

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Development and Conservation Control Committee	1 st March 2006
AUTHOR/S:	Director of Development Services	

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

Recommendation: Delegated Approval
Date for Determination: 20th March 2006

Members will visit the site on Monday 27th February 2006

Site and Proposal

1. The application relates to a roughly rectangular site measuring 0.056 hectares (0.14 acres), situated on the western side of Nether Grove, set back approximately 50m from the junction of Nether Grove and Rampton Road. The site has a road frontage of 17 metres. The site currently forms part of an unenclosed grass section of land at the intersection of Nether Grove and Rampton Road, measuring approximately 0.15 hectares (0.38 acres).
2. The site is adjacent to, but outside, the Longstanton Conservation Area. Nether Grove is characterised by a mixture of modest sized bungalows and chalet-bungalows, with bungalows adjacent the site to the north. Approximately 43m to south-west of the site is All Saints Church, a Grade 1 Listed Building. Rampton Road represents the southern boundary of the village framework of Longstanton.
3. The full application received on 23rd January 2006, proposes the erection of a three-bedroomed bungalow with integral carport, with a ridge and eaves height of 4.7m and 2.4m respectively. The bungalow will have a front gable and hipped roof on the northern and western elevation. The bungalow will be set back 8m from the front property boundary. The proposal equates to a density of 17.9 dwellings per hectare.
4. The site is currently owned by South Cambridgeshire District Council .

Planning History

5. Outline planning permission was given in 1955 (**Ref: C/0517/55/O**) for a single dwelling on land to the south of the site facing Rampton Road.
6. Outline planning permission was subsequently given in 1966 (**Ref: C/0294/66/O**) for residential development on the site and surrounding land, measuring 0.96 hectares (2.38 acres).
7. Reserved matter application (**Ref: C/0214/67/D**) for 22 dwellings and garages, which made no allowance for public open space along Nether Grove, was withdrawn in March 1967.
8. Reserved matter application (**Ref: C/0715/67/D**) for 19 dwellings and garages at Nether Grove was subsequently approved in December 1967.

Planning Policy

9. **Policy P1/3** of the County Structure Plan requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development and which provides a sense of place which responds to the local character of the built environment.
10. **Policy 5/3** of the County Structure Plan states that Local Planning Authorities should seek to maximise the use of land by applying the highest density possible which is compatible with maintaining local character.
11. **Policy 5/5** of the County Structure Plan states that small scale housing developments will be permitted in villages only where appropriate, taking into account the need for affordable rural housing, the character of the village and its setting, and the level of jobs, services, infrastructure and passenger transport provision in the immediate area.
12. **Policy 7/6** of the County Structure Plan requires Local Planning Authorities to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
13. **Policy SE4** of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan 2004") identifies the village of Longstanton as a Group Village. This policy permits residential development and redevelopment within this village providing:
 - (a) The retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village;
 - (b) The development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape or ecological importance, and the amenities of neighbours;
 - (c) The village has the necessary infrastructure capacity; and
 - (d) Residential development would not conflict with another policy of the Plan.

It is noted that **Policy ST/6** of the Core Strategy Local Development Framework Submission Draft (2006) also identifies Longstanton as a Group Village.

14. **Policy HG10** of the Local Plan 2004 states that the design and layout of residential schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape. Schemes should also achieve high quality design and distinctiveness, avoiding inflexible standards and promoting energy efficiency.
15. **Policy RT7** of the Local Plan outlines that planning permission will not be granted for proposals resulting in the loss of land and buildings providing for recreational use except where:
 - 1) Sports and recreational facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;
 - 2) Alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is available; or
 - 3) There is demonstrable surplus of all forms of open space in the area.
16. The substance of this policy is repeated in **Policy SF/9** of Development Control Policies Local Development Framework Submission Draft (2006).

17. **Policy EN5** of the Local Plan specifies that trees, hedges and woodland and other natural features should be retained wherever possible in proposals for new development. Landscaping schemes will be required to accompany applications for development where it is appropriate to the character of the development, its landscape setting and the biodiversity of the locality.
18. **Policy EN30** of the Local Plan 2004 states that proposals within or adjacent Conservation Areas are expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas especially in terms of their scale, massing, roof materials and wall materials.

