

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th July 2006
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0110/06/F – Longstanton
Erection of Bungalow at Land at Nether Grove for Papworth Trust

Recommendation: Approval
Date for Determination: 20th March 2006

1. Members may recall that this planning application was deferred at the 1st March 2006 Development and Conservation Control Committee Meeting, so that the possibility of a suitable site being made available elsewhere in the village could be explored. The agenda report for this meeting is attached as Appendix 1.
2. Following the preparation of the previous agenda report, the site location plan was amended to include proposed landscaping along the southern boundary within land outlined in blue. The following representations have also been received.

Consultation

3. **English Heritage**- No recommendation. The application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation office.
4. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – Contrary to the agent's assertion on the application, two semi-mature trees will be removed to accommodate the footprint. One tree has suffered damage at the base because of mowing operation, but both trees make a significant contribution (as part of a group of trees) to the amenity area. My view is that the character of this tree group should be retained.
5. If approved, further semi-mature planting to mitigate the loss of these trees will be necessary on the remaining amenity area.
6. **Conservation Manager** – No objection to application. In response to Trees and Landscape Officer's comments, raises no objection to the loss of two semi-mature trees, subject to conditions which protect other existing trees and requires new landscaping along the southern boundary.
7. **Longstanton Parish Council** – In response to amended location plan being received, the Parish Council recommends the approval of the planning application and notes that their previous views and comments raised still apply.
8. **Lands Officer** – No comment on merits of application. Has provided a map of Longstanton, indicating land in Council ownership (attached as Appendix 2).
9. Comments provided by Council officers in relation to alternative sites in Longstanton are provided under the Planning Comments section.

Representations

10. Letter from the occupant of 7 Rampton Road seeks answers to questions regarding land ownership and whether the land in question has been sold.
11. Letter received from the occupant of 1 Nether Grove which raises an additional objection to the application. Proposed boundary treatment on the northern boundary nearest their property would be unsightly to occupants of 1, 2 and 3 Nether Grove. In the event that the application is approved, this boundary should have the same boundary as the southern property boundary, with the proposed fence replaced by a boundary wall.
12. An anonymous email requesting an update on the status of the planning application has also been received.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

13. I have considered the suitability of the following sites with direct road access within the village framework of Longstanton, for a bungalow of similar footprint to that in the current application (that is, approximately 100 square metres without garaging facilities). Please note that no application has been received on these sites, and that any future application would be subject to public consultation.

Land at Nether Grove, Longstanton

14. Option A refers to the current application. This site is discussed in detail in the attached agenda report for the March Committee Meeting.

Home Farm Site

15. Outline planning permission was given for the Home Farm site in 2000 (Ref: S/0682/95/O). Conditions of consent limited the number of dwellings to 500. No affordable housing on this site was required under the outline consent, in recognition of the applicant's funding of the Longstanton bypass. To date, no application has been received which raises the total number of dwellings on this site above 500. Until this situation occurs, the Council is not in a position to demand any affordable housing on this land.
16. The Housing Strategic Services Officer has provided the following comments on the suitability of this site. "The family's needs will be best served by being in the village close to all amenities and facilities. They need the support of close family and I do not believe that this will be achievable on the Home Farm site.
17. The fact that we will provide land on a 125 year lease in Nether Grove has great achievable implications for this proposal.
18. Any land on Home Farm will come at a price and we do not have funds to even contemplate that option, if it were possible".
19. Option B has been dismissed on financial considerations.

Land adjacent Hatton's Park and High Street

20. The potential site refers to an approximately 0.2 hectare (0.5 acre) site at the junction of High Street and Hatton's Park. The site is grassed open space and contains a

mature Norway Maple. On the adjacent site to the south-east are several mature Norway Maples. The site is surrounded by residential development on all sides, with an electrical substation to the south-east. Along the High Street road frontage is a bus shelter.

