

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

6<sup>th</sup> December 2006

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

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### **S/1919/06/F - HARDWICK**

**Erection of Two Dwellings following Demolition of Existing Dwelling  
(Amended Design) at 6 Main Street, for C McKee.**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2006**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation of Hardwick Parish Council does not accord with the officer recommendation.**

### **Adjoining Conservation Area**

#### **Site and Proposal**

1. The site, which has an area of 0.4ha, is located within the village framework, adjacent to Hardwick Conservation Area. There is a bungalow on the site, served from an access onto the southern boundary on Main Street. The site has a number of mature trees, a pond, and a screen-height hedgerow fronting Main Street. The site rises quite steeply from Main Street.
2. To the west, the site is adjoined by a two-storey house at Victoria Cottage, 16 Main Street, which is sited close to the boundary with the existing bungalow. Beyond that to the west is a Listed Building at No. 26 Main Street. To the east there is a two-storey house at 4, Main Street, which is set some 5 metres from the boundary. An attractive Walnut tree grows on the boundary close to the existing bungalow, and in fact overhangs the site by a few metres.
3. The application for full planning permission, dated 19<sup>th</sup> September 2006, proposes the demolition of the existing bungalow and the erection of two 5-bedroom detached houses, served from the existing site entrance. Planning permission has recently been issued for similar development (see Para. 4 below). This application seeks consent for an amended design for the dwellings before they are constructed. The main difference is the addition of a conservatory at the rear of each dwelling, measuring 4.0m x 4.2 x 3.1m high.

#### **Planning History**

4. Planning permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow and the erection of two detached dwellings was granted on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2006 (**S/2156/05/F**). Hardwick Parish Council made no recommendation at that time. Representations were received from the occupiers of No.16. Prior to this a similar proposal was withdrawn following concerns expressed by the Conservation Manager (**S/1706/04/F**). In 2002, outline planning permission was refused for the erection of three dwellings on the site. (**S/2391/01/O**).

## Planning Policy

5. The site lies outside but adjacent to the Conservation Area. There is a Protected Village Amenity Area designation that extends through the southern part of the site. There is a pond on the site which is of ecological interest.

*Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:*

6. **Policy P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development) requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development.
7. **Policy P5/5** (Homes in Rural Areas) permits small scale housing developments in villages, taking into account, amongst others, the character of the village and its setting.
8. **Policy P7/6** (Historic Built Environment) aims to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
9. **Policy P7/2** (Biodiversity) states that all developments will seek to conserve and enhance the biodiversity value of the areas which they affect.

*South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:*

10. **SE4** (Group Villages) of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that redevelopment up a maximum scheme of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village framework provided that the retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village; the development would be sensitive to the character of the village and the amenities of neighbours.
11. **SE10** (Protected Village Amenity Areas) seeks to protect undeveloped land, the retention of which is of importance to the character and amenity of the village.
12. **EN12** (Nature Conservation: Unidentified Sites) expects features and habitat types of nature conservation value to be retained. Appropriate management will be sought by the imposition of conditions.
13. **EN30** (Development in Conservation Areas) – proposals in conservation areas, or affecting their setting, will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area.

## Consultations

14. **Hardwick Parish Council** – Recommends refusal, stating: “One of the proposed new houses is too close to No.16 Main Street. The gaps between the houses should be equalised by moving the first new house closer to the boundary on the east. This would improve the street scene in the Conservation Area. We think the tree is a lesser consideration in this case.”
15. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – concern over the possible loss of the Walnut tree in the grounds of No.4 Main Street. This tree had also been identified by the former Trees and Landscape Officer, Mr John Hellingsworth, as desirable for retention. The footprint of the development was moved in the previous application in order to accommodate this tree. The TLO would object if the footprint were to be moved back towards the Walnut.

16. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – Concern about possible noise disturbance to adjoining residents during the construction period. Recommends conditions/informatives to address this aspect if planning permission is granted.
17. **Ecology Officer** – No objection. A scheme of ecological enhancement for the restoration of the pond is underway and so far the applicant has been most co-operative.
18. **Conservation Manager** - Any comments received will be reported orally to the Committee.

### **Representations**

16 Main Street, Hardwick:

19. The occupiers of this adjoining dwelling have stated that the addition of a conservatory onto each house will contribute to the enlargement of what are already very large houses on this limited plot. The houses are not situated 'squarely' on the site. The house on Plot 2 is pushed very close to the east wall of No.16, leaving a gap of less than 3 metres between the two properties. This compares with a gap of nearly 5 metres between the proposed two new houses, and almost 12 metres between the house on Plot 1 and the dwelling at No.4. This seems to be a major imbalance and detracts from the overall appearance of the design. The whole development should be moved at least two metres to the east and there should be a narrowing of the gap between the new houses. These adjustments would facilitate access for maintenance of the guttering and east wall of No.16 and would present a much more pleasing aspect when viewed from Main Street.

### **Planning Comments**

20. The application site is located adjacent to Hardwick Conservation Area, where new development will affect the setting of the Conservation Area. The siting and design of the proposed development was considered carefully in the previous application S/2156/05/F, where the comments of the Conservation Manager and Trees and Landscape Officer were taken into account, together with those of the occupiers of 16, Main Street. As such, the applicant is at liberty to erect these dwellings in the approved positions.
21. The current application does not vary the approved siting of development and, as consent has been already granted, I do not consider that a sustainable reason for refusal can be based on this concern at this stage, notwithstanding the comments of the Parish Council and adjoining neighbours. The Trees and Landscape Officer is opposed to the suggested re-siting of development.
22. The additional conservatories on the rear elevation of each dwelling will not have an adverse impact on the amenity of either adjoining dwelling, nor on the appearance of the dwellings or the setting or character of the Conservation Area.

### **Recommendation**

23. Approval with conditions and informatives as for S/2156/05/F.

## 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:**
    - P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development)
    - P5/5** (Homes in Rural Areas)
    - P7/2** (Biodiversity)
    - P7/6** (Historic Built Environment)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
    - SE4** (Group Villages)
    - SE10** (Protected Village Amenity Areas)
    - EN30** (Development in Conservation Areas)
    - EN12** (Nature Conservation: Unidentified sites)
2. The proposal is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Visual impact upon the setting of Hardwick Conservation Area
  - Street scene
  - Neighbour amenity

**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/1919/06/F, S/2156/05/F, S/1706/04/F and S/2391/01/O

**Contact Officer:** Ray McMurray – Senior Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713259