

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

7th February 2007

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

S/2395/06/F - LONGSTANTON
Erection of Dwelling and Garage at Land adj 11 Thatchers Wood, Longstanton
for Mr Parsons

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 7th February 2007

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the anticipated Parish Council objection (comments have not been received at the time of preparing the report) does not accord with the Officer recommendation.

Site and Proposal

1. The application is located on the Thatchers Wood estate, within the Longstanton village framework. The dwellings are former MoD houses sold off some years ago. The estate is characterised by large dwellings on spacious plots with a lot of open space, and the majority of the dwellings are built on similar building lines that aids the spacious character.
2. The application site is located on a junction between the internal roads of Thatchers Wood. It measures approximately 810 square metres, and includes the area in which the existing garage to no. 11 is located. This is to be demolished as part of the scheme. No replacement garage to this dwelling forms part of the application.
3. The full application, received on 13th December 2006 is for the erection of a dwelling and garage on the site. The dwelling has living space at three floors, the top floor being located within the roof serving a single bedroom with en suite facilities. The density equates to 12.6 dwellings per hectare.
4. The four-bedroom dwelling, as amended, by drawing franked 18th January 2007, has a height of 8.7m and 4.8m to the ridge and eaves respectively. A small gable is located to the front of the dwelling for the staircase. A single-storey element is set to the rear of the dwelling to provide a family room. The garage is set to the southwest of the dwelling, and would measure 4.7m in height to the ridge. The garage would be located 2m from the verge and 4m from the road to the west. An amendment has been received which has replaced a proposed dormer window on the frontage roofslope with a rooflight opening.

Planning History

5. **S/1698/06/F** – This application was on the same site and was for a two and a half storey property, whose single storey garage element was located next to no. 11, with the bulk of the house approximately 2.2m from the road. The dwelling measured 8.5m to the ridge of the roof. It was refused on 18th October 2006 because of its size and siting resulting in a two-storey building mass being positioned closer to the street on the southwestern side than any other dwelling in Thatchers Wood. It would therefore

have appeared incongruous, dominate the street scene and be out of character with the open surroundings, contrary to Policies SP1/3 of the Structure Plan and SE4 and HG10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

6. **S/1950/06/F** – This application for a house was refused on a plot of land opposite the Committee site, adjacent to no. 18 Thatchers Wood, by letter dated 5th December 2006. This was again refused as the height (8.8m) and bulk of the dwelling were located much closer to the road than the existing dwellings in this spacious and open estate, and would therefore appear incongruous and would harm the visual quality of the surroundings.
7. **S/1949/06/F** – This application for a house was refused by letter dated 5th December 2006 for similar reasons. The two and a half storey element would come up to within 3.2m of the footpath and 5m from the road, almost twice as close to the road as any existing dwelling. It would have therefore appeared incongruous in the street scene and harmed the visual quality of the surroundings.
8. **S/0892/06/O** – Outline planning permission was granted for a dwelling adjacent to 23 Thatchers Wood. This plot has the capacity to provide a dwelling within the building lines of the existing dwellings on the estate. Reserved matters have been submitted through application S/1948/06/RM, and have yet to be determined.

Planning Policy

9. **Policy P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ('the County Structure Plan') requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development and which provides a sense of place which responds to the local character of the built environment. This policy is supported by policy DP/2 of the Local Development Framework, Submission Draft 2006.
10. **Policy P5/5** of the County Structure Plan adds small-scale developments will be permitted in villages only where appropriate, taking into account the character of the village and its setting.
11. **Policy SE4** of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan 2004") states that residential development and redevelopment will be permitted within the village frameworks of Group Villages (including Longstanton), subject to meeting various criteria including character of the village and amenity of neighbours.
12. **Policy SE9** of the Local Plan 2004 requires development on the edge of villages to be sympathetically designed and landscaped to minimise the impact of the development on the countryside.
13. **Policy HG10** of the Local Plan 2004 states the design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape.

Consultation

14. **Longstanton Parish Council** – no comments received at time of preparing report. However, the PC has raised objections previously on grounds of development being out of character with ambience of Thatchers Wood, moving out of the building line, impact on sewage works and surface water drainage on this site and for similar schemes on other corner plots within the Thatchers Wood estate.

15. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** has considered the implications of the proposals in terms of noise and environmental pollution, and there are no significant impacts from the Environmental Health standpoint.

