

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

5 September 2012

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

**S/1196/12/FL - HARLTON
Demolition of Existing Bungalow and Replacement with 2 storey Dwelling at 8
Haslingfield Road for Mr Justin Webb
Recommendation: Approval**

Date for Determination: 3 August 2012

This application has been reported to the planning Committee for determination as the Parish Council's recommendation differs from the officer recommendation.

To be presented to the Committee by Saffron Garner

Site and Proposal

1. The site is located inside the development framework. It is surrounded by residential development on all axes other than to the southeast, which comprises open countryside. The site comprises 0.19ha. The existing property is a modest single storey unit that sits amongst identical properties in the immediate vicinity. Five of the same units were built in the 1960's and since this time only one has been replaced with a two-storey dwelling. This sits at the end of the row of bungalows at No. 12 Haslingfield Road. The neighbouring sites, and particularly this plot, benefit from extensive rear gardens that back onto open countryside. The entire site is in the village framework; however, the developable area is primarily in line with its immediate neighbours. The boundaries are defined by a mixture of hedging and close boarded fencing. A small layby is located outside the front of the application site and a large pine tree that took up the best part of the front garden has been removed.
2. The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow and replacement with a two storey dwelling with an integrated garage and off road parking provision.

Planning History

3. The site has minimal planning history as the existing bungalow predominately remains as per the originally granted consent in 1960. However, an application for a replacement dwelling was refused under planning reference S/1376/11 due to the adverse impact on neighbour amenity and impact on the street scene. Following this decision made under delegated powers various discussions took place with the aim on reducing the impact on neighbour amenity and designing a scheme that was more in keeping with the closer properties as well as trying to achieve a property that the clients could use as a family home.

Planning Policy

4. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007**
ST/7 Infill Villages
5. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007**
DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New Development
DP/3 Development Criteria
DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments
DP/7 Development Frameworks
SF/10 Outdoor playspace, Informal Open Space and New Developments
SF/11 Open Space Standards
NE/2 Renewable Energy
NE/6 Biodiversity
TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
6. Circular 11/95 (The use of Conditions in Planning Permissions) advises that planning conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

Consultations

7. **Harlton Parish Council** recommends refusal with the following comments:
 - The development will materially alter the character of the village
 - It will remove from the housing stock a type of dwelling that will become more in demand by an aging population
 - It will compromise the existing building line.
8. The **Local Highway Authority** has no objection in principle subject to the inclusion of conditions securing pedestrian visibility splays, surface water drainage, the use of bound material for the driveway, permanent closure of the existing access and the prevention of works in the highway.
9. The **Environmental Health Officer** no comments received. However the standard conditions and informative regarding hours of construction operation and demolition should be applied if minded for approval.

Representations by members of the public

10. Three letters of objection have been received with regard to this application and the following concerns are raised.
 - Overdevelopment and out of proportion
 - Inappropriate development
 - Visually displeasing
 - Out of character
 - Overbearing
 - Inaccurate drawings (tree at front has been felled)
 - Loss of a small dwelling for an aging population

- Forward projections create an unacceptably large dwelling
- Overshadowing
- Shortage of smaller houses in Harlton
- Mess from building contractors

Material Planning Considerations

11. The main issues in this case are:
- Principle of Development
 - Impact on the street scene and character of the area
 - Impact on neighbour amenity
 - Highway Safety
 - Other Matters

Principle of Development

12. The site is located inside the development framework. It is also surrounded by residential development on all sides other than to the southeast which is open to the wider countryside. The density for this site equates to 5 dph. This is significantly lower than the adopted 2007 Local Development Framework policy requirements. However, given the surrounding context and the layout of the existing properties along Haslingfield Road it is considered that more than one unit on this site would create a cramped form of development not in character with the existing context, street scene or neighbouring properties.
13. Harlton is identified as an infill village under Policy ST/7 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire LDF Core Strategy DPD 2007. As such the provisions of Policy DP/7 applies, which permits the development of unallocated land within development frameworks, subject to the proposal not leading to a loss of character or local employment, being respectful to local features and providing the necessary infrastructure. In this instance, the proposal does relate to unallocated land, which is already in residential use, where it is felt that a replacement dwelling could be satisfactorily accommodated in this context.

Impact on the character of the area/Street Scene

14. The new dwelling comprises a two storey replacement dwelling that sits 8m to the ridge and 5m to the eaves. The front and rear elevations have projecting gables that allow for rooms at first floor. The footprint of the replacement dwelling sits over that of the existing; no further back into the site. The most forward projecting element is that of the garage and bedroom 3, which will have limited head room. This projects forward approximately 7.5m from the existing building line and a reduced 6 metres forward of the property known as No. 6. The ridge height of the garage is approximately 5.2 metres and the roof designed to slope away from the occupier of No. 6 Haslingfield Road so as to reduce its presence on the occupier. The eaves height measures at approximately 2.5m, slightly higher than a standard close-boarded boundary fence. At present a mature hedge is located on the shared boundary at a similar height to the proposed eaves line here. This projection has been reduced in length and the design altered to take into account the neighbouring property as well as the street scene. It was preferred that the

garage be set further back, however, the applicant required a double garage on site and this siting was considered to be less damaging to the street scene than that of a detached garage and of an appropriate design so as not to adversely impact on neighbour amenity. It was considered that this projection was a fair compromise from the originally refused scheme.