21. Public footpaths connect this site to the adjacent Thornhill Place Estate. Hatton's Park to the north-west of the site is a narrow two-lane road, which leads to Hatton Park Primary School.
22. Council officers have provided the following comments on the suitability of this site:
23. Trees and Landscape Officer – "Any footprint would have to ensure the retention of the mature Norway Maple on site and reflect the requirements of BS:1587:2005 with respect to tree root protection areas. The aspect of shading from the Norway Maples in gardens should also be considered".
24. Housing Strategic Services Officer – "Whilst, as you say the proposed site at Hatton's Park will accommodate the sized bungalow as per the planning application, there are concerns as to the impact on the existing area.
25. As you will note the location of the school in relation to the site, there are existing traffic issues and parking to the school accesses, which cause congestion. Any loss of car parking to the school will most certainly be detrimental for the area. Also the child in this case has two years left for her attendance at the school before she moves to secondary education therefore the sustainability of this site has a short life in this instance".
26. It is noted that planning permission was given in 1973 (Ref: C/0488/73/F) for the construction of a concrete hardstanding area for 18 cars on part of this site. This consent was not implemented. Extracts from a local newspaper at the time, indicate that proposal meet with strong local opposition.
27. The construction of a bungalow on this land would raise similar issues to the current application in relation to the loss of green open space. Furthermore, the site is considered constrained by its absence of surrounding open space, the presence of a mature tree(s) on the site and adjacent land which contribute to the visual amenities of the streetscene; and the prominent position of the site within the village of Longstanton. I am of the view that the construction of this bungalow would lead to an unacceptable loss of open space within the vicinity of the site. Concern is also raised as to potential impacts on the visual amenities of the streetscene.
28. Option C has been dismissed on the grounds of loss of open space. The proposal is likely to lead to the loss of all public open space in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Land adjacent 1 Hatton's Park and 26 High Street

29. This 0.024 hectare (0.06 acre) site is currently sited within the side gardens of 1 Hatton's Park and 26 High Street, on a prominent corner plot at the junction of High Street and Hatton's Park. A low chain-wire fence and shrubs runs along the road frontage. No. 1 Hatton's Park is a semi-detached bungalow and 26 High Street is an end of row single-storey terrace dwelling. There is a regular pattern of setback from road frontages in the streetscene. The site contains one mature tree, which does not appear to be of conservation value, although this tree has not been examined by Council's Trees and Landscape Officer.

30. This site is sufficiently large enough to accommodate a bungalow of the same footprint as that proposed in the current application, with or without garaging facilities. Nevertheless, any bungalow, even without garaging facilities would need to occupy a larger footprint than adjacent bungalows, and would need to project beyond at least one of building lines, which characterise development in this section of Longstanton. This site would not allow for the option of a rear garden and it may prove difficult to protect the privacy of any front or side garden. The use of tall hard boundary features along the road frontage would not be acceptable.
31. Vehicular access to the site could be provided to Hatton's Park, although access in proximity to the junction with High Street would be less than ideal. Should access be provided from High Street, on-site turning is likely to be required, which would be difficult to achieve on this site.
32. This option may not be able to provide covered parking/garaging facilities without leading to cramped development in the streetscene, and would provide for a minimal garden when excluding car parking and bin storage area. There would be little scope to erect any future domestic outbuildings on the site.
33. Opposition from occupants of adjacent dwellings to the loss of garden space would also be anticipated.
34. Option D has been dismissed on the grounds that the development is not likely to be sensitive to the pattern of surrounding development and hence likely to have an adverse visual impact upon the streetscene, contrary to Policy SE4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Longstanton Cemetery

35. The option of making part of the Cemetery available for residential development is considered likely to attract significant local opposition and may be considered disrespectful to surviving relatives. Nevertheless, should Members consider the principle of residential development on this land acceptable, the site is expected to suffer from land contamination. Land remediation works are likely to prove prohibitive expensive.
36. It is also noted that the Cemetery has been identified by the Environment Agency as within Flood Zone 3 (Medium to High Flood Risk). Works to reduce/minimise flood risk are also expected to contribute to the costs of the development.
37. Option E has been dismissed on financial and social considerations.

Land adjacent 8b Hatton's Road

38. This 0.023 hectare (0.057 acre) site is currently sited within the side garden of 8b Hatton's Road. No. 8a is a semi-detached two-storey dwelling, erected circa 1988 (Ref: S/2409/87/F). Surrounding dwellings have a regular pattern of setback from the road. There are several mature trees on and adjacent the site, and the site adjoins a water course. The land is identified by the Environment Agency as within Flood Zone 3 (Medium to High Flood Risk). The site has not been examined by Council's Trees and Landscape Officer or Ecology Officer to date.
39. This site is sufficiently large enough to accommodate a bungalow of the same footprint as that proposed in the current application, with or without garaging facilities. Nevertheless, any bungalow, even without garaging facilities would need to occupy a

larger footprint than adjacent dwellings, and would need to be built significantly closer to the road than surrounding development. The proposal is likely to result in the loss of several mature trees and new development in this proximity to a watercourse, within a high flood risk area is unlikely to prove acceptable. Concern is also raised that a new bungalow could result in an undue loss of outlook from the existing dwelling.