Representations

16. The occupiers of no. 10 Thatchers Wood make an objection on three concerns. Firstly, they state the dwelling would breach the existing building line as the garage would be constructed much closer to the road than other dwellings. Secondly they state the proposed building is not contained within the original curtilage. Finally, they note the request for a 1.8m high fence along the road frontage is in contravention of the 1m high Council approved fence height.
17. The occupier of no. 22 Thatchers Wood states the “application should again be refused because, despite the modification of any plans, any building in this area will extend beyond the building line and therefore be out of character with the surrounding houses. Thatchers Wood was built as an estate with detached houses surrounded by large areas of green space. Allowing this application to proceed will destroy the character of the estate, which lies at the boundary of the conservation area”.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

18. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- (a) Impact upon the character and appearance of the Streetscene;
 - (b) Impact upon Residential amenity;
 - (c) Surface Water Drainage and Sewage

Impact upon the character and appearance of the Streetscene

19. The Council has previously accepted the principle of developing the corner plots within the Thatchers Wood estate for new dwellings in 2000, 2003 and 2006, subject to the proposed development being of a suitable design, size and scale to accord with the streetscene.
20. The proposed dwelling has been switched around since the previous refusal, so that the single storey garage is located closest to the road, and the main bulk of the dwelling is located close to no. 11 Thatchers Wood. Furthermore the span of the dwelling has also been reduced from 17.5m to 16m. The height, as before, is that of a 2 ½ storey dwelling, which is typical of the streetscene in the Thatchers Wood estate.
21. Overall the changes from the previous refusal have resulted in the replacement of the proposed 2 ½ storey bulk being located approximately 4m from the road with a single storey garage structure which measures 4.7m to its ridge. The main bulk of the proposed dwelling is now subsequently positioned approximately 10m from the road. Addressing the neighbour’s comments regarding the building line, whilst the proposed garage would be located closer to the road to the south west of the site than the dwellings that front that road (Nos. 9 and 10), it is worth noting that the main bulk of the dwelling would be located largely in line with the frontages of those dwellings. As such, I am of the opinion that the amended proposals have served to significantly reduce the impact of the proposed dwelling in this prominent location to the extent that they do not pose an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene.

Impact on Residential Amenity

22. The proposed dwelling is to be positioned so that it is located in line with the frontage of the existing dwelling at No. 11 Thatchers Wood. Whilst the proposed structure is slightly deeper in footprint, the 2 ½ storey element of the structure would be located 18m from the rear boundary fence, which lies adjacent to 10 Thatchers Wood. Some windows are proposed in the side elevation facing No. 11 Thatchers Wood, but these serve three WCs, a kitchen and a utility room and would only offer views of the side elevation of the existing dwelling and oblique views of the front and rear gardens serving number 11, and therefore would not result in undue loss of privacy.
23. As discussed previously the proposed dwelling is of a similar height and scale to the neighbouring dwellings in Thatchers Wood. Given the scale and position of the proposed dwelling and the location of the proposed openings I am therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy or overbearing impact on the neighbouring dwellings.

Surface Water Drainage and Sewage

24. With regard to the issues raised previously by the Parish Council, the site is identified as being in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) area, as identified by the Environment Agency. As such, a flood risk assessment is not required for this development. The applicants have stated that it is their intention for the development to be connected to the surface water sewer and main sewer for the disposal of surface and foul water, which are considered as typically acceptable methods of water disposal. It is the obligation of the applicants to obtain the necessary permission of the relevant statutory undertakers prior to carrying out this work. Should this permission be denied it would therefore also be the responsibility of the applicants to find an alternative method of surface and foul water disposal.

Recommendation

25. Approval (as amended by plan No. 4642 date stamped 18th January 2007)
 1. Sc A – Time limited permission (RcA);
 2. Sc5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5a.ii);
 3. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
 4. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
 5. Sc5f – Details of materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including driveways and car parking areas (Rc – To minimise disturbance to adjoining residents and to ensure a high quality for the development).

Informatives

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)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
 - SE4** (List of Group Villages)

SE9 (Village Edges)
HG10 (Housing Design and Mix)

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
- Character and Appearance of the Streetscene
- Surface and Foul Water Disposal

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 Files Ref: S/2395/06/F; S/1950/06/F; S/1949/06/F; S/1948/06/RM; S/1889/06/F; S/1698/06/F and S/0892/06/O

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