15. The design of the house is the result of negotiations between the applicant and officers. The first application saw a development that adversely impacted neighbour amenity due to loss of light and being overbearing. Additionally it was considered to be out of keeping with the street scene with large projections that filled the plot tightly from boundary to boundary resulting in an adverse impact on both neighbour amenity and street scene.
16. With specific regard to street scene it was established that a two storey property here was not unacceptable. There are two storey units in close proximity to the application site, opposite and within the village. The main concern was that as this was a bungalow between two very similar properties a change in height would be problematic and out of character. There are many villages in the District that have a road with a line of small bungalows, normally 1950'-1970's, commonly similar in design if not identical. Often attempts are made to retain them due to their regularity in the street scene, however they are often not suitable for larger families but come with vast amounts of land locked rear gardens, similar to the application site. Whilst it would be admirable if private owners saw the benefit of keeping some single storey properties in villages for the ageing population, the market prices of units are not reflective of this requirement. Additionally many elderly residents struggle with the garden size. This is not a planning issue that can be conditioned nor can it be requested that the owners never apply to build upwards. Applications must be assessed individually on their merits. The result of this scheme is to allow for a two-storey dwelling that meets the needs of the applicant and acceptably addresses the earlier two reasons for refusal.
17. One pre-application scheme that was dismissed replicated the units on the other side of the road. No projecting elements were proposed but a detached double garage was to be located in the front garden. Officers were keen to ensure that the house in question addressed all of the issues previously raised rather than just replicating another unit in close proximity to overcome the concerns raised about street scene. The proposal was not reflective of either of the neighbouring bungalows and looked totally at odds with this side of Haslingfield Road, although it looked almost identical to several of the units opposite.
18. As a result the design was revised and projections were reintroduced, the hipped roof design was omitted, the dormer window was omitted and the footprint and proportions revised to create a property that would sit more comfortably between the two modest bungalows. The garage was turned to face onto the street and the eaves were lowered to the front. All these minor changes have resulted in a significant change to the scheme visually and officers are content that the revised design will sit in the existing street scene without resulting in undue harm. It will bring change to the existing view but it is not considered to be harmful or contrary to the requirements of the relevant policies.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity

19. The earlier refused scheme was considered unacceptable as it adversely impacted the amenity of the occupiers at No. 10. It resulted in a loss of light to the property as well as being unduly overbearing due to its proximity and scale. This has since been altered and the potential impact on the occupiers at No. 10 is considered to now be completely addressed. The revised dwelling and rear projection has been moved away from the shared boundary, reduced in size, is subservient to the main ridge line and hipped to remove the loss of light that was previously considered unacceptable. The forward projection has not only been significantly reduced in depth but has been removed from the shared boundary with No. 10, improving the outlook from the kitchen onto the road.
20. The revised design has been reduced in scale overall and the projections now mirrored. The impact of this change on the occupier of No. 6 is considered to be less significant due to the orientation of the units to each other, meaning loss of light is not a concern here. With regard to being overbearing the projections have been reduced in depth, height and the roof slopes designed to slope away from the occupier thus reducing potential impact.
21. Based on the information above it is considered that the revised design appropriately addresses the original concerns regarding neighbour amenity.

Impact on Highway Safety

22. The comments received from the Local Highway Authority are noted. Conditions set out in the LHA comments can be applied as conditions if approval given.

Other Matters

Financial Contributions

23. Policy DP/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007 states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
24. The proposed dwelling will result in a net increase of 1.57 occupants as the new dwelling provides 3 additional bedrooms over the property it intends to replace. The open space calculator suggests that the increase would equate to a financial contribution of £2014.00. This is index-linked and would be secured through the signing of a Section 106 legal agreement. Confirmation that the applicant would be willing to make such a contribution has not been received.
25. In accordance with Policy DP/4, a new charge has been introduced in relation to the Community Facilities Assessment 2009 that seeks a financial contribution of £332.84 towards indoor community facilities. This is index-linked and would be secured through the signing of a Section 106 legal agreement. Confirmation that the applicant would be willing to make such a contribution has not been received.

Loss of a small dwelling

26. There is no policy support for the retention of smaller properties within village frameworks. Retention of small dwellings is primarily protected outside of these areas. This property is inside the framework for Harlton and therefore its replacement, in principle is supported.

Conclusion

27. The application has been changed on several occasions with regard to design, neighbour impact and street scene. The result is a scheme that aims to meet both the applicants needs and the concerns raised by the Local Planning Authority.

Recommendation:

28. It is recommended that the Planning Committee approve the application subject to the following conditions.
1. Time limitation - 3 years
 2. Plans: 14, 8A, 24A, 25A, 26A and 27 franked 6th June 2012
 3. Materials
 4. Hours of Operation/Construction/Demolition
 5. Landscaping
 6. Landscaping Implementation
 7. Removal of PD rights
 8. No further windows at first floor/roof slope
 9. Garage shall not be used as living accommodation
 10. First floor windows in the SW elevation to be fixed and fitted with obscure glazing
 11. Contributions and relative informative
 12. Highway Conditions included

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

- Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPDs
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning file reference S/1196/12/FL, S/1376/11/FL and Pre-application discussions and meetings

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