

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

9th May 2007

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

S/0499/07/F - SAWSTON

Palisade Fence (Retrospective Application) at Edge of Deal Grove Woodland, Off Woodland Road for HB Sawston No. 3 Ltd.

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 10th May 2007

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because Sawston Parish Council recommend refusal of the application, contrary to the officer recommendation.

Site and Proposal

1. The site forms the boundary of the village framework to the north of Sawston between garages belonging to residential development in Woodland Road and Green Belt land that is covered by woodland subject to a Tree Preservation Order.
2. The application, received on 15th March 2007, proposes retention of 112 metres length of a 2.4 metre high palisade style, galvanised steel, grey/silver security fence.

Planning History

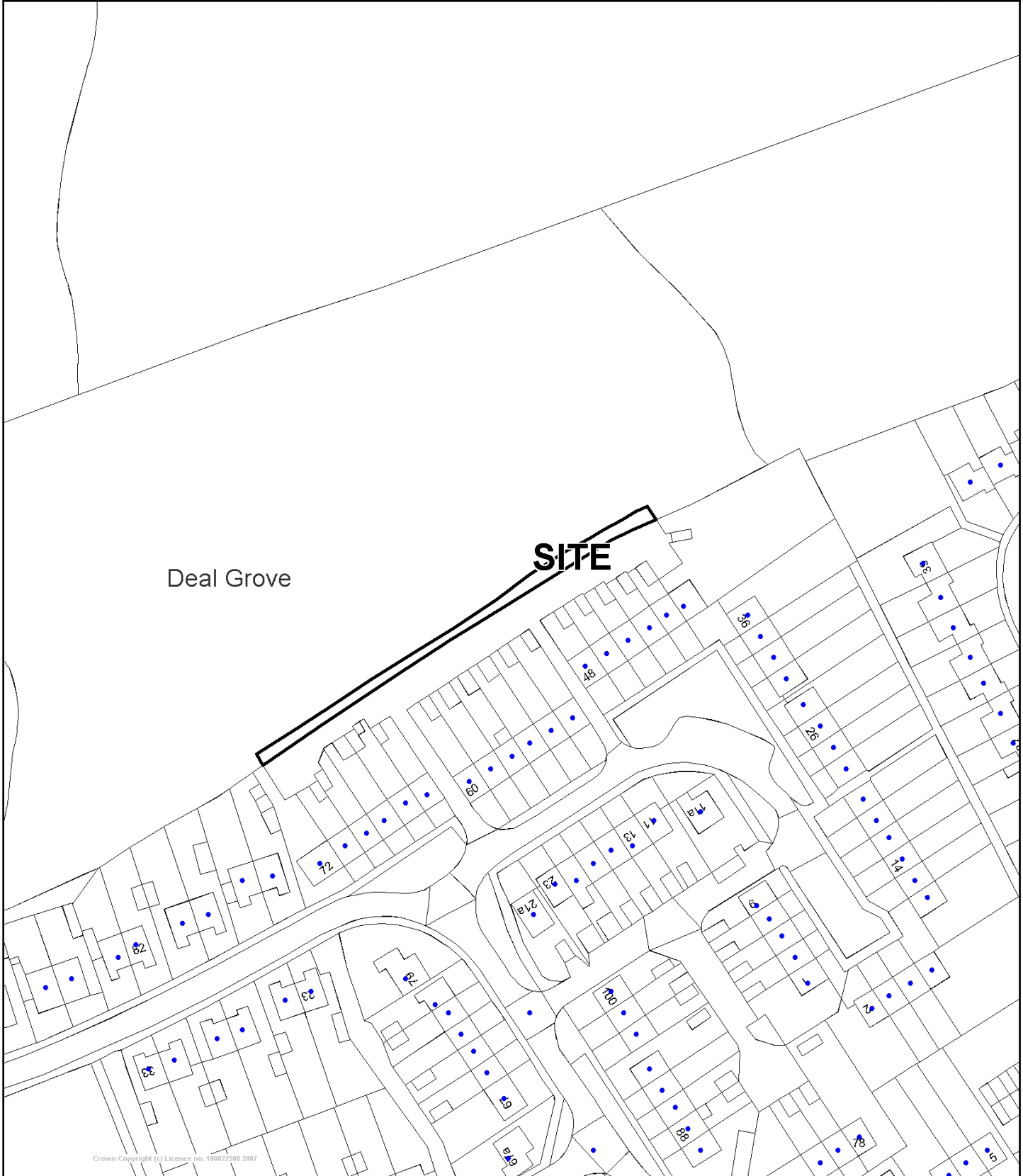
3. None relevant.