Local Development Framework Submission Draft 2006

19. Development Control **Policy DP/1** states that development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form. It outlines various criteria to assess the sustainability of proposed development.
20. Development Control **Policy DP/2** outlines that all new development must be of high quality design, appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. It outlines criteria, which define what is meant by high quality design.
21. Development Control **Policy DP/3** outlines requirements for new development within the district. Of particular relevance is the statement that planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact on village character.
22. Development Control **Policy DP/7** largely reiterates the advice contained in policy SE4 regarding development and redevelopment of land on unallocated land within village frameworks.
23. Development Control Policy **HG/b** outlines that new residential proposals should protect and enhance the environment by making the best use of land and being appropriate to its location.
24. Development Control Policy **HG/1** states that residential developments will make the best use of land by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare, unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment.

Consultation

25. **Longstanton Parish Council** – comments as follows:

“PPG3 specifically states that the development on Greenfield sites should be a last resort. Redeveloping existing housing or using Brownfield sites preferred. Longstanton has had a large portion of its Greenfield removed as part of the Home Farm Development. It will lose significantly more both in access roads to, and in the main site, of Northstowe. We therefore need to pay particular attention to preserving Greenfield sites that remain.

Further, there is concern that the location of the dwelling will obscure the view of at least one existing dwelling when viewed from the road. This will create a safety issue.”

26. **Conservation Manager** – No objection, but requests that the southern boundary is formed in a brick wall with additional planting to open grassed area adjacent the site. He adds:

“This site is immediately outside the Longstanton Conservation Area and has the potential to impact on it.

Nether Grove is a cul-de-sac of twentieth century houses and bungalows and the introduction of an additional bungalow will, in itself, not impact unduly on the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area or the nearby listed church, although it would result in the reduction of an open area of grass, which is a positive feature in the locality. However, there will still be a significant area of open ground and it will be important that this is retained and that further development of this land is resisted. My main concern is over the boundary treatment between the new bungalow and this open ground. The proposals include for a 1.8m close-boarded fence along part of this boundary, which will be most unsightly. I would therefore suggest that this is replaced by a 1.8m high brick wall that links back to the bungalow. The closed-boarded fences to the other boundaries will not be so visible and can remain.”

27. **Housing Strategic Services Officer** – Recommendation of Approval. Adds “the proposals to build this specific property was to satisfy the specific needs of a local family. We have worked in partnership with the Neighbourhood Manager and Papworth Trust in this regard.

I am aware the Parish Council are not supportive of this proposal but do not share their views, i.e. “taking up the villages ‘green’ spaces will result in all ‘green’ areas being reduced in the village”. We support this proposal as it will meet the needs of a local family.

SCDC works in partnership with Papworth Trust to provide properties to accommodate the special needs of families who are on our housing needs register. The family we have nominated for the bungalow in Nether Grove consists of the parents and two girls. The youngest suffers from cerebral palsy, all four limbs being affected. She is wheelchair bound and present council accommodation cannot be adapted to meet current and future needs. The family need to remain in the village” as relations live in this village, which offer “physical and emotional support to the family. One of the parents does not drive.”

28. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – No objection.
29. **Land and Property Officer** - No response received at time of preparing agenda report. Response to be verbally reported.
30. **Trees and Landscape Officer** - No response received at time of preparing agenda report. Response to be verbally reported.
31. **Ecology Officer** - No response received at time of preparing agenda report. Response to be verbally reported.

Representations

32. Letters of objection received from the occupants of 1, 2, 3, 13 and 14 Nether Grove. These properties adjoin the site. Grounds of objection are summarised as follows:

a) Loss of green space;

- b) Harm to the visual amenities of the streetscene and character of the village;
- c) Loss of space for children to play;
- d) The proposal is out of keeping with the design, layout and landscaping of Nether Grove;
- e) The green is “an integral part of the original design of the close and should be retained in its entirety”;
- f) The importance of the green as open space is made greater by new residential developments at Home Farm and Northstowe, in addition to small gardens of nearby properties;
- g) Objection to size of bungalow and plot size;
- h) Proposed bungalow will be built to front of 1 & 5 Nether Grove and is likely to affect the lighting of these properties and create overshadowing;
- i) A more suitable location for a bungalow for disabled resident, would be the within the new Home Farm or Northstowe development sites;
- j) Impact on local wildlife; and
- k) Loss of quality of life.

It is noted that the consultation period for this application had not expired at the time of preparing the agenda report and that additional representations may be received. Additional representations (if any) will be reported verbally at Committee. The statutory consultation period expires on 3rd March 2006.

