

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 12 May 2004
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0435/04/F ERECTION OF A HOUSE; LAND ADJACENT TO 'WHITE GATES', HONEY HILL, FEN DRAYTON FOR S.WHYBROW

Recommendation: Refusal

Members will visit the site on Monday 10th May.

Site and Proposal

1. The application, received 4th March 2004, proposes to erect a detached house on the side garden of the dwelling at 'White Gates', a detached bungalow fronting Honey Hill. To the south the site adjoins the detached two-storey house at 'Mead House', also fronting Honey Hill. An existing garden shed on the site is to be removed. To the east, the site adjoins agricultural land. The site has dimensions 16.5m width x 38-42m depth = 0.07 hectare. The density equates to 14 dph.
2. The proposal is to erect a two-storey timber-framed Potton house centrally within the site. This is of two-storey height with four bedrooms, and with bedroom windows in three of the four elevations. The proposed external materials are to be agreed.
3. The proposed access is from the existing driveway serving 'White Gates' onto Honey Hill.

Planning History

4. In 1972 Planning Permission to erect a bungalow and garage upon the site was refused as being a piecemeal form of backland development served by an inconvenient access (C/72/451).

Planning Policy

5. In the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003, the following policies apply:
Policy 5/5 (Homes in Rural Areas)- small-scale housing developments will be allowed in villages only where appropriate, taking into account the character of the village and its setting.
6. In the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 the site is shown to be within the village framework boundary. The following policies apply:
Policy SE4 (Group Villages)- Fen Drayton is designated as a Group Village where residential development of up to eight dwellings will be permitted within the village framework provided that the development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape importance, and the amenities of neighbours.

Policy SE8 (Village Frameworks) There will be a presumption in favour of residential development within village frameworks where this is also in accordance with policies SE2, SE3, SE4, and SE5.

Policy SE9 (Village Edges) Development on the edge of villages should be sympathetically designed to minimise the impact of development on the countryside.

Policy HG11 (Backland Development) Development to the rear of existing properties will only be permitted where the development would not:

- result in overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing of existing residential properties;
- result in noise and disturbance to existing residential properties through the use of its access;
- result in highway dangers through the use of its access; or
- be out of character with the pattern of development in the vicinity.

Consultation

7. **Fen Drayton Parish Council** has no objection to the proposal provided the site is located within the village framework and that the shed is not a listed building.

Representations

8. Comments have been received from the occupiers of the adjoining dwelling at 'Mead House'. They request a re-siting of the proposed dwelling back onto the footprint of the shed that is to be demolished so as to reduce overlooking from windows in its southern elevation.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

9. A key issue for members to consider is whether the proposal amounts to backland development that would give rise to harm to the amenity of occupiers of adjoining dwellings. A second main issue is whether the site is suitable to accommodate a two-storey dwelling as it adjoins a bungalow and is located on the fringe of the village.
10. The proposed house has a first floor bedroom window in the western elevation that is located approximately six metres from the boundary with 'White Gates' and which would face directly onto the rear garden area of that dwelling. The applicant and the owner of 'White Gates' are part of the same family and so no difficulties in practice may arise from this, but in the future this degree of overlooking would be likely to be harmful to the private amenity of occupiers of 'White Gates'. The window in question is shown to be obscure glazed, but is not considered to be appropriate for a bedroom, and indicates the difficulties with this design.
11. The southern elevation of the proposed dwelling has two first floor bedroom windows sited 12 metres from the boundary and facing towards the rear elevation of 'Mead House', which is some 24 metres from windows in the rear elevation of that property. The windows in question are shown to be obscure glazed, but this is not considered to be appropriate for bedrooms and indicates the difficulties with this design. The occupiers of this dwelling have written to express their concerns about the potential loss of privacy. In my opinion, the siting of a two-storey dwelling in this position is likely to give rise to undue overlooking of neighbouring properties.
12. The site is located adjacent to agricultural fields without any significant landscaping on the boundary. In my opinion, the development of a two-storey dwelling in this position would be harmful to the setting of the village, and would be out of keeping

with the pattern of predominately single-storey dwellings in this part of the village, which would not be in accordance with Policies HG11 and SE9.

Recommendations

13. Refusal

The erection of the proposed two-storey dwelling in this location to the side and rear of dwellings fronting onto Honey Hill, unless provided with inappropriate obscure glazing and facing of first floor bedroom windows, is likely to give rise to undue loss of privacy by reason of overlooking from proposed first floor bedroom windows and represents an unsympathetic form of development on the edge of the village in an area of dwellings predominately of single storey height. The proposal is considered to fail to conform to the provisions of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, particularly Policies HG11, SE9 and SE4.

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

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning file S/0435/04/F

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