

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

S/2000/05/F – Great Shelford
Erection of 6 Flats and 1 Dwelling Following Demolition of Existing Dwelling at 139
Cambridge Road for Dudley Developments

Recommendation: Approval
Date for determination: 14th December 2005

Site and Proposal

1. The application site, which is located on the corner of Cambridge Road and Westfield Road, measures 51m (Westfield Road frontage) x 16m (Cambridge Road frontage) approximately (0.08 hectares/0.20 acres) and is occupied by a render and concrete tile bungalow with accommodation in the roof, a flat roof dormer to the front and a first floor balcony on its northwestern side. A detached bungalow with accommodation in the roofspace used to stand on the adjacent site to the southeast (No.135) but this has recently been demolished to make way for 2 pairs of 2½ storey dwellings. To the southwest is No.5 Westfield Road, a 2-storey detached dwelling with a flat roof garage on its east side, a high level first floor window and a narrow full height first floor window in its side/northeastern elevation. No.141 Cambridge Road, on the opposite side of Westfield Road, has a ground floor window and 2 narrow first floor windows in its end gable and a pitched roof boarded and tile garage to the side/rear.
2. This full application, registered on the 19th October 2005 and amended by plans date stamped the 12th January 2006, proposes the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a 2½-storey building fronting Cambridge Road accommodating 4 flats (with a frontage of 12.8 metres, a depth of 9.3 metres, an eaves height of 6 metres, a ridge height of 8.9 metres and set back 8-10 metres from the site frontage) with a two-storey rear wing accommodating a further 2 flats (measuring 8.2m deep, 8.4m wide, 5.3m to eaves and 6.5m to ridge) and a two bedroom dwelling fronting Westfield Road (measuring 8.4m x 6.2m, 3.9m to eaves and 6.4m to ridge) at the southwestern end of the site linked to a single storey car port, cycle parking and bin store building. 2no. 1-bedroom units, 3no. 2-bedroom units and 2no. 2-bedroom plus study units are proposed. The amended plans show that 8 parking spaces, accessed from a new access onto Westfield Road, would be provided. The original plans showed 7 parking spaces. The existing vehicular access at the junction of Cambridge Road and Westfield Road would become a pedestrian access. The density equates to 88 dwellings to the hectare. The application is accompanied by a Planning Statement and a Highway Statement.

Planning History

139 Cambridge Road

3. An application for the erection of 8 dwellings with 10 parking spaces following the demolition of the existing dwelling on the site (4 dwellings in a 2½-storey block fronting Cambridge Road and the other 4 dwellings in a 2-storey block fronting Westfield Road) was refused in January 2005 under reference **S/1851/04/F** for the following reasons:
 - a. *“The proposed development would be unduly dominant in the street scenes and would seriously detract from the suburban character of this section of Cambridge Road by virtue of the size, depth and height of the building fronting Cambridge Road, the length of the terrace fronting Westfield Road and the close proximity of the buildings to Westfield Road. The proposal is therefore contrary to: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 Policy P1/3 which requires all new development to respond to the local character of the built environment; South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policy SE2 which requires residential development in Great Shelford to be sensitive to the character of the village; South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policy HG10 which states that the design and layout of residential schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape; and the Great Shelford Village Design Statement, adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in February 2004, which describes the scale and feel of development along Cambridge Road as suburban.*
 - b. *The proposal would seriously harm the amenity of the occupiers of No.137 Cambridge Road as a result of the noise and disturbance generated by the use of the amenity area to the rear of units 5-8 and the parking area. The proposal is therefore contrary to South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policy SE2 which requires residential development in Great Shelford to be sensitive to the amenities of neighbours.*
 - c. *The development would also provide for an unsatisfactory standard of amenity for the occupiers of the proposed dwellings due to the fixed, obscure glazed ‘bedroom 2’ windows proposed for units 5-8 that are necessary in order to avoid serious overlooking of the garden area of No.137 Cambridge Road and the very limited amount of amenity space proposed.”*
4. The subsequent appeal was dismissed in August 2005 but only on the grounds that the part of the proposed building fronting Westfield Road would harm the character and appearance of the area and the use of the amenity area to the rear of proposed units 5 to 8 would harm the living conditions for occupiers of No.137. The Inspector concluded that the proposed 2½-storey building fronting Cambridge Road (which was the same as now proposed) would not harm the character and appearance of the area.
5. Outline planning application for a dwelling on the western part of the site was refused in 1985 under reference **S/0988/85/O** on the grounds that: the sub-division of the existing property would create a cramped form of development out of keeping with existing development in Cambridge Road and Westfield Road; and the proposed erection of a house on a site with restricted depth will cause overlooking of adjoining properties with consequent loss of privacy.

