

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee

7<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/0430/06/F - Girton  
Erection of Six Dwellings Following Demolition of Existing Dwelling  
(No. 2 High Street) at 2 High Street and Land Rear of 4 & 6 High Street  
for Hogger Homes Ltd.**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval  
Date for Determination: 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. This site, measuring 0.26 hectares is formed from land that currently comprises the plot at 2 High Street, which has a detached bungalow on it, and parts of rear gardens to 4 and 6 High Street. The land rises approximately 2.5 metres eastwards from the road towards the rear of the site. It contains a number of trees and currently a hedge marks the frontage of no. 2. To the front of the site there is a grassed verge. There is no footpath on this side of the road. The site is adjoined by residential property at 20 Duck End and 50 High Street to the south and 5 Lawrence Close to the south-east; and gardens serving 8 High Street to the north and 66 – 68 Church Lane to the east. Mature hedges mark the southern and eastern boundaries.
2. This full planning application proposes to demolish the existing 1920s bungalow on the site and to build six dwellings in the form of: a pair of semi-detached, three-bedroom houses to the frontage with garages to the rear; one two-bedroom bungalow with detached garage; and three chalet bungalows with ridge heights of 6.5 metres and integral garages. The proposals will result in development at a density of 23 dwellings per hectare (dph). The application was amended on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006 following receipt of a revised layout plan to address Highways' comments relating to the access.

### **Planning History**

3. Planning application ref. **S/0616/64/O** for a bungalow to the rear of 4 High Street was refused. A subsequent appeal was dismissed.

### **Planning Policy**

4. Policy **SE3** 'Limited Rural Growth Settlements' of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ('Local Plan') defines Girton as a Limited Rural Growth Settlement in which residential development will be permitted on unallocated land providing the development meets with the criteria of this and other policies included within the Local Plan, including a mix of dwellings and a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare, unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
5. Policy **HG10** 'Housing Mix and Design' of the Local Plan requires developments to include a mix of housing types and sizes, with the design and layout being informed by the wider area.



6. Policy **HG11** 'Backland Development' of the Local Plan states that development to the rear of existing properties will only be permitted where the development would not:
  - a) Result in overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing of existing residential properties;
  - b) Result in noise and disturbance to existing residential properties through the use of its access;
  - c) Result in highway dangers through the use of its access; or
  - d) Be out of character with the pattern of development in the vicinity.
7. Policy **CS1** 'Planning Obligations' – The Council will seek to secure through section 106 agreements or Grampian conditions infrastructure or other forms of development that are necessary as a result of the development proposed.
8. Local Plan policy **CS5** 'Flood Protection' restricts development where flood risk will be increased.
9. Policy **CS10** 'Education' of the Local Plan seeks financial contributions towards the provision of education where the development of 4 or more dwellings would cause the capacity of local schools to be exceeded.
10. Policy **TP1** 'Planning for More Sustainable Travel' of the Local Plan seeks to promote sustainable travel and as such planning permission will only be granted where small-scale increases in travel demands will result, unless satisfactory measures to increase accessibility are included. Standards for maximum car parking levels and requirements for cycle storage are found in Appendices 7/1 and 7/2.
11. Policy **EN5** 'The Landscaping of New Development' of the Local Plan requires trees, hedges and woodland wherever possible to be retained within proposals for new development and landscaping schemes will be secured through appropriate conditions.
12. Local Plan policy **EN12** 'Nature Conservation: Unidentified Sites' seeks wherever possible to retain features and habitat types of nature conservation value where they occur. Where the need for development outweighs the need to retain such features appropriate mitigation measures will be required.
13. **Policy P1/3 'Sustainable Design in Built Development'** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ('Structure Plan') states that a high standard of design and sustainability should be adopted for all new forms of development.
14. **Policy P5/3 'Density'** of the Structure Plan requires developments to achieve a density appropriate to the area, with a minimum requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare.
15. **Policy P5/5** (Homes in Rural Areas) - small housing developments will be permitted in villages only where appropriate, taking into account the need for affordable rural housing, the character of the village and of its setting, and the level of jobs, services, infrastructure and passenger transport provision in the immediate area.
16. Structure Plan **Policy P6/1** 'Development-related Provision' restricts development unless additional infrastructure and community requirements generated by the proposals can be secured.



17. Structure Plan **Policy P6/3** 'Flood Defence' requires measures and design features to be included to give sufficient protection against flooding on site or elsewhere locally.
18. **Policy P6/4** 'Drainage' of the Structure Plan states that all new development should avoid exacerbating flood risk locally by utilising water retention systems.
19. Structure Plan **Policy P7/2** 'Biodiversity' seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
20. Structure Plan Policies **P8/1** 'Sustainable Development – Links Between Land Use and Transport', **P8/8** 'Encouraging Walking and Cycling' and **P8/9** 'Provision of Public Rights of Way' seek to ensure that new developments are located where they are highly accessible by public transport, cycle and on foot; reduce travel by car; cater for all users and; provide opportunities for travel choice; and do not compromise safety.
21. **Policy P8/5** 'Provision of Parking' of the Structure Plan requires car parking standards to be maximums, in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 13, Transport.

