

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6th September 2006

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

S/0625/06/RM - LONGSTANTON
Erection of 87 Dwellings and Ancillary Works on Land West of Longstanton
(Phase 3a - Home Farm) for
West Longstanton Ltd

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 28th June 2006 (Major Application)

Update

1. The application was considered at the June 2006 Committee Meeting. Delegated powers of approval were granted at that meeting subject to the conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services in order to resolve outstanding design issues in conjunction with the local Member.
2. Attached as Appendix 1 is the report to the June 2006 committee meeting.
3. The application has been amended following a detailed consideration of the design and layout of the scheme involving the case officer, Mr Nigel Blazeby, the Council's appointed urban design consultant, Mr Nicholas Parkinson, the agents, applicants and the Local Member Mr Alex Riley.

Consultation responses

Longstanton Parish Council

4. Makes no recommendation. It states: "Plot 16 should be rotated 90° so that main windows do not overlook existing properties. The hedgerow along the High Street to be maintained".

Willingham Parish Council

5. Recommends refusal. It states: "Willingham Parish Council would not be willing to see a development of that size until there is a bypass around Willingham to take the increased traffic which would be generated. It is also a matter of concern, as this development gets larger and larger, as to how much more waste water the pumping station at Haden Way, Willingham, will be able to take".

Bar Hill Parish Council

6. Recommends refusal. It states: "Objection on the grounds of excess traffic in to Bar Hill and possibility of flooding due to so many new dwellings with no plans as yet to alleviate these problems".

Local Highways Authority

7. "In addition to the fundamental issue of the acceptability of the off-site traffic calming scheme, there are just two issues within the site that need addressing:-
1. The parking for plots 73 and 74 requires attention. With only some 4.0m distance between parked vehicles and the opposite side of the private drive there is insufficient space to allow vehicles to enter/exit the spaces without overrunning the verge and maybe the footpath. I suggest that the garage be moved further into the plots to allow a greater depth of parking space in front of the garage doors and thus increase the manoeuvring space to the rear.
 2. Why is a ramp proposed within the carriageway in front of plot 45? This entire street is shared surface commencing at the table/square at the junction in front of plots 10-14. Consequently, there should not be any further change in vertical alignment along the entire street".

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

8. Ask that adequate provision be made for fire hydrants and that access and facilities for the Fire Service be provided in accordance with Building Regulations.

Environment Agency

9. Repeats comments made on original proposal.

Ecology Officer

10. "Conditions required for scheme of pond restoration, nest box provision, wild flower planting in boundary (but this should really be integrated with landscaping).

I welcome the footpath link to the Fishpond Lane. I would suggest that it is given some form of very low-key surfacing such as compacted hoggin 1.8m wide. Otherwise it will become muddy with regular use. It should not have the same surfacing as the main footpaths as it is a countryside linkage. Condition to control vegetation removal during bird nesting season."

Head of Housing Strategic Services

11. "There is no affordable housing obligation on this site (unless or until the number of homes proposed exceeds the 500 for which outline planning consent has been granted).

I would generally comment that it would be preferred if the market housing mix could include a wide range of housing types/sizes in order to provide opportunities for a mix of household incomes/sizes.

It is not clear from the plan provided what the house sizes proposed are although given the dominance of what appears to be large detached homes across the site it does not appear that there are very many smaller homes proposed which would be more affordable to middle income households (see previous comments along these lines).

Cambridgeshire Constabulary Community Safety Officer

12. "The proposals are characterised by a significant degree of back to back development within curtilage parking or parking courts serving a small number of dwellings. From a crime prevention viewpoint this is welcomed.

The degree of permeability through the site is dictated to some degree by the neighbouring site. The routes are, by and large, well overlooked without sharp

uninviting bends. I would, however, like to see the footpaths made at least 3 metres wide to allow people to pass without infringing each others' personal space with at least a 2 metre verge on either side.

There appears to be planting between the southern side of the footpath running alongside plots 26-28 to 67 and the adjoining housing. It is recommended that this planting is low level to enhance natural surveillance and to prevent the creation of hiding places. This is particularly important in relation to the LAPs near plots 28 and 53.

The path and verges between plots 40 and 41 are rather narrow, lack high levels of natural surveillance and, given the access provided opposite 67, the benefits of access to the open space might be outweighed by the provision of escape routes and anonymity to offenders.

Overall the layout provides dwelling frontages that benefit from high levels of natural surveillance from other dwellings or the street. Plot 84, effectively accessed via a small shared parking court, is unfortunately an exception".

