

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

6th October 2004

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/1606/04/F – Sawston
2 Dwellings and Garage on Land Adjacent 2 Granta Road for Hogger Homes Ltd**

Recommendation: Approval

Site and Proposal

1. The site extends to approximately 0.06 hectares (0.14 acres) and was previously the grassed side garden to No.2 Granta Road which, like all the other dwellings in this part of Granta Road, is a semi-detached chalet dwelling with flat roof dormers on the front and rear and a flat roof garage to the side. There is an existing 1.5m-2m high hedge along the sites's road frontages. The site is bounded by Granta Road to the northeast, No.2 Granta Road to the southeast, open land/trees to the southwest and Meadowfield Road to the northwest.
2. This full application, received on the 3rd August 2004 and amended by plan date stamped the 20th September 2004, proposes the erection of a pair of 8.8 metres high semi-detached 3-bedroom chalet dwellings on the site. The dwellings are similar in design to the existing dwellings in this part of Granta Road although the dwelling on plot 1 has a pitched roof attached garage with study above and the dwelling on plot 2 would have a pitched roof detached garage to the rear accessed from Meadowfield Road. The proposed density equates to 33 dwellings per hectare.
3. The floor level of the dwellings would be 300mm above the highest recorded flood level applicable to this site. Furthermore, this application purports to include the measures proposed at the time of the recently approved application for 2 dwellings on the site which demonstrated that there would be no loss of flood plain by ensuring that the area beneath the dwellings and garages is left open, air bricks allow any water to flow into this area and then drain out after the end of the flood and any small loss of flood plain is counteracted by lowering the ground level beneath the dwellings. The plan date stamped the 20th September 2004 is the same as the original plans save that air bricks are shown.

Planning History

4. Planning permission was granted for 2 dwellings and garage on the site in April 2004 (**S/1745/03/F**). The application was considered at the March 2004 meeting of this Committee.
5. An outline application for 2 dwellings on the site was refused in February 2002 (**S/2072/01/O**) for the following reason: "The site is in the recorded floodplain of the River Cam and it's tributaries, at a level approximately 600mm below the highest recorded flood level. The proposed development of the site for housing would subject the dwellings to the potential of flooding and reduce the area of floodwater storage, increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere.

As such it would be contrary to Policy SP8/6 of the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 1995 and Policy CS8 of the Deposit South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 1999.”

Planning Policy

6. The site is within the village framework of Sawston, which is defined as a Rural Growth Settlement in Local Plan 2004.
7. Whilst the front part of the site is outside the Environment Agency’s Zone 2 Flood Risk Area, the rear part of the site is within it. These Zones replace the Indicative Flood Plain maps previously used.
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. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SE2** states that residential development will be permitted on unallocated land within village frameworks of Rural Growth settlements provided that (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 also states that development should provide an appropriate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and affordability and should achieve a minimum density of 30 dph unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
10. Local Plan 2004 **Policy CS5** states that planning permission will not be granted for development where the site is liable to flooding, or where development is likely to: (1) increase the risk of flooding elsewhere by materially impeding the flow or storage of flood water; (2) increase flood risk in areas downstream due to additional surface water runoff; or (3) increase the number of people or properties at risk unless it is demonstrated that these effects can be overcome by appropriate alleviation and mitigation measures and secured by planning conditions or planning obligation providing the necessary improvements would not damage interests of nature conservation.
11. Structure Plan **Policy P1/2** states that no new development will be permitted within or which is likely to adversely affect functional flood plains or other areas where adequate flood protection cannot be given and/or there is significant risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere. Structure Plan **Policy P6/3** states that, if development is permitted in areas where flood protection is required, flood defence measures and design features must give sufficient protection to ensure that an unacceptable risk is not incurred, both locally and elsewhere.

Consultation

12. **Sawston Parish Council** recommends refusal stating “This site is in the floodplain of the River Cam and its tributaries and therefore more buildings would create problems for them and existing buildings nearby. The proposed access and egress from the site are at a dangerous road junction which would cause more traffic problems.”
13. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommends conditions relating to the times during the construction period when power operated machinery shall not be used and driven pile foundations are attached to any approval.

At the time of application S/1745/03/F, he also specifically confirmed that he had no objections to the proposal in terms of groundwater pollution.

