

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

12th May 2004

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0203/04/O – PAPWORTH EVERARD RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND SOUTH OF NORTH LODGE DRIVE, FOR THE VARRIER-JONES FOUNDATION

Recommendation: Minded to Approve

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. The 1.642 ha site lies between Papworth Hospital and the newly completed David Wilson Homes residential development to the north of North Lodge Drive. The site is largely flat and has been partly cleared; one large former industrial building remaining on the eastern side. There are significant tree groups on the eastern and southern parts of the site, and a parking area used by the Hospital in the South West corner.
2. The southern boundary of the site abuts the Hospital and the Village Hall. To the east is a residential estate on rising ground (Muriel Close/Harnden Way). To the north is a new residential development fronting onto North Lodge Drive. To the west are the back gardens of houses fronting onto Ermine Street.
3. The outline application, received on the 3rd February 2004 proposes residential development. There is an existing vehicular access, but all other matters are reserved.
4. A statement accompanying the application rehearses the history of the site, with outline planning permission being granted for B1 use in 1998, possibly for the use of Papworth Hospital. Five years on the Hospital Trust is not in a position to take up the B1 allocation and the applicants have decided to seek an alternative use for the land and to dispose of it since the land is surplus to the foreseeable requirements of both the Papworth Trust and the Foundation. Residential development is seen as the most appropriate use for this “brownfield” site befitting its central location. There is new residential development adjacent and ample general employment land available in the village at Stirling Way. The site is at the northern limit of a larger area, centred around Papworth Hall and its grounds, the subject of recent Tree Preservation Orders. The better specimen trees on the site will need to be safeguarded both during the construction phase and for the longer term.

Planning History

5. In December 1998 Outline Planning Permission was granted for the redevelopment of the Village Centre, an indicative “zoning” plan showing the use of the site for B1 Business Use, possibly in association with Papworth Hospital, who at the time were considering a “medipark” research development.

Planning Policy

6. Papworth Everard is classed a “limited rural growth” settlement in the 2004 Local Plan. The site is within the village framework. The following policies apply:
7. **Policy SE3 ‘Limited Rural Growth Settlements’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 – maximum development of 30 dwellings on unallocated land at a minimum density of 30 dph.
8. **Policy SE8 ‘Village Frameworks’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
9. **Policy HG7 ‘Affordable Housing on Sites within Village Frameworks’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 – up to 50% of the total number of dwellings for which permission may be given.
10. **Policy RT2 ‘Provision of Public Open Space in new development’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
11. **Policy EM8 ‘Loss of Employment sites in villages’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
12. **Policy EN5 ‘The landscaping of New Development’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
13. **Policy EN13 ‘Protected Species’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
14. **Policy P1/3 ‘Sustainable Design in Built Development’** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.
15. **Policy P3/1 ‘Vitality and attractiveness of centres’** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.
16. **Policy P5/2 ‘Re-using Previously Developed Land and Buildings’** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.

Consultation

17. **Papworth Everard Parish Council** approves the application subject to the satisfactory negotiation of a Section 106 Legal Agreement requiring the Varrier-Jones Foundation to make a substantial contribution to community facilities.
18. **The Local Highway Authority** has no objection subject to standard conditions.
19. Early discussions are recommended on an acceptable form of layout.
20. **The Environment Agency** states the application does not sufficiently consider foul and surface water drainage issues and the site is within an area of unknown sewerage capacity and environmental concern. Standard conditions are recommended requiring details of surface water and foul surface water drainage to be submitted and agreed between development commences.
21. **Anglian Water** has not commented.
22. **The Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** require the provision of fire hydrants.

23. **The Chief Financial Planning Officer (County Council)** requires a financial contribution for additional primary and secondary places from the development.
24. **The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer** states any proposal for the site should take account of the existing mature trees that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order, to ensure that the trees can be accommodated without prejudicing their longevity.
25. **The Council's Ecologist** refers to the remaining building on site. Because of its relative old age and large numbers of holes in the structure combined with its woodland setting, an assessment will be needed of the value of the building for roosting bats. A condition requiring a bat survey prior to any alteration or development is requested.
26. **The Council's Chief Environmental Health Officer** is concerned that problems of noise could arise during the construction phase and suggest a standard "hours of work" condition for power operated machinery, and a contamination condition requiring survey/remediation.
27. **The Council's Housing Development Manager** comments that whilst there is a continuing need for affordable housing in the village (52 units as at September 2002) a large number of these will be provided through schemes where affordable housing has already been agreed, such as the Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association at South Park. He therefore agrees with the suggestion that a contribution towards the Village Hall is appropriate in place of affordable housing providing that the contribution is of equal value to that of the affordable housing.