137 Cambridge Road

6. Planning permission for 2 pairs of staggered 2½ storey dwellings, 2no. dwellings with 2-bedrooms and 2no. dwellings with 4-bedrooms, measuring 5.2 metres to eaves and 9 metres to ridge was approved on the adjacent site (137) in October 2005 under reference **S/2283/04/F**. The approved plans showed 6 parking spaces for the 4 dwellings. The approved dwellings are currently under construction.

Planning Policy

7. 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.
8. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P5/3** 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. It also states that, in setting density standards appropriate to their area, Local Planning Authorities should take into account the following guidelines: densities of at least 40 dwellings per hectare should be sought in locations close to a good range of existing and potential services and facilities and where there is, or there is the potential for, good public transport accessibility; and densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable.
9. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SE2** states that residential development will be permitted on unallocated land within the village framework of Great Shelford 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, particularly policy EM8 which relates to the loss of employment sites. 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 dwellings to the hectare unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
10. Local Plan 2004 **Policy HG10** states that residential developments will be required to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes (including 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings) and affordability, making the best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs. It also states that the design and layout of 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.
11. Local Plan 2004 **Policy TP1** states that the Council will seek, through its decisions on planning applications, to promote more sustainable transport choices and to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, by amongst other things restricting car parking to a maximum of an average of 1½ spaces plus ¼ space for visitors per dwelling.
12. Local Plan 2004 **Policy CS10** states that, where permission is granted for residential development of 4 or more dwellings, financial contributions will be sought towards the provision of additional permanent or temporary education accommodation in those cases where the new development would cause the planning capacity of permanent buildings at the local primary or secondary schools to be exceeded during the 5 years following the date of the application.

13. The **Great Shelford Village Design Statement** describes the scale and feel of development along Cambridge Road as suburban.

Consultation

14. **Great Shelford Parish Council** recommends refusal of the original scheme (which showed 7 parking spaces) stating "In light of the inspectors decision we do not object to the frontage to Cambridge Road, but would like to see drawings of the street frontage to see how the proposal fits in within the houses at 137. The northern elevation is too massive and bulky in this prominent corner location. We would prefer to see the length of the rear elevation reduced. Refuse as the application stands (is the car parking adequate and the layout workable?)" Any additional comments received in relation to the amended scheme (which shows 8 parking spaces) will be reported verbally.
15. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommends that conditions relating to the times when power operated machinery shall not be operated during the demolition and construction periods except in accordance with agreed noise restrictions and driven pile foundations are attached to any approval. He also recommends that an informative is attached to any approval stating that, before the existing property is demolished, a Demolition Notice will be required.
16. **Local Highway Authority** states that the access width and visibility splays are acceptable and must be provided before any of the dwellings are occupied. It is concerned about the number of parking spaces proposed stating that the originally proposed seven spaces will not accommodate the number of vehicles likely to be generated by the scheme and that such under provision will result in on-street parking on Westfield Road.
17. **Cambs Fire & Rescue Service** states that additional water supplies for firefighting are not required.
18. **County Council Chief Financial Planning Officer** is concerned that adequate primary school capacity is not available in the area to meet the additional demand from this proposal and therefore asks that a contribution from the developer towards the necessary provision of £7000 is sought.