14. The comments of the **Environment Agency** are awaited.

Representations

15. The occupiers of 18 and 22 Meadowfield Road reiterate concerns expressed at the time of application S/1745/03/F, namely parking problems, loss of view to open space, loss of feeling of space, increase in height is not in keeping with the rest of the surrounding properties and the site is within the floodplain.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

16. The main issues in relation to the application are:

- Flood Risk:
- The design and appearance of the dwellings; and
- Impact on the amenity of neighbours.

17. The principle of erecting two dwellings and garage on the site has already been established by the granting of planning permission under reference S/1745/03/F. The current proposal also purports to include all of the measures proposed at the time of application S/1745/03/F which lead to the Environment Agency raising no objections to the proposal subject to conditions. Subject to the receipt of confirmation from the Environment Agency that it does not object to this proposal, I consider that the scheme is acceptable in terms of flood risk. The recommendation includes the informative that Members specifically requested be attached to the previous permission which stated that, in coming to a decision to approve the application, the Local Planning Authority had regard to the Environment Agency's comments that the scheme satisfactorily addresses and mitigates against the risk of flooding to the site and neighbouring properties.

18. This application proposes revisions to the design of the approved dwellings including changes to the fenestration and a room over the garage to the side of the dwelling on plot 1. In my opinion, the revisions to the fenestration would better assimilate the dwelling into the street scene. These changes include relocating the entrance to the side of the dwelling on Plot 2 (surrounding dwellings have their entrances in the side elevations) and linking the flat roof dormer windows (the dormer windows of each pair of existing semis are linked). That said, I consider that further amendments to the scheme are required in that the dwellings should be no higher than the approved scheme (i.e. 8.5m rather than 8.8m to ridge), they should be no nearer to the adjacent angled section of footpath at the junction of Granta Road and Meadowfield Road than shown on the approved plans (approximately 1.8m) and the garage with room above element to the side of the dwelling on plot 1 should be more subservient. The agent has indicated that his client is willing to amend the scheme to address these concerns and the recommendation is therefore subject to the receipt of amended plans. It is likely that he will ensure that the garage with room above element is more subservient by 'cutting off the top' and thereby reducing its height (ie. having a flat roof element in the middle obscured from view by ridge tiles). As the side of this element would not be readily visible in the street scene due to the position of No.2 Granta Road, I consider that this would be acceptable.

19. I consider that the proposal would not unduly affect the amenity of neighbours and would be acceptable in terms of parking and highway matters.

Recommendation

20. Subject to no objections being raised to the scheme by the Environment Agency and the receipt of amended plans to address the concerns set out in paragraph 17 above, Approval subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard condition A – (Reason A);
2. The external materials of construction for the building works hereby permitted shall be identical to those used for No.2 Granta Road unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority – RC To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development;
3. The ground floor level of the dwellings hereby permitted shall be 21.55 ODN metres – RC To provide a reasonable freeboard against flooding;
4. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works/scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme – RC To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage;
5. There shall be no raising of ground levels within the site, save for the hereby permitted dwellings and garage – RC To prevent the risk of flooding to other land/properties, due to impedance of flood flow and reduction in flood storage capacity;
6. The air bricks, shown on drawing no. EDG/04/84/2b, shall remain clear from obstruction at all times – RC To facilitate flood risk conveyance;
7. Standard condition 21 (Part 1, Classes A and E) 'Removal of permitted development rights' – RC To ensure that extensions and outbuildings which would not otherwise require planning permission do not lead to an increased risk of flooding to other land/properties, due to impedance of flood flow and reduction in flood storage capacity;
8. During the construction period ... Standard condition 26 'Times when power operated machinery shall not be operated' (0800, 0800, 1800, 1300) – RC26;
9. Standard condition 60 (all) 'Boundary treatments' – RC To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development and to protect the amenity of the occupiers of No.2 Granta Road and the hereby permitted dwellings

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: **P1/2 (Environmental Restrictions on Development); P1/3 (Sustainable Design in Built Development); and P6/3 (Flood Defence).**

b) South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE2 (Development in Rural Growth Settlements); and CS5 (Flood Protection),

2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise: **parking problems, loss of view to open space, loss of feeling of space, increase in height in relation to surrounding properties, the site is within the floodplain and the proposed access and egress from the site are at a dangerous road junction which would cause more traffic problems.**
3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

General

In coming to a decision to approve this application, the Local Planning Authority had regard to the Environment Agency's comments that the scheme satisfactorily addresses and mitigates against the risk of flooding to the site and neighbouring properties.

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

During construction, there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the District Council's Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.

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 Ref: S/1606/04/F, S/1745/03/F and S/2072/01/O.

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