Representations

28. 2 letters of objection have been received, one from a North Lodge Drive resident, the other co-signed by two separate residents in Muriel Close.
29. The main points are:
 - North Lodge Drive**
 30. Prospect of further construction traffic causing disturbance.
 31. There are other large development sites in the village under construction. This site will add to the already unacceptable levels of Construction Traffic into the site and on Ermine Street.
 32. Noise from the proposed development will disturb hospital patients.
 33. When purchasing house not told by Developer of proposal on this site.
 34. Site should be left as public open space.
 35. Not sufficient services in the village to cope with additional residents generated.
 36. Danger to disabled residents from increased traffic flows.
 - Muriel Close**
 37. Not correct to describe site as "brownfield" because 25% of woodland.

38. No indication which trees likely to be affected.
39. The existing woodland belt adjacent to Muriel Close and Hamden Way is the subject of a tree preservation order and should be retained in its entirety.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

40. The principal determining issues are:
 - Appropriateness of the site for residential use.
 - The loss of a site with a permission for B1 Business Use.
 - The need to incorporate treed areas with preservation orders into the development.
 - The impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties.
 - The provision of finance for the repair and modernisation of the adjacent Village Hall in lieu of a requirement for affordable housing.
41. At the time of granting outline planning permission for B1 use of the site in 1998, there had been a suggestion for a number of years that Papworth Hospital was intending to develop a “medipark” and this site was identified as appropriate, being adjacent to the hospital site. That is no longer the case with the Hospital possibly transferring to the Addenbrookes site in the longer term.
42. Although residential development would mean the loss of a permitted employment site in the village, the site is centrally located with good links to existing services and is surrounded on 3 sides by residential development. There is an established industrial estate (Stirling Way) on the southern edge of the village with outline planning permission for a large Phase 2 extension and therefore there is no shortage of employment land in the village. I do not consider that an objection in principle to a residential use could be sustained.
43. Concerns have been raised by residents at the possible loss of TPO'd trees on the site. This is a matter for the reserved matters stage when a layout will be considered, but a meeting has already taken place with a Developer and the constraints made clear. An opportunity is presented to use some of the tree groups as focuses for public open space which will add interest to the layout.
44. One neighbour is particularly concerned about further disturbance whilst the site is developed but it appears that he did not check the status of the application site with his solicitor before buying his property. It was never intended the land would become public open space.
45. Informal pre-application discussions have taken place with the Parish Council concerning the possibility of a financial contribution to the restoration/modernisation of the adjacent Village Hall being required in lieu of the provision of affordable housing. Members will recall discussions in the past concerning the most appropriate level of affordable housing provision in the village given the large Papworth Trust Housing Stock, the contributions from development towards the funding of the bypass and the extent of the Local Plan allocations for housing still undeveloped. The advice given

was that officers would look sympathetically at the suggestion, but that Members would have the final decision.

46. A similar case arose recently in Caldecote where following representations from the Parish Council, the developer agreed to finance the construction of a pavilion on the recreation ground because there was no identifiable demand for affordable housing in the village, with other sites within the village still to be developed. The Council's Housing Development Manager does not object to a contribution being made to the Village Hall in this instance.
47. The application will need to be referred to the Department of the Environment as a Departure as the Local Plan permits development of no more than 30 dwellings on unallocated sites in limited rural growth settlements and this may be exceeded here, depending on the impact of retaining the TPO'd trees. Although it should be noted that average densities in Papworth Everard are aimed at 25 dph on allocated sites, by virtue of Policy Papworth Everard 2 of the Local Plan.
48. Also, the non-provision of affordable housing is contrary to Local Plan policy.

Recommendations

Subject to:

49. The Department of the Environment not "calling in" the application.
50. The prior-signing of a Section 106 Legal Agreement concerning funding for the restoration/modernisation of the Village Hall, education contribution, and provision of public open space.

Approval, with the following conditions

1. Standard Condition B – Time limited permission (Reason B);
2. Reserved matters – siting of buildings, design and external appearance of buildings, the landscaping of the site (with reference to the TPO'd trees);
3. Environment Agency conditions (foul and surface water drainage);
4. Environment Health conditions (hours of work re power driven machinery, site contamination);
5. Local Highway Authority Condition;
6. Fire Hydrants to be provided;
7. Bat Survey;

Informatives

1. Environment Agency and Environmental Health comments.

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:

- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**

Policy P1/3 'Sustainable Design in Built Development'

Policy P3/1 'Vitality and attractiveness of centres'

Policy P5/2 'Re-using Previously Developed Land and Buildings'

- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**

Policy SE3 'Limited Rural Growth Settlements'

Policy SE8 'Village Frameworks'

Policy HG7 'Affordable Housing on Sites within Village Frameworks'

Policy RT2 'Provision of Public Open Space in new development'

Policy EM8 'Loss of Employment sites in villages'

Policy EN5 'The landscaping of New Development'

Policy EN13 'Protected Species'

2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Loss of a site with a permitted employment use
 - The retention of existing trees on the site
 - The amenity of neighbouring residential properties
3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

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

- County Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Application File S/0203/04/O

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