

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th July 2007

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

S/0548/07/RM - LONGSTANTON Erection of 25 Dwellings, Phase 2, Home Farm

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 20th June 2007 (Major Application)

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the Parish Council objects, contrary to the Officer recommendation.

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.866 hectare site forms part of a larger site comprising Phase 2 of the Home Farm development. The Phase 2 site extends to 6.4 hectares. Formerly agricultural land the site is now being developed as part of an overall planning permission for 500 houses.
2. Access is from Over Road which lies to the west.
3. This reserved matters application, received on 21st March 2007 provides details of the layout, access, scale, appearance and landscaping for 25 dwellings as a revision to part of the approved details for 153 dwellings on Phase 2. These proposals increase the number of dwellings on this part of the Phase 2 site from 18 to 25. This has increased the density on that part of the site from approximately 21 dwellings/ha to 29 dwellings/ha.
4. The development would be comprised of 6 (24%) no. 3-bedroom, 15 (60%) no. 4-bedroom and 4 (16%) 5 bedroom. This compares to the approved 0 (0%) no. 3-bedroom dwellings, 8 (44%) 4-bedroom and 10 (56%) 5-bedroom dwellings.
5. 68% of the dwellings (17) would be 2-storey and 32% (8) 2½ storey. The ridge heights of the proposed dwellings range from 8.2 to 9.5 metres. This compares to the approved 44% (8) 2-storey and 56% (10) 2½ storey with ridge heights ranging from 8m to 9.3m.
6. The layout has been amended following concern expressed by officers in relation to the layout, garden sizes and plot relationships. The consultation period for the amendments expires 5th July 2007.
7. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.

Planning History

8. Outline planning permission for comprehensive phased development to provide B1050 Bypass for Longstanton and related road works together with housing (21Ha),



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a business park (6.3Ha), extension to village recreation ground (2.8Ha), village green including land for local shop and surgery, open space, landscaping and related infrastructure` on land west of Longstanton, including the application site, was granted in October 2000 (**S/0682/95/O**). The Decision Notice was issued following the signing of a legal agreement relating to education contributions and highway works. Condition 16 restricted development to no more than 500 dwellings unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

9. An application to vary conditions 2 and 3 of **S/0682/95/O**, which relate to the timescales for the submission of details and the commencement of development, was submitted under reference **S/1268/02/F**. This application has been treated as withdrawn.
10. **S/1762/03/RM** - 91 dwellings and ancillary works (Phase 1) - approved 22.12.03.
11. An appeal against a refusal to vary condition 16 of the Outline Planning Consent **S/0682/95/O** to allow the construction of more than 500 dwellings was dismissed by an Inspector's letter dated 29th November 2004.
12. **S/0246/04/RM** - Application for 196 dwellings (Phase 2) - Appeal allowed August 2005.
13. **S/0696/04/RM** - Duplicate application for 200 dwellings (Phase 2) - Refused for the following reasons:
 - "1. The proposed density at 31.25 dwellings per hectare, which exceeds the approved density of Phase 1 (29.3 d/h), would be contrary to the development principles of the Adopted Development Brief for Home Farm, would fail, in the absence of an appropriate master plan, to coherently implement the phased provision of 500 dwellings over the whole Home Farm site as required by the Outline Planning Permission, reference **S/0682/95/O** dated October 2000 and would not reflect the character of the existing built environment; consequently the proposal would be contrary to Policies P1/3 - Sustainable Design in Built Development of the Approved Structure Plan 2003 and HG5, HG10 and Longstanton 1 of the approved South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.
 2. The design and layout of the proposed development fails to achieve a sufficiently high standard of design and a sense of place as required by Policies P1/3 - Sustainable Design in Built Development of the Structure Plan 2003 and HG10 of the Local Plan 2004 and by the adopted Longstanton Development Brief 1998."
14. **S/0625/04/RM** - Reserved Matters application for the construction of on-site roads and sewers (Phase 2) – Approved April 2005.
15. **S/1846/04/F** - Application for balancing pond and scheme of ditch widening to serve development approved by virtue of outline planning permission **S/0682/95/O** – Approved June 2006.
16. An application to vary Condition 16 of the Outline Planning Consent **S/0682/95/O** to allow the construction of 630 dwellings has been dismissed at appeal.
17. **S/2069/04/RM** – Application for 153 dwellings (Phase 2) was approved in May 2005.

