

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 10th May 2006
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0444/06/F - Willingham
Erection of 4 Dwellings and Garages following Demolition of Existing Dwelling and Barn, 32 Schole Road, for Mr M R Scurll and Miss J M Scurll

Recommendation: Approval
Date for determination: 1st May 2006

Site and Proposal

1. The application relates to an existing 2-storey Victorian cottage located close to the eastern edge of the village. Schole Road has a loose stone surface for much of its length, except in the vicinity of the junction with Rampton End. It is not provided with any pedestrian footway or street lighting. The road is also a formal bridleway, and has a width of between 5.0m and 5.5m. There are a number of modern dwellings on the south side of the road, each with extensive rear gardens. The site is adjoined to the west by a bungalow at No.28 and to the east by a house at No.36.
2. This full application, dated 24th February 2006, proposes the demolition of the existing dwelling and its single-storey outbuilding, and the erection of one replacement dwelling and three additional dwellings and garages. The houses are laid out as two pairs of semi-detached 2½-storey units, each with three bedrooms, separated by a central driveway. This leads to a rear parking court and garage block providing space for nine cars. The existing hedgerow on the frontage is to be retained, except to provide access.
3. The proposed dwellings have ridge heights of 8.5m. This is higher than adjoining dwellings, No. 28 being 5.6m and No. 36 being 7.6m. The existing house on the site has a ridge height of 7.6m.
4. The site has an area of 0.1ha. The development represents a density of 40 dwellings per hectare.

Planning History

5. Outline planning permission for the erection of two detached houses on the site following demolition of the existing was granted last year (**S/1275/04/O**).
6. In two recent appeal decisions on other sites, Inspectors have assessed the suitability of Schole Road to accept further traffic. At the eastern end of the road an appeal was dismissed in July 2005 for the provision of 4 mobile homes (**S/0856/05/F**). The Inspector concluded that the development was not likely to prejudice highway safety. He found the road not to be well suited to increased vehicle usage, but it was fairly wide, and its poor condition was likely to mean that vehicle speeds would be likely to be relatively low. An appeal decision in April of this year allowed the siting of two caravans, and the erection of a utility block and mobile chalet for a disabled person, on land also at the eastern end of the road

(S/2505/04/F). The Inspector concluded that the marginal increase in the use of Schole Road arising from the development would be likely to increase the rate of deterioration of the road surface. Nevertheless, 'it would not give rise to unacceptable parking, highway access or service provision problems or detract from the safe, convenient or enjoyable use of a public right of way to any measurable extent'. He noted that the road was lightly trafficked, fairly wide and that vehicle speeds would be low.

Planning Policy

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

7. **Policy P1/1** (Approach to Development) – development sites involving the use of previously developed land and buildings within existing settlements should be afforded the highest priority.
8. **Policy P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development) of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 requires compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities that responds to the local character of the built environment.
9. **Policy 8/1** (Sustainable Transport – Links between Land Use and Transport) – LPA's should ensure that new development provides appropriate access from the highway network that does not compromise safety.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

10. In the village inset plan, the site is shown to be inside the village framework boundary.
11. **Policy SE2** (Rural Growth Settlements) – residential development will be permitted provided that the retention of the site is not essential to the character of the village, the development would be sensitive to the character of the village and the amenity of neighbours; and the village has the necessary infrastructure capacity. Development should achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
12. **Policy SE8** (Village Frameworks) of the Local Plan states that there will be a general presumption in favour of residential development within the frameworks of villages.
13. **Policy SE9** (Village Edges) development on the edge of villages should be sympathetically designed and landscaped to minimise the impact of development on the countryside.
14. **Policy HG10** (Housing Mix and Design) requires residential developments to have a mix of units making the best use of the site. The design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape.
15. **CS10** (Education) where planning permission is granted for schemes of 4 or more dwellings, financial contributions will be sought towards the provision of local educational accommodation.

Consultations

16. **Willingham Parish Council** – recommends refusal, stating that to ‘access is onto a poorly maintained road. It is also unclear from the drawings as whether the site is wholly within the village envelope’.
17. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – no objection. He recommends two informatives regarding bonfires and demolition notice.
18. **County Chief Financial Planning Officer** – has requested a financial contribution in respect of three dwellings towards additional educational and community facilities in the Parish and Cottenham Secondary School, which serves Willingham.
19. **Old West Internal Drainage Board** – no objection to the use of soakaways.

Representations

20. None received.

Planning Comments

Traffic and Access

21. The proposed development, if implemented, will lead to increased use of Schole Road by vehicular traffic, which is likely to be in the order of 20 movements a day in respect of three additional dwellings net. Planning consent for one additional dwelling has been granted already. In commenting on the use of Schole Road in respect of other sites, both the Highway Authority and two Inspectors have acknowledged the poor state on the road surface, but have all concluded that this is not in itself justification for a refusal of planning permission. In view of this, I do believe that the current proposal is unacceptable in highway safety terms.

Appearance and Residential Amenity

22. The proposed dwellings are taller than adjoining dwellings. In this locality, with limited development on the northern side of the road, the sense of spaciousness will be preserved and in my opinion, the variation in roof heights and bulk of building will not appear incongruous.
23. The proposed dwelling adjacent to No.28 is sited within 1.0m of the side boundary at its nearest point. The development will not block light to any habitable room or private garden area and will not be overbearing when viewed from that property. I consider that the proposal complies with Policy SE2, including minimum density provisions.

Educational Requirements

24. Notwithstanding the comments of the County Chief Financial Planning Officer, the proposal does not fall within the terms of Policy CS10 as the net increase of three dwellings is below the appropriate threshold. I do not consider that a financial contribution should be sought in this case.

Recommendation

25. Approval, subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard Condition A (time limit) (Reason A);
 2. Sc5 a (external materials for walls and roofs) (Rcai);
 3. SC51 (landscaping);
 4. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
 5. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60);
 6. Sc26 - Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery during the period of construction(Rc26);
 7. Before the use is commenced, the access from the existing highway shall be laid out and constructed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Local Highway Authority. (Reason – In the interests of highway safety);
 8. The permanent spaces to be reserved on the site for parking shall be provided before the use commences and thereafter maintained. (Reason – In the interests of highway safety);
 9. Before development or demolition commences details shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority of means to secure the protection of the surface of Schole Road from damage by heavy vehicles coming to the site during the demolition and construction period. The scheme shall be carried out prior to the commencement of demolition and/or construction. (Reason – In the interests of highway safety).

Informatives

Before the existing buildings are demolished, a Demolition Notice will be required from the Council's Environmental Health Section, in order to establish the means by which the demolition will take place including the removal of any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains, and establishing hours of working operation, so as to ensure the protection of the residential environment of the area.

During construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on the site except with the prior permission of the District Council's Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.

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: Policy P1/1** (Approach to Development); **Policy P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development); **Policy 8/1** (Sustainable Transport – Links between Land Use and Transport).
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: Policy SE2** (Rural Growth Settlements); **Policy SE8** (Village Frameworks); **Policy SE9** (Village Edges); **Policy HG10** (Housing Mix and Design); 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 including noise disturbance and overlooking issues
 - Highway safety
 - Visual impact on the locality

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/0444/06/F, S/1275/04/O, S/0856/05/F, S/2505/04/F

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