### **Consultations**

22. **Girton Parish Council** recommends refusal on grounds of: over-development of the site; significant change in the nature of this quiet, sensitive part of the village; the site is next to a junction of three roads and this multi-use access will create a difficult junction with the existing roads.
23. **The Local Highways Authority** requests conditions relating to the siting and width of the access, tuning, parking and visibility splays of 2.4m by 70.0m to the north and 2.4m x 66.0m to the southwest. It is essential that the access road be sited adjacent to the northern boundary so that vehicles exiting the site do so without encroaching the Duck End/ High Street junction. An amended layout has been received. This is confirmed to be acceptable from a highway point of view.
24. **The Local Highways Authority** has also stated that the Local Planning Authority should consider the implications of approving a development of this nature where there is no footway provision within High Street to accommodate pedestrian traffic. It remains concerned about pedestrian provision, particularly as pedestrian traffic associated with plots 1 and 2 ingresses and egresses via the carriageway off the Duck End / High Street junction. It strongly suggests that a footway be provided at least along the entire frontage of the site. If this were agreed it should be a minimum of 1.8m wide and provided prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings.
25. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** does not require additional water supplies for firefighting but requests that access and facilities for the Fire Service be provided in accordance with the Building Regulations.
26. **The Chief Environmental Health Officer** suggests informatives relating to demolition and the requirement for a demolition notice.
27. **Cambridgeshire County Council** requires a financial contribution from the developer of £17,000 for the cost of additional places at the local primary and secondary school.
28. The **Environment Agency** notes that the sites falls within flood zone 1 (low risk of flooding) and that flood risk in relation to operational development on sites of less than 1 hectare should be considered by the Local Planning Authority. In light of known localised flooding



problems and the absence of a flood risk assessment it recommends an objection.

29. **Building Control** advises that fire engine access is necessary and confirmation is required that the hammerhead and radii at the road are suitable, as they appear inadequate. It was noted that drainage issues are being resolved.
30. **The Recycling and Waste Minimisation Officer** comments that it is possible for a Refuse Collection Vehicle (RVC) to reverse down the access, however turning radii of 6m are required off the High Street in order for it to make a turn. The road will have to be constructed to adoptable standards to take 26 tonne gvw 6x 4 collection vehicles.
31. Comments are awaited from the **Trees and Landscape Officer and Ecology Officer**. These comments will be reported verbally.

### **Representations**

32. Representations have been received from the occupiers of 20 and 50 Duck End, 5 Lawrence Close, 66 and 68 Church Lane, 4, and 8 High Street. A further representation has been made by a former resident of Cambridge Road, Girton on behalf of the occupier of 5 Lawrence Close. These representations object to the proposals on the following grounds:
  - a) Failure to show neighbouring dwelling on the site plan;
  - b) Drainage problems – history of flooding in this part of the village due to the soil being a heavy clay, high water table and local springs which drain to Duck End. Any drainage scheme will need to take into account neighbouring dwellings and should be properly maintained;
  - c) Overlooking of 5 Lawrence Close and its garden;
  - d) Impact upon ancient hedge and trees between the site and 5 Lawrence Close, 66 - 68 Church Lane and 2 - 6 High Street and subsequent loss of wildlife habitat;
  - e) Traffic generation on Church Lane and Duck End, which are narrow roads, not suited to increased use. Duck End has no pavement on either side;
  - f) Boundary treatments to neighbouring properties at 66 Church Lane and 8 High Street;
  - g) Bungalows would be more appropriate to the area;
  - h) Impact upon wildlife such as black squirrels;
  - i) The front pair of houses will dominate the street scene;
  - j) Loss of light to a kitchen window at 50 Duck End;
  - k) Inadequate visitor parking will result in on-street parking;
  - l) Noise disturbance to 8 High Street from increased traffic movements;
  - m) The junction with High Street is poorly lit and will result in increased danger to pedestrians;
  - n) Overlooking of 20 Duck End's bedroom, bathroom, toilet and kitchen windows and garden;
  - o) Overlooking due to the height of plots 4, 5 and 6, which are chalet bungalows;
  - p) Narrow access road;
  - q) Proximity of the access to 4 High Street resulting in noise disturbance.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

33. While the proposal is acceptable in principal in relation to Settlement Policy SE3 of the Local Plan, there are a number of issues to be considered in relation to these proposals including drainage, access, visitor car parking, neighbouring amenities, impact upon the character of the area, impact upon local wildlife and whether the



proposals will result in over-development of the site.

### ***Drainage***

34. The applicants have instructed a consultant to prepare a flood risk assessment. This will concentrate upon the issue of surface water drainage as the site is in an area of localised flooding. Members will be updated verbally on this issue.