Planning Policy

4. Policy **P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 seeks to ensure that all new developments incorporate high standards of design that respond to the local character of the built environment.
5. Policy **SE9** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that development on the edge of villages should be sympathetically designed and landscaped to minimise the impact of the development upon the countryside.

Consultations

6. **Sawston Parish Council** recommends refusal on the application on the following grounds: -
 - a. Too high;
 - b. Overbearing;



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- c. Not in keeping with residential area;
 - d. Abuts Green Belt land;
 - e. Original boundary markers removed;
 - f. Safety issues of spikes at top of fence; and,
 - g. Not completed and access still possible via back garden of No. 38 Woodland Road.
7. **Trees and Landscapes Officer** Comments are awaited.
8. **Ecology Officer** Comments are awaited.

Representations

9. The applicant states that the fence was erected for the following reasons: -
- a. The land was being used by local residents to dispose of domestic and garden waste, items included bicycles, motor cycles, toys and other items that should have been removed to the waste recycling depot;
 - b. The woodland became a regular meeting place for local youths and dog walkers. As this is a private woodland we did not want to be held responsible for any injuries which may have occurred to those people;
 - c. The type of fence erected was based upon the height required to prevent people being able to both climb over and also being able to easily throw rubbish over the top. The style of fence is such that it cannot be easily damaged and needed to be robust enough in its construction and installation so as not easily pushed over. Consideration was not given to the colour when the decision on the fence was taken, but if necessary we will arrange for it to given a coat of paint in an appropriate colour.
10. Four letters of objection have been received from local residents in Woodland Road and Edinburgh Avenue. The main points of concern relate to the visual impact of the fence in relation to its industrial style and colour, and being out of keeping with the character of the area; the safety of local wildlife; lack of access to the surface water outlet for maintenance reasons; and the fact that the land owners did not notify the residents that the work was being carried out and used private land for builders to erect the fence.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

11. The main issues to be considered in relation to this application are the design and external appearance of the fence and its impact upon the character of the surrounding area of countryside and residential development, the impact upon protected trees, the impact upon ecology, and the impact upon neighbours.
12. The fence has been erected to demarcate the boundary of the private land and restrict unauthorised access to Deal Grove woodland. The applicants have provided justification for the reasons behind why this style of fence was chosen.
13. Whilst I acknowledge that the fence has an industrial style appearance, I do not consider that it has a significant harmful visual impact upon the character and

appearance of the area. I would, however, suggest that the fence is painted to minimise its visual impact further.

14. The land to the rear of the dwellings is privately owned by residents and consists of an unmade parking/ turning area and a number of small garages and outbuildings that have a run down appearance. The fence is only visible from public view at a distance of 40 metres through the two narrow (4 metres wide maximum) access points to the garage area between Nos. 60 and 62 Woodland Road, and Nos. 48 to 50 Woodland Road. I do not consider that it is particularly out of keeping with its location within a residential area, due to the appearance of the existing garage area and its limited visibility.
15. Given that the adjacent woodland is in the Green Belt and that the fence cannot be seen from any public viewpoints across open land, I do not consider that it has an inappropriate design that harms the character and appearance of the countryside.
16. Although the fence may be visible from rear gardens and windows of the nearby dwellings, it does not seriously harm the amenities of neighbours through being unduly overbearing, as a result of its height.
17. I do not consider that the safety issues of the spikes on the top of the fence, the use of a private access, the lack of access to the surface water outlet on private land, and the fact that the fence has not been erected in a particular area are not planning matters that can be considered during the decision making process.

Recommendation

18. Providing there are no material objections from the Trees and Landscape and Ecology Officers, approval subject to condition.
 1. Unless within 1 month of the date of this decision a scheme for painting the fence, which shall include a timetable for its implementation, is submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority for approval and unless the scheme is implemented as approved and in accordance with the approved timetable, the fence shall be removed.
(Reason - To ensure the development is not incongruous.)

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)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
SE9 (Village Edges)

2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Visual Impact
 - Ecology
 - Drainage

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

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning File Reference S/0499/07/F

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