

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee

6th July 2005

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/0713/05/O - Thriplow
Residential Development, Land at Lodge Road, for Thriplow Farms Ltd.**

**Recommendation: Refusal
Date for Determination: 12th July 2005 - (Major Application)**

Members will visit the site on the 4th July 2005.

Update

1. At last month meeting members deferred determining the application to allow a site visit to take place and further information to be submitted by the applicant. (Item 17).
2. It was reported verbally at the meeting that representations had been received from the occupiers of over 20 local properties, in addition to those summarised in the agenda, which could be summarised as follows:
 - 6 who raised no objections in principle to some residential development on the site, state that more details, including the contents of a S.106 Agreement, are needed, and consideration should be deferred with such details are available.
 - 5 who recommended that the application should be refused.
 - 6 who state that more details are required to allow the impact of the proposal to be properly considered but the application should be refused or deferred until such information is available.
 - 4 who feel they are unable to comment until more details are available.
3. Those not objecting in principle to some residential development on the site state that the following points would need to be carefully considered:
 - Ensuring the development would blend in well with the local landscape.
 - An increase in traffic.
 - The development of 25-35 houses would increase this village population by 10%.
 - It is a large development and a significant departure from the Local Plan.
 - The existing buildings would be displaced elsewhere.
4. Of those recommending refusal, the following grounds are cited:
 - The development is contrary to Local Plan Policies and National Government Guidance;

- Site is outside the village framework;
 - Thriplow is an infill only village;
 - It would seriously harm the character of the village;
 - The development would not be sustainable;
 - Adverse impact on highway safety and overloading of the capacity of Lodge Road and its junction with Fowlmere Road;
 - The existing buildings would need to be rebuilt elsewhere; and
 - If this site is underused, a better use would be a new, smaller grain store built to current standards and thereby reducing noise and dust complaints, and light industrial units.
5. The following comments of the Conservation Manager were also reported verbally at the June meeting:

“I am of the opinion that the proposed outline extension of the village will have a major impact on the character and appearance of the village and the Conservation Area and therefore should not be considered in this outline form.

It will be evident that Thriplow is a small settlement, characterised by its open and green character, with buildings clustered in loosely linear form around green spaces and narrow country lanes. The proposal would create a substantial extension of the village, potentially creating a new residential estate, extending into the open countryside and thereby fundamentally altering the form and character of the village as a whole.

If any form of development were to be considered in this peripheral village location then it should at least be guided by a detailed site analysis and Master Plan to enable the full implications of the development on the village to be considered prior to commitment, and integrate the development into the fabric of the village. The proposal may remove former agricultural buildings, which at least are appropriate in this context, but the replacement could simply sub-urbanise the village or create an isolated satellite estate, which by virtue of its location at the entrance to the village, would actually come to define the character of the village.

The relative scale of a development of up to 35 houses built to modern densities will rather dominate the western side of the village, transforming Lodge Road from quiet country lane to estate access. The requirements for sightlines and movement themselves could threaten the strong hedge lines that currently enclose and screen the site from the west and form the approach to the village. To be a successful addition to the village the development would need to be integrated into the pattern of the village, by means of footpaths and linked open spaces. The historic character of the village (rather than the latter day additions) is one of linear development along the lanes. This pattern might be appropriate here but would probably preclude the scale of development envisaged on this site which suggests the standard cul-de-sac estate which would be so clearly inappropriate for the village.

None of these development issues can be determined by consideration of this outline proposal. The proposal will clearly neither preserve the character of the village nor

enhance its built form, and given that the development is outside of the village framework, and that Thriplow is an infill only village, I can see no reason to other than refuse this proposal.”

6. I understand from the applicant’s agent that further information is to be provided before the meeting, including the likely location of the replacement farmyard.
7. A verbal report will be made.

Recommendation

8. The recommendation is likely to remain one of refusal, for the following reasons:
 1. The site is adjoining, but outside the village framework, consisting of an assemblage of post-war farm buildings partly used by the applicants for agricultural purposes. One building is used as a vehicle repair workshop by others.
 2. The redevelopment of the site for residential purposes including market housing would be contrary to the following policies which seek to protect the countryside from inappropriate development and which, exceptionally, provide for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on sites within or adjoining villages.
 - (i) Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003;
 - (ii) Policy SE5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004;
 - (iii) Policy SE8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004;
 - (iv) Policy HG8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004;
 - (v) Policy SE6 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

The site is not previously developed land in the context of Planning Policy Guidance 3 “Housing” and the proposal does not bring forward 100% affordable housing.

3. Notwithstanding the above, the redevelopment of the site currently predominantly used in connection with an extensive local farm, would create the need for new replacement buildings in the Green Belt, detracting from the its openness and character and therefore contrary to Policy GB2 of South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.
4. The redevelopment of the site would displace the existing garage repair business located in the barn complex, contrary to Policy P2/6 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 which seeks to encourage small businesses in rural areas.
5. Notwithstanding the above substantive reasons for refusal, it is considered that the scale of the proposed development located on the fringe of an infill only village and adjoining the village conservation area merits the preparation of a Design and Landscape Statement, to include a detailed site analysis and Master Plan, to enable the full implications of the development on the village to be considered.

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

- Planning Policy Guidance 3: "Housing"
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File ref: S/0713/05/O
- Item 17, Development and Conservation Control Committee - June 2005

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