Representations – Local Residents

19. The occupiers of 4 and 5 Westfield Road, 135 and 141 Cambridge Road and the agent for the owner of 137 Cambridge Road objected to the original scheme (which showed 7 parking spaces) on the following grounds:
- Inadequate parking provision on site resulting in on-street parking and a risk of accidents at or near the Westfield Road/Cambridge Road junction;
 - The parking blocks access to the bin store and cycle park;
 - Increased traffic and pollution;
 - Surface water drainage;
 - Overlooking of 141 Cambridge Road's rear bedroom window, ground floor windows and garden and front of 4 Westfield Road, particularly from the coach house but, in respect of 141, also from flats 5 and 6;
 - Impact on living conditions of future occupiers of the new dwellings at 137;

- g. Frontage building and rear element would not blend in well with the road;
- h. There is an even greater unrelieved bulk of return frontage onto Westfield Road than in the previously refused plans and no separation between the building fronting Cambridge Road and the accommodation attached to the rear;
- i. The ridge and eaves heights, design, bulk of the building fronting Cambridge Road and the use of dormer windows does not reflect anything else in the immediate area;
- j. The proposed elevations are completely alien to this locality, neither respecting the rhythm of the existing spaces nor attempting to reflect the best of local vernacular, being bland, out of character with the area and showing little regard to the street scene;
- k. The Westfield Road elevation, Coach House and car port do not integrate with the mixture of detached and semi-detached houses/bungalow along Westfield Road;
- l. Density is too high; and
- m. Restricted open space around the building.

The occupier of 5 Westfield Road states that, if permission is granted, no additional windows should ever be allowed at first floor level in the Coach House's south west elevation.

- 20. Any further comments received in relation to the amended scheme (which shows 8 parking spaces) will be reported verbally.

Representations – Applicant

- 21. The Highway Statement, which included a survey of existing parking conditions, submitted as part of the application concludes that:
 - a. The proposed level of provision of car parking spaces associated with the development is only slightly below the standard advised by South Cambridgeshire District Council (officers had indicated that one space per dwelling plus 0.25 spaces per dwelling for visitor parking would be appropriate – a total of 9 spaces). This maximises the efficient use of the available land, and it is in line with national policy guidance aimed at reducing car use in all new developments particularly where, as in this case, there are good alternative modes of transport;
 - b. There is ample space on Westfield Road to accommodate a parked car of an occasional visitor to the development. Westfield Road has the capacity to comfortably accommodate 26 cars parked on-street while maintaining the vehicle access to residential properties. The current parking on Westfield Road close to Cambridge Road relates to overspill from Scotthall's Garage and the nearby construction work. There is very little on-street parking relating to the residential properties in the area;
 - c. The closure of the existing access to the site in the centre of the Westfield Road junction would be beneficial in terms of road safety and congestion. There are no other particular road safety concerns in the vicinity of the site; and
 - d. Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 paragraph 51 states that "In developing and implementing policies on parking, local authorities should: not require developers to provide more spaces than they themselves wish, other than in exceptional circumstances which might include for example where there are significant

implications for road safety which cannot be resolved through the introduction or enforcement of on-street parking controls". There is no reasonable justification for refusing the proposed development on the grounds of inadequate parking provision.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