18. **S/1875/06/RM** and **S/1877/06/RM** – Duplicate applications for 18 dwellings within Phase 2 were approved in December 2006 (net increase of 7 dwellings).
19. **S/1086/06/F** – Application to extend the period for submission of reserved matters for Phase 2 for an additional 2 years was approved in August 2006.
20. **S/1876/06/RM** - Application for 20 dwellings within Phase 2 was approved in December 2006 (net increase of 6 dwellings.)
21. Approximately 10 revised designs have recently been approved for individual plots to include conservatories.

Planning Policy

22. The site forms part of the 21 hectare area of land allocated for some 500 dwellings on land north of Over in South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: 2004 **Policy HG5**.
23. The principles of development are encapsulated in **Policy Longstanton 1** of the Local Plan 2004. The supporting text at Paragraph 67.17 states:

"The District Council has granted outline planning permission for residential, employment and recreation uses, which includes the provision of a development related bypass. The bypass between Hatton Road, Over Road and Station Road would provide access to Over or Willingham and onto Fenland without passing through the village. The District Council considers that the provision of the bypass is crucial for the village and therefore allocated a larger area for a housing estate than would otherwise be appropriate. In this instance there is no requirement for affordable housing as set out in **Policy HG7** because of the need to ensure the provision of the bypass and other community facilities such as a village green, shop and surgery".
24. Longstanton is defined as a Group Village in South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2007 (**Policy ST/6**).
25. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P1/3** requires all new developments to incorporate high standards of sustainability and design and to provide a sense of place which:
 - (a) "Responds to the local character of the built environment;
 - (b) Is integrated with adjoining landscapes;
 - (c) Creates distinctive skylines, focal points, and landmarks;
 - (d) Includes variety and surprise within a unified design;
 - (e) Includes streets, squares and other public spaces with a defined sense of enclosure;
 - (f) Includes attractive green spaces and corridors for recreation and biodiversity;
 - (g) Conserves important environmental assets of the site;
 - (h) Pays attention to the detail of forms, massing, textures, colours and landscaping."

26. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P5/3** states that densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable “Local Planning Authorities should seek to maximise the use of land by applying the highest density possible which is compatible with maintaining local character”.
27. Local Plan 2004 **Policy HG10** states that residential developments will be required to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes (including 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings) and affordability, making the best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs. It also states that the design and layout of the scheme should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape and schemes should achieve high quality design and distinctiveness, avoiding inflexible standards and promoting energy efficiency.
28. Local Plan: 2004 **Policy TP1** states that the Council will seek to promote more sustainable transport choices and one of the ways this can be achieved is restricting car parking for residential developments to a maximum of an average of 1 ½ spaces per dwelling with a maximum of 2 spaces for 3+ bedroom dwellings in poorly accessible areas.
29. Development principles are contained within the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Submission Draft January 2006. The Inspectors’ Report was received May 2007. These policies address sustainability, design, development criteria, infrastructure, cumulative development, construction methods and development frameworks. The policy document is not adopted but carries significant weight. **Policy HG/2** states “In developments of more than 10 dwellings a mix of units will be sought providing a range of accommodation, including one and two bed dwellings, having regard to economic viability, the local context of the site and the need to secure a balanced community. A proportion of new dwellings should be designed to lifetime mobility standards.”
30. A development brief for the Home Farm site, covering matters such as development aims, design philosophy, scale of development, built form (advocating a series of townscape zones including greenways, village lanes, village streets and hamlets), architectural form and open space was adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 1998. Whilst design guidance has evolved since this brief was adopted, many of the principles contained within the brief remain relevant.
31. Government’s **Planning Policy Guidance (PPS) 3**, “Housing” (2006) aims to promote designs and layouts which make efficient and effective use of land . 30 dwellings per hectare should be used as a national indicative minimum.