Representations on behalf of Applicant

- 33. This proposal is intended to house a family with a disabled child who currently reside in Longstanton as tenants of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

- 34. The key issues for consideration in the assessment of this planning application are as follows:
 - a) Principle of residential development on existing green area;
 - b) Impact on Longstanton Conservation Area and village character;
 - c) Impact on Residential Amenity; and
 - d) Whether the proposal represents an efficient use of land in terms of density.

Principle of Residential Development on Existing Green Area

- 35. I am of the view that the retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village. It is noted that the grassed section is not designated as public open space and contains no recreational or children's play equipment. The proposal does result in a loss of green space, however an area measuring approximately 18m by 50m (0.09 hectares) is to be retained to the south of the site.

36. I am of the view that the granting of consent for residential development on this land will not set a precedent for the granting of consent on the remaining section of grassed land. Each application should be considered on its merits.
37. The proposed bungalow will be viewed from Rampton Road and Nether Grove against the backdrop of existing bungalows to the north. The bungalow is of modest height and will be no closer to Nether Grove than the existing bungalow at No. 3. I am of the view that the proposed bungalow is compatible in appearance to existing development along Nether Grove.

Impact on Longstanton Conservation Area, Adjacent Listed Building and Village Character

38. Subject to appropriate conditions regarding retention of existing trees, boundary treatment and landscaping, I am of the view that the proposal will not harm the setting of the Longstanton Conservation Area or the nearby listed Church. In that respect, consideration has been given to the statutory requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
39. I am also of the view that the proposal will not harm the character of the village of Longstanton. The bungalow is compatible in appearance with adjacent residential development, and green space to the south of the site is to be retained.

Impact on Amenities of Adjacent Dwellings

40. I am of the view that the proposal will not seriously harm the amenities of occupants of the adjacent dwellings. The dwelling is setback 4m from the side property boundary of No. 1 Nether Grove and 9.4m from the dwelling itself, with the setback to No. 3 Nether Grove increasing to 15.4m. I am of the view that this distance is sufficient to prevent an undue loss of light, overshadowing, outlook and privacy.

Efficient Use of Land and Housing Density

41. The proposal equates to a housing density of 17.9 dwellings per hectare, as opposed to the 30 dwellings per hectare promoted by Policy HG1 of the Draft Local Development Framework 2006. Nevertheless, in this case there are material considerations which justify a lower housing density, including the presence of trees on and adjacent the site, the low height of adjacent dwellings and the location of the site adjacent the Longstanton Conservation Area.

Recommendation

42. Delegated approval following expiration of statutory consultation period.

Recommended Conditions of Consent

1. SCA – 3 years;
2. Sc5 – (a) Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5a(ii));
(f) Materials to be used for hard surface areas within the site, including driveways and car parking areas. (RC5f);

3. SC21 – Withdrawal of Permitted Development Rights – a) Part 1
(Development within the curtilage of a Dwellinghouse – All Classes and Part 2 (Minor Operations) Class A.
(RC: To ensure that alterations or extensions to the dwelling which would not otherwise require planning permission do not harm the setting of the Longstanton Conservation Area, the visual amenities of the streetscene or the residential amenities of adjacent properties.);
4. SC26: - Restriction on the Use of Power Operated Equipment during Period of Construction (RC26);
5. SC60: Details of boundary treatment. (RC: To ensure that the appearance of the site is appropriate to its position adjacent the Longstanton Conservation Area and that boundary treatment does not harm the residential amenities of adjacent dwellings);
6. SC51: Landscaping (RC51);
7. SC52 Implementation of Landscaping (RC52);
8. SC56: Protection of Trees along rear property boundary during construction. (Rc56);
9. SC57: Protection of Existing Trees (Rc57).

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)
P5/3 (Density)
P5/5 (Homes in Rural Areas)
P7/6 (Historic Built Environment)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
SE4 (Residential development in Group Villages)
HG10 (Housing Mix and Design)
RT7 (Protection of Existing Recreation Areas)
EN5 (The Landscaping of New Development)
EN30 (Development within and Adjacent Conservation Areas)
2. The proposal is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Impact upon setting of adjacent Conservation Area and Listed Building
 - Design and Appearance
 - Loss of Green Space/Informal recreation area.

Environment Agency Informatives

Informatives regarding surface water drainage.

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
- Local Development Framework, Development Control Policies, Development Plan Document, Submission Draft 2006
- Local Development Framework, Core Strategy, Development Plan Document, Submission Draft 2006
- Planning File Refs: S/0110/06/F, C/0517/55/O, C/294/66/O, C/0214/67/D and C/0715/67/D.

Contact Officer: Allison Tindale – Planning Assistant
Telephone: (01954) 713159