### ***Access***

35. There are several aspects of the access that require consideration. The layout generally accords with Local Highway Authority standards and subject to conditions is acceptable.
36. An issue of pedestrian access has been raised. There is a pavement on the opposite side of the road, which terminates in front of the site. To the north-east of the site there is a footpath adjacent to 12 High Street that links the High Street with Church Lane. There is a wide grassed verge on the eastern side of the road, which could accommodate a footpath up to the footpath linking to Church Lane. This point is beyond the junction to Gretton Court on the opposite (western) side of the road and is a safer point at which pedestrians can cross to join the pavement on that side. This would involve constructing approximately 75m of pavement and would link up to the pedestrian entrance to the front of plot 1, which is further south. This solution would address issues relating to pedestrian access and highway safety and could be required through a Grampian condition if the land is within Cambridgeshire County Council's control. Confirmation is being sought as to the extent of the public highway and Members will be updated verbally.
37. The kerb radii requested by the Recycling and Waste Minimisation Officer will affect the junction layout and would impinge on the junction with Duck End. Subject to the Highways Officer's comments this matter could be addressed through a further revision to the access arrangement. It may not however, be possible to achieve this in a manner that meets Highways' requirements.

### ***Car Parking***

38. The layout does not include visitor parking. The development should 1.25 visitor parking spaces. This would usually be rounded up to 2 spaces. The applicant has been advised of the requirement and the layout should be amended to include such provision. Each dwelling has space for two cars to park.

### ***Neighbouring Amenities***

39. 4 High Street will retain a reasonable garden area of 10-15m depth, however the access road will run adjacent to the boundary with this. Currently, a hedge marks this boundary and it has a garage sited to the rear of the house adjacent to the boundary with no. 2.  
Due to the existing good screening I do not consider the access will significantly harm the neighbouring occupiers' enjoyment of that garden space.
40. 50 Duck End has a kitchen window in its northern elevation that faces the site. This is the main window to the kitchen, although it joins a dining area that has an east facing window that provides additional daylight to the room. The kitchen window is currently partially screened from the site by a hedge and would be sited approximately 5m from the sidewall of plot 1. In light of these factors there will not be



a significant loss of sunlight. Some daylight may be lost as a result of the proposal, however due to the distance between the two properties and the existing boundary hedge, the proposals will not significantly alter the existing situation.

41. The relationship of the bungalow proposed at plot 3 with 20 Duck End has been carefully considered to ensure that it is not sited directly to the rear of no. 20. It will be sited to the north-west and as such the main views of the bungalow from no. 20 will be blocked by the garage serving no. 20, which is located adjacent to the boundary with 2 High Street. A single garage is proposed adjacent to 20 Duck End's garden and will be seen end on with the roof sloping away from the property. This relationship will not result in loss of light and will not be visually overbearing.
42. Concern has been raised over the siting of dormer windows on plots 4 – 6 in relation to 20 Duck End. Front dormer windows to plots 5 and 6 are sited approximately 35m away from the rear of 20 Duck End and 25 – 28m from the boundary with its garden. This relationship is not unreasonable and will not significantly harm the amenities of the occupants of 20 Duck End. Two front dormer windows to plot 4 however may result in overlooking of the main private garden area of 20 Duck End through oblique views. The applicant has been advised of concerns relating to this relationship and revisions to this plot have been requested in order to reduce the overlooking impact. These windows have been sited however to avoid overlooking to 5 Lawrence Close and simply shifting them to the rear elevation will not be acceptable, as it would introduce overlooking.
43. Plots 5 and 6 have been designed so that overlooking of gardens to the north does not result. Suitable boundary treatments can be secured by way of a condition.

#### ***Character of the area***

44. This part of Girton has a semi-rural feel, being close to the village edge, dwellings being sited back from the road with large green front gardens and due to the wooded area opposite. Development in depth has been established in this area through development off Duck End and Lawrence Close. I do not consider that backland development in this location will be out of keeping the general pattern of development in the area.
45. The pair of houses to the front of the site have been located to reflect the position of 50 Duck End and a chimney has been added to the northern elevation of plot 2 to provide visual interest when approaching from the north.

#### ***Trees and Ecology***

46. Subject to the comments of the respective Officers conditions requiring appropriate landscaping are recommended if approved.

#### ***Over-development***

47. The proposed density of 23dph is below the minimum standard of 30 dph. Given the relationship of the site with neighbouring residential properties and the character of the surrounding area this level of development is considered to be a significant design ground for not insisting on a higher density, in accordance with policy HG10 of the Local Plan. A development at 30dph would require two additional dwellings to be included in the scheme.



48. **Recommendation**

1. Delegated approval subject to:
  - a) Receipt of an amended site layout plan showing all neighbouring dwellings;
  - b) Receipt of a satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment;
  - c) Agreement of the Local Planning Authority to a revised junction arrangement to meet the requirements for refuse collections (or other suitable alternative);
  - d) Confirmation from Building Control that access by fire service vehicles can be achieved in the amended layout;
  - e) Provision of two visitor parking spaces within the development;
  - f) Overlooking of 20 Duck End being satisfactorily addressed;
  - g) No objections being received from the Trees and Landscape Officer or Ecologist; and
  - h) A Section 106 agreement securing a £17,000 financial contribution towards meeting the educational needs resulting from the development.
2. If the above points are not satisfactorily addressed to the satisfaction of the relevant consultees then the application will be recommended for refusal.

**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: C/0616/64/O and S/0430/06/F

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