Consultation

32. **Longstanton Parish Council** recommends refusal. It states:
 - (a) “Assurance required that the sewer system can cope with the additional new buildings.
 - (b) Despite Anglian Water stating that they can cope with phase 2, reassurance is sought as recent evidence of flooding has made it clear that it cannot.
 - (c) The Council do not consider the removal of sewerage into tanks as acceptable.

- (d) Concerns on the high level of the stream in Home Farm in January and surface drainage improvements are not performing.”
33. **Environment Agency** is concerned that the proposed development may not have adequate mitigation against flood risk. Following the outline permission and new considerations in relation to PPS25 and climate change the modelling undertaken for Longstanton now shows that there may be some flood risk for parts of the new development area during extreme events in the future. It recommends a precautionary approach and suggests a condition requiring floor levels to be set no lower than 7.20 metres above Ordnance Datum Newlyn unless otherwise approved by the local planning authority.
34. **The Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service** requires adequate provision to be made for fire hydrants.
35. **The Local Highways Authority** does not object: It would like to see dimensions for the carriageway (min 5m) and footways (min 1.8m) that are proposed to become adopted public highway shown on a revised plan; the footway is to be provided on both sides of the carriageway throughout the areas offered for adoption; and it would prefer to see the relocation of some of the properties closer to the proposed adopted public highway. “A distance of between 1.5m and 2m would prevent the proposed front gardens being used as car parking in the future, which not only reduces the potential for an increase in hard paving but also increases the ease of access for wheelchair users”.
36. **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** comments: No objections subject to conditions to safeguard the amenities of existing residents from noise disturbance during construction.
37. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer**
"Providing car parking in an internal courtyard is a practice which should be discouraged due to the introduction of criminal access to the rear of dwellings. Therefore the parking arrangements to rear of plots 1-4, 14-17 and 21-25 might be reconsidered. If the parking courts are to remain then consideration should be given to the provision of gates as a means of access control.
- Roads, footpaths and parking courts should be provided with lighting by means of column mounted white downlighters to BS 5489: 1996 Code of practice for outdoor lighting”.
38. **The Council’s Environment Operations Manager** comments are awaited:

Representations

39. Two letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of The Retreat, Fewes Lane, Longstanton and No. 30 Duddle Drive.
- The Retreat*
40. Application should not be allowed to proceed as Anglian Water has not yet upgraded their sewerage system. Problems currently exist with smells etc.
41. "What village amenities are these developers providing for the residents of Longstanton? The promised extension to the recreation ground has not yet come to fruition. There are no play facilities for children on Home Farm estates and Public

footpath No. 3 from Over road through the development site has not yet been re-opened nor the promised replacement footbridge at Fews Lane end provided”

42. No pavements or cycle paths along Over Road which is now carrying fast moving vehicles.
43. Continued risk of flooding with surface water being disposed of into Longstanton Brook.
44. Request conditions limiting hours of use of power operated machinery, the provision of bird and insect boxes and replacement of any hedges or trees that are removed.

30 Duddle Drive

45. The occupiers of this property have commented after viewing the amended plans. They are concerned about overshadowing and an over dominating impact of the proposed dwelling on plot 1. Boxing in of garden with built development. The proposed dwelling is significantly larger than that already approved in this location.
46. Requests the developers amend the scheme to resolve above concerns.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

47. The key issues for consideration are:
 - (a) The impact on residential amenity of the revised layout
 - (b) The visual impact of the scheme on the wider locality
 - (c) Housing mix and density
 - (d) Parking and landscaping

General

48. This reserved matter application will not lead to more than 500 houses being erected on the Home Farm development site. Having regard to recent reserved matter consents it will result in a total of 173 dwellings on Phase 2, below the 196 allowed at appeal, at a density of 27 dwellings per hectare. This constitutes part of the 500 total with planning permission.