Anglian Water

13. Comments that it should be able to provide a response late August or early September.

Cambridgeshire County Council Countryside Access Team Definitive Map Officer

14. Disappointed that footpath link onto Few's Lane has been omitted – "would be a good opportunity to provide sensible 'soft access' linking the development to Public Footpath no. 3, Longstanton... this link is likely to be a route that is used anyway as a desire line and it would be sensible to formalise this and provide suitable surfacing at this stage."

"The reference to a footpath link to the High Street near plots 8 & 9 is confusing as it is not a Definitive Footpath, but a footway adjacent to the road.

The developers should consider whether it would be necessary to ensure public safety to temporarily close Public Footpath No.3 for the duration of the build."

15. Comments are awaited from Over and Swavesey Parish Councils, the Councils Trees and Landscape Officer, Lands Drainage Officer, Cultural Services Manager, Strategic Development Officer, Chief Environmental Health Officer, Chief Financial Planning Officer Cambridgeshire County Council, Waste Minimisation Officer, Cambridge Water Company, Middle Level Commissioners, English Nature and The Ramblers.

Representations

16. Three letters have been received from the occupiers of The Retreat, Few's Lane and 135 and 155 High Street.

1. The Retreat

Pleased to note there are a reduced dormer proportion of houses.

Objections remain in relation to overlooking from plot 16 (former plot 5).

Do not wish to see any trees removed adjacent to boundary of The Retreat.

Site entrance is also the main link road to Over Road part of the site. The Council should ensure this is not used as a rat run before the bypass is built.

Can the developers contribute towards a footpath/cycleway link along the High Street/Station Road to the railway crossing. Why no apparent contribution from developers towards village amenities?

2. Old Farm, 155 High Street

Inaccuracies in boundaries and position of drainage pipes shown on plans.

Drainage and highway safety concerns.

3. 135 High Street

All access to the site for contractors' vehicles should be via the proposed distributor road from Over Road, not via the entrance on High Street which is unsafe.

Concerned that hedges and trees to be retained on the site continue to be protected and properly maintained to encourage wildlife. Of particular importance is the hedgerow along Fews Lane.

Planning Comments

17. Many of the points raised through the consultation and notification process in relation to the amended plans are dealt with in the earlier report (see Appendix 1).
18. In my opinion the revised proposal addresses nearly all of the concerns raised by statutory consultees and other interested parties. I note that some further minor revisions are being requested by the Local Highways Authority and a neighbour has raised issues of inaccuracies on the plans.
19. With particular regard to the concerns of overlooking of The Retreat from Plot 16 raised by the occupiers of The Retreat and the Parish Council, this house type has been amended from a 2½ storey house to a 2 storey and provides a distance of approximately 10m to the rear garden boundary of this property and 48m back to back distance between the two properties. In my opinion this affords a satisfactory amenity relationship.
20. The footpath link between the development and Fews Lane has been omitted as it was felt to be unnecessary. This green area will be available as informal open space.

Other revisions include:-

- (a) Widening of carriageway around bend fronting plots 8 and 9 (i.e. no overrunable strip of contrasting material).
- (b) Plots 26 and 45 adjusted to squeeze enclosure onto adoptable area.
- (c) Units arrangement to north-western corner amended to incorporate modified layout.
- (d) Footpath incorporated as link between shared surface roads around north-eastern site area and units amended accordingly.

- (e) House type 131 updated and accommodates reduced roof dormer proportion.
- (f) Chimneys now indicated on house types, layout and street scenes.
- (g) 'Angled' garage structure between plots 83 and 85 is now incorporated and detailed.
- (h) Reduced uniformity through the variation in house type designs and the positioning of dwellings and garages.
- (i) Greater ecological emphasis including widening the link onto Fishponds Lane.
- (j) Refuse collection vehicle access concerns addressed.
- (k) More traditional window detailing.
- (l) Small LAP revised to better relate to the street scene.
- (m) Footpath strategy produced.
- (n) More enclosed feel to the south western area of the site through the 'narrowing' of the streetscape and the revised layout of dwellings and the extension of the altered surface area to the north to better distinguish this character zone from the more open and green character of the north western part of the site. This better reflects the approach contained within the Design Guide for the site.
- (o) Highway revisions to accommodate requirements of the Local Highways Authority.

Recommendation

21. Delegated approval subject to the revisions required by the Local Highways Authority and the submission of accurate plans (if necessary following a detailed consideration of the concerns of the occupiers of Old Farm, 155 High Street) and subject to conditions relating to the details of siting, design, means of access and the landscape structure without the need to further consult statutory consultees, residents or other interested parties.

Background Papers:

- Reserved Matters Application File Refs S/0625/04/RM
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Development Brief for Home Farm, Longstanton 1998

Contact Officer: Nigel Blazeby – Area Planning Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713165