

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee

1st March 2006

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/0020/06/O – Hildersham
House on Land Adjacent to 4 Elm Cottages for Mrs I Tuchfield**

**Recommendation: Approval
Date for determination: 3rd March 2006**

Site and Proposal

1. The application relates to a 0.03 hectare/0.08 acre approximately site with a 22m frontage which currently forms part of the side garden to 4 Elm Cottages, a two-storey render over black painted brick plinth and slate roof semi-detached cottage situated to the north of the site. A pair of semi-detached bungalows (3 and 4 Meadowlands) and the rear of a garage block lie to the east. No.1 Beech Row, the first of a row of gault brick and small tile roof semi-detached houses, sits to the south of the site and has a two-storey side extension. As the site rises to the south, it stands above the level of 4 Elm Cottages. The site is set up approximately a metre higher than the road to the west, the road being at the bottom of a grass bank. A 2 metre high hedge on top of this bank runs along the site frontage.
2. This outline application, registered on the 6th January 2006, proposes the erection of a house on the site. All matters are reserved for subsequent approval but the application was accompanied by two illustrative drawings, one showing a two-storey house with its ridge running parallel to the road and the other depicting an 'Eco-modern option' dwelling set gable end onto the road. The density equates to approximately 31 dwellings to the hectare.

Planning History

3. The site formed part of a larger site on which outline permission for residential development following demolition of existing cottages was granted under reference **S/0422/74/O**.
4. Outline planning permission for the erection of a house with garage on the site was refused under reference **S/0052/77/O** on the grounds that the design of the proposed dwelling was out of keeping with the existing development and is unacceptable on this important site, and the siting of the proposed building within the plot was unacceptable as it did not enable vehicles to enter and leave in forward gear.
5. A planning application for porches to Elm Cottages was approved under reference **S/0808/77/F**.
6. Planning permission for the erection of a bungalow with garage on the site was refused under reference **S/1410/77/F** on the ground that the design of the proposed dwelling was out of keeping with the existing development and is unacceptable on this important site.

Planning Policy

7. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SE5** states that residential developments within the village frameworks of Infill Villages, which includes Hildersham, will be restricted to not more than two dwellings comprising:
 1. a gap in an otherwise built-up frontage to an existing road, provided that it is not sufficiently large to accommodate more than two dwellings on similar curtilages to those adjoining; or
 2. the redevelopment or sub-division of an existing residential curtilage; or
 3. the sub-division of an existing dwelling; or
 4. subject to the provisions of Policy EM8, the conversion or redevelopment of a non-residential building where this would not result in a loss of local employment;

Provided the site in its present form does not form an essential part of village character, and development is sympathetic to the historic interests, character, and amenities of the locality.

Consultations

8. **Hildersham Parish Council** recommends refusal stating “Four of the five Parish Councillors recommended refusal of this planning application. The reasons for this recommendation were that the two house options proposed for this site are too large for the size of the plot. One Councillor was concerned that the scales and dimensions of the drawings were incorrect and very misleading, and seemed to enhance the size of the plot of land. Parking cars in this part of the village is already a problem, so off-road parking on the plot should be a very clear stipulation should a development go forward. However there were also concerns that a new access would have problems with good visibility due to the site location. Additional cars parked on the road could be dangerous so close to the bend of the Beech Row. Some Councillors were concerned that an additional house would not be appropriate/over-crowd this part of the village, but were not sure whether this part of the village was within the conservation area. The loss of the hedgerows and banks for a new access was a concern to one Councillor, changing the outlook of this area. Some councillors were concerned that an ECO house would be inappropriate in a village where new builds have been very sympathetic to the older houses, although one councillor felt such builds can be undertaken sympathetically. There were also concerns about the size of the ECO option on such a small site.”
9. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommends conditions and an informative to be attached to any permission.

Representations

10. The occupier of 2 Elm Cottages objects to the proposal stating; Elm Cottages, although outside the Conservation Area, are older than many houses within the Conservation Area and the site currently forms a natural break between the ‘old village’ and the later ribbon development of Beech Row; its destruction would be a loss to the village as a whole; the submitted plans are not sufficiently accurate to enable proper consideration of the proposal; Elm Cottages could easily be overpowered by a house built to more modern standards,

11. unless limited to single storey; the ecological measures proposed may be laudable but should be of no relevance in determining the merits of this outline application; and, due to these restrictions and concerns, the proposal should not be considered without a much greater level of detail and a site survey in order to check that the proposals are realistic and desirable.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

12. The main issues in relation to this application are: the impact of the development on the street scene and the character and appearance of the area; impact on neighbours; and highway matters, including parking provision.
13. Whilst I am in agreement with the Parish Council and the objector in that I am not satisfied that either of the illustrative sketches would necessarily constitute an appropriate scheme in terms of the impact on the street scene and the character and appearance of the area, and the impact on neighbours, I am satisfied that a sensitively designed, modest cottage could be satisfactorily accommodated on the site.
14. Subject to careful design at the detailed stage, I am satisfied that a dwelling could be designed so as not to result in serious harm to any neighbours.
15. On-site parking could be provided for the proposed dwelling. The submitted indicative plans also show a new access for No.4 Elm Cottages, which currently has no on-site parking. I am satisfied that, at the detailed stage, a scheme can be designed which would be acceptable in terms of highway matters.
16. It is therefore recommended that the application be approved with a condition specifically excluding the illustrative sketch drawings submitted with the application from the permission and, in the reason for the condition, giving some guidance as to what is likely to constitute an appropriate scheme.

Recommendation

17. Approval
 1. Standard Time Condition B – Time limited permission (Reason B);
 2. Standard Condition 1 a, b, c & d – Submission of Reserved Matters (RC1);
 3. Standard Condition 52 – Implementation of Landscaping Scheme (RC52);
 4. The details to be submitted pursuant to condition 2 shall include details of the proposed floor and ground levels in relation to the existing ground level – RC To enable the impact of the development in terms of the appearance of the development and the impact on the amenity of neighbours to be properly considered;
 5. During the construction period, SC26 – Use of Power Operated Machinery (RC26);
 6. The illustrative sketch drawings submitted with the application (sketches 047/4 and 047/5) are specifically excluded from this permission – RC In the absence of full elevation drawings, including the height of the dwellings, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the depicted dwellings would be in keeping with the character of the area and would not seriously harm the amenity of neighbours in order to comply with Policy SE5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2005;

in order to have an acceptable impact in the street scene and to not seriously harm the amenity of neighbours, particularly in terms of overlooking of the bungalows to the rear, the dwelling would need to be modest, reflect the scale and design of 4 Elm Cottages and have no first floor habitable room windows in its rear elevation.

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:** None.
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** SE5 (Residential Development in Infill Villages).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: character and appearance of the area; accuracy of plans; parking; highway safety; and lack of details of proposal.

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.

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 Refs: S/0020/06/O, S/1410/77/F, S/0808/77/F, S/0052/77/O and S/0422/74/O.

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