Residential amenity

49. The proposed layout is considered to be acceptable in terms of its spacing and plot to plot relationships within the site. In my opinion it has been improved through negotiation from the original submission.
50. Of concern, however, is the relationship with Plot 1 and No. 30 Duddle Drive. This property has been recently occupied. The new residents are aware that permission has been granted (as part of the approval for 153 dwellings) for a dwelling to the rear of their garden. However, the layout, as revised by this application, proposes a dwelling that is approximately 2.5m deeper and 0.6m taller than that approved. They feel that the additional bulk so close to their rear garden boundary which appears to take up two thirds of the width of their garden, combined with the enclosing effect of existing garages that lie either side of their garden, will have too great an impact upon them.
51. At the time of writing the report the case officer has not been able to assess their concerns on site. This will take place before the meeting and Members will be

updated with the findings. In the meantime I have asked the developers to consider a further amendment to address this concern. Again Members will be updated at the meeting.

Visual impact

- 52. The density has increased but remains in the order of 30/ha in line with policy requirements, albeit 27 dph over the whole of Phase 2. The mix has moved towards smaller units although there are no 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings at all. The same area of the approved scheme, which could still be implemented, had no dwellings with less than 4 bedrooms.
- 53. I do not consider the site will appear over developed and I note that ridge heights are similar in both schemes.
- 54. The house types are consistent with those on adjacent developments and the layout of the access roads has only been changed very slightly.

Housing mix and density

- 55. The increase in density has to be viewed as part of the overall Home Farm development. 500 homes are permitted on the Home Farm site. This dictates the density unless the whole of the site is not developed. In this regard the density of the developed area will be greater and more in line with the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan and Government targets than permitted. The merits of developing the remainder of the site to increase the number of houses beyond 500 will have to be considered should this be proposed in the future. With regard to this site I welcome the increase in density and the provision of a greater proportion of smaller dwellings.

Parking and landscaping

- 56. Each dwelling will have parking available for two cars and the access arrangements remain as already permitted. The revised layout will not prejudice the ability to provide for planting in association with a scheme to be submitted under conditions on the Outline permission.

Other matters

- 57. The comments of the Policy Architectural Liaison Officer are noted. However I do not consider it necessary to amend the scheme further. These comments have been forwarded to the developers for consideration.
- 58. The Council's Environment Operations Manager comments are awaited. However the layout of the scheme includes facilities for the storage of bins which I consider is satisfactory. Any comments received will be reported verbally at the meeting.
- 59. I note that the Local Highways Authority would prefer the dwellings fronting the new road to the north west (subject to a separate application) to be set further back. I do not consider this necessary and it would, in my opinion, harm the street scene
- 60. The Environment Agency is recommending an approach that has not been adopted on the remainder of the Home Farm development. I am concerned that to do so may result in part of this site appearing incongruous. In light of extant planning permission to erect 18 dwellings without such additional controls I do not consider it would be appropriate to require them for the additional 7 as a result of this proposal.

61. Drainage concerns are dealt with in the conditions attached to the Outline permission and in the recent permission for the balancing pond (see above). This has been implemented and the relevant surface and foul water drainage conditions of the outline planning permission have been discharged following consultations with and agreement from the Environment Agency and Anglian Water.
62. A condition of the outline planning permission requires the provision of fire hydrants.

Recommendation

63. Delegated powers of approval are sought following a consideration of the impact of Plot 1 on the occupiers of No. 30 Duddle Drive, the submission of a revised layout plan showing dimensions of carriageways and 1.8m footways, subject to no new material planning issues being raised during the consultation period, and subject to safeguarding conditions.

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

- Reserved Matters Application File Ref S/2069/04/RM
- Outline Planning Permission Decision Notice Ref. S/0682/95/O
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Submission Draft January 2006.
- Development Brief for Home Farm, Longstanton 1998

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