40. Option F has been dismissed on the grounds of loss of trees and potential loss of biodiversity, in addition to potential harm to the visual amenities of the streetscene and harm to amenities of occupants of the adjacent dwelling.

Land to the rear of 7 and 8 Hatton's Park

41. This 0.03 hectare (0.074 acre) site is currently sited within the rear gardens of 7 and 8 Hatton's Park. Numbers 7 and 8 Hatton's Park are two-storey terrace dwellings, which form part of a row of four terrace dwellings. The site appears to contain two mature trees and small domestic outbuildings. The trees have not been examined by Council's Trees and Landscape Office to date. The site is surrounded by two-storey dwellings.
42. This site is sufficiently large enough to accommodate a bungalow of the same footprint as that proposed in the current application, with or without garaging facilities. Nevertheless, any bungalow, even without garaging facilities would need to occupy a larger footprint than adjacent dwellings and would result in the loss of trees and garden area for occupants of the existing dwellings. This site would not allow for the option of a rear garden and would allow for little amenity space, taken into account required car parking and bin storage areas. First floor windows in adjacent properties would overlook any outdoor space in this location.
43. Vehicular access to the site could be provided from the turning head to the south-west of the site. Care would need to be taken to ensure that the proposal did not lead to any on-street car parking, which is limited within the vicinity. On-site turning appears difficult to achieve on this site and vehicle manoeuvring could interfere with the free flow of traffic on Hatton's Park, and the ability of vehicles to use this turning head.
44. This option does not appear able to provide covered parking/garaging facilities without leading to cramped development. Opposition from occupants of adjacent dwellings to the loss of garden space would also be anticipated.
45. Option G has been dismissed on the grounds that the proposal is likely to significantly harm the visual amenities of the streetscene, taking into account the loss of existing trees; in addition to being out of character with the surrounding pattern of development.

Land to the rear of 10 to 14 Fairview

46. This 0.07 hectare (0.12 acre) site is currently sited within the rear gardens of 10 to 14 Fairview. These properties have the appearance of two pairs of two-storey semi-detached dwellings. The site is surrounded by two-storey residential development, with a turning head accessed off Thornhill Place adjoining the site to the north-east. The site contains mature trees and small domestic outbuildings, with further trees adjoining the site to the north.

47. This site is sufficiently large enough to accommodate a bungalow of the same footprint as that proposed in the current application, with garaging facilities and reasonable outdoor amenity space, without leading to the over-development of the site or creating a cramped appearance in the streetscene.
48. Nevertheless, the proposal might result in the loss of mature trees and would significantly reduce the garden area for occupants of the existing dwellings. The trees have not been examined by Council's Trees and Landscape Office to date. Outdoor amenity space for a new dwelling is likely to be overlooked by first floor windows in surrounding dwellings.
49. Concern is raised that the creation of access from Thornhill Place could lead to undue noise and disturbance to the occupants of 13 and 15 Rectory Close, particularly taking into account their small gardens.
50. Option H may prove to be acceptable, subject to careful siting and design and access and parking being provided within a manner that would not lead to undue noise and disturbance to adjacent residents, and no objection being raised by Council's Trees and Landscape Officer. Nevertheless it would reduce the garden area of occupants of Council Housing.

Overview of Options Considered

51. The only options which are considered likely to provide an acceptable outcome in planning terms are Option A and G. Option A continues to be considered the best option as impacts on existing trees are minimised, no harm is anticipated to highway safety, the proposal allows for a private rear garden and the proposal does not lead to a reduction in garden space for residents of existing Council housing.
52. It is acknowledged that the current application will result in a loss of open space, however it will retain a sizeable area of open land adjacent the site. Visual impacts of the proposal have been minimised by its siting adjacent existing dwellings and proposed landscaping along the southern boundary.

Recommendation

53. Approve current application for bungalow at Nether Grove as amended by Drawing No. NGL-PL-01 Rev B, with conditions of consent as outlined in attached agenda report.

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

- Map of land in Council ownership within Longstanton
- Planning Application Files: S/0682/95/O, S/2409/87/F and S/0110/06/F

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