22. The main issues in relation to this application are: the impact on the street scenes and the character and appearance of Cambridge Road and Westfield Road; impact on neighbours; and parking provision.
23. Whilst dismissing the appeal for the erection of 8 dwellings on the site (S/1851/04/F) on the grounds that the part of the proposed building fronting Westfield Road would harm the character and appearance of the area and the use of the amenity area to the rear of proposed units 5 to 8 would harm the living conditions for occupiers of No.137, the Inspector concluded that the 2½-storey building fronting Cambridge Road proposed at that time and forming part of this application would not harm the character and appearance of the area. The Parish Council's principal concern relates to the impact of the proposed two-storey rear wing to this building. By being lower than the main building and set further from Westfield Road, I am satisfied that the proposed two-storey rear wing and resulting building would not detract from the street scenes or the character and appearance of Cambridge Road or Westfield Road. The proposed dwelling at the southwestern end of the site would relate to frontage dwellings along Westfield Road and is considered to be acceptable in relation to the character and appearance of Westfield Road.
24. The proposed 'coach house' has been designed with no first floor windows in the southwest elevation facing No.5 Westfield Road and only a high level window at first floor level in its rear elevation. Whilst there would be some overlooking of the front of No.4 Westfield Road, of 141 Cambridge Road and the new dwellings at 137 Cambridge Road as a result of the development, the degree of overlooking is not considered to be sufficient reason to warrant refusal of the application. The car port, bins and cycle storage building along the boundary with 137 Cambridge Road would have some impact on the amenity of future occupiers of the nearest dwelling at 137 but, again, this impact is not considered to be serious and is not therefore considered to be reason for refusal. The scheme dismissed at appeal had four living room windows and four patio areas along the boundary with 137 Cambridge Road and was dismissed partly on the grounds that the development would have resulted in undue noise and disturbance and thereby harm living conditions for occupants of 137. I consider that the layout of the current proposal and the approved intensification of the use of 137 would ensure that this development would not result in serious additional noise and disturbance suffered by the occupiers of properties at 137. It is considered that the proposal would not seriously harm the amenity of neighbours.
25. The Local Plan requires a maximum of 12 spaces, which would include visitor parking, to be provided for a scheme of 7 dwellings. The amended plans show 8 car parking spaces within the site, which equates to 1 space per dwelling plus 1 visitor space. The previously refused scheme (S/1851/04/F) proposed 1 space per dwelling plus 2 visitor spaces and neither the District Council nor the Appeal Inspector raised any objection to this.
At the time of the appeal, the Inspector commented on the sustainable location of the site relative to public transport and cycling facilities. In view of this, the conclusion of the submitted highway report and as the proposed dwellings would have one, two or two plus study bedrooms, I consider that it would be very difficult to substantiate a refusal based on the inadequacy of the proposed parking provision.

26. Whilst limited amenity space is proposed, I do not consider that this is reason for refusal.
27. Local Plan Policy CS10 requires a financial contribution towards the provision of school accommodation for developments of 4 or more dwellings. Whilst no such contribution was offered at the time of the previous appeal, (and the Inspector concluded that, there was little supporting evidence before him regarding school capacities or justifying the level of contribution sought towards education provision, and the absence of such an agreement would not be fatal were it to be acceptable in all other respects) I consider that it would be appropriate to seek a financial contribution towards the provision of school accommodation if Members are minded to support the proposal.

Recommendation

28. Subject to the prior signing of a S.106 Agreement relating to a financial contribution towards the provision of school accommodation resulting from this development, approval as amended by drawing nos. CR/03C AND CR/04A date stamped 12.1.06 subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A)
 2. SC5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs (RC To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development)
 3. SC5e – Details of finished floor levels (RC To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development)
 4. SC51 – Landscaping (RC51)
 5. SC52 – Implementation of landscaping (RC52)
 6. SC60 – Details of boundary treatments (RC60)
 7. SC5f – Details of materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas (RC To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development)
 8. The 'Vehicle visibility Splays' and 'Pedestrian Visibility Splay' shown upon drawing no. CR/03C shall be provided and shall be maintained free from any obstruction over a height of 600mm (RC In the interests of highway safety)
 9. Before any of the hereby permitted dwellings are first occupied, the new access onto Westfield Road shown upon drawing no. CR/03C shall be provided (RC In the interests of highway safety)
 10. Highway condition C3 a and b – Parking and turning (RC In the interests of highway safety)
 11. During the periods of demolition and construction ... SC26 (0800, 0800, 1800, 1300) – Restriction on hours of use of power operated machinery during demolition and construction periods (RC26)
 12. No further windows or openings of any kind shall be inserted at first or second floor levels in any elevation of any of the flats or the 'coach house' hereby permitted unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf (RC22)

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) and P5/3 (Density)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** SE2 (Development in Rural Growth Settlements), HG10 (Housing Mix and Design), TP1 (Planning for More Sustainable Travel) and CS10 (Education)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: residential amenity; character and appearance of Cambridge Road and Westfield Road; parking provision; highway safety; traffic; pollution; drainage; and open space.

Informatives

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

Before the existing property is demolished, a Demolition Notice will be required from the District Council's Environmental Health Department establishing the way in which the property will be dismantled, including any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains and establishing hours of working operation.

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
 Great Shelford Village Design Statement 2004
 Planning file Ref: S/2000/05/F, S/2283/04/F, S/1851/04/F and S/0988/85/F.

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