be a wall with tiles on top to match No.24's existing southern boundary wall as requested by the occupier of No.24. The occupier of No.24 has requested that the scheme be amended to incorporate a hipped roof at the southern end of the single storey element to reduce the impact on his amenity. This is not considered necessary to ensure that the proposal would not unduly affect the amenities of the occupiers of No.24 and, whilst there may be examples of hipped roofs in the village, the Conservation Manager considers that the proposed gable end is preferable in terms of the proposed design and appearance of the dwelling. There is a first floor landing window in the southern elevation of the main part of the dwelling facing No.24 approximately 10m from the boundary between Nos. 22 and 24. Given the limited size of this window and as it only serves a landing, I consider that it would be difficult to argue that it would result in a serious degree of overlooking of No.24. However, I will ask the applicant to consider replacing this window with a rooflight(s) to minimise any perceived overlooking and will report his response verbally at the meeting.

Recommendation

22. Approval
 1. Standard Time Condition A (3 years) (Reason A);
 2. SC5 – Samples of materials to be used for external walls and roofs (RC To ensure the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area);
 3. SC5 – Details of the rooflights (RC To ensure the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area);
 4. SC51 – Landscaping (RC51);
 5. SC52 – Implementation of landscaping (RC52);
 6. SC60 (all) – Details of boundary treatments (RC To ensure the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and to protect the amenity of the occupiers of the hereby permitted dwelling and neighbouring dwellings);

7. SC5f – Details of materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site (RC To ensure the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area);
8. SC22 – No further windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted at first floor level in the side (north and south) elevations of the development (RC22);
9. SC21 (Part 1, Classes A, B and C (Enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse, including additions and alterations to the roof)) – Removal of permitted development rights (RC To ensure that additions or alterations that would not otherwise require planning permission do not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area);
10. During the construction period, ... SC26 (0800, 0800, 1800, 1300) – Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery (RC26);
11. SC66 (on the application site) – Archaeology (RC66).

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:** P1/3 (Sustainable design in built development) and P7/6 (Historic Built Environment);
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** SE5 (Development in Infill Villages) and EN30 (Development in Conservation Areas)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: impact upon character and appearance of the Conservation Area; impact on amenity of occupiers of Nos. 22 and 24; highway safety; loss of holly tree; and inadequate storm water drainage.

Informatives

In relation to **Condition 3**, the rooflights should be 'conservation type'. Further information can be obtained from the Council's Conservation Section.

In relation to **Conditions 6**, the applicant is encouraged to consider erecting walls with tiles on top along the southern and northern boundaries to match No.24's existing southern boundary wall.

Should driven pile foundations be proposed, before development commences, a statement of the method for construction of these foundations should be submitted to and agreed by the District Council's Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

Planning file Refs: S/1744/05/F, S/2242/04/CAC, S/2036/04/F, S/2035/04/F, S/2034/04/F, S/0660/96/F and S/0484/84/F

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