

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

4th August 2004

S/1232/04/F - Thriplow
Conversion of one Dwelling into two Dwellings at 15 Woburn Place For T & J RYAN

Recommendation: Approval

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.024 hectare application site is located on the north-east side of Woburn Place and is occupied by an end-terrace two storey dwelling that has previously been extended on its south-eastern side.
2. The full application, submitted on 15th June 2004, seeks to convert the existing property in order to create two dwellings consisting of 1 x 2-bed and 1 x 1-bed property. A block plan submitted with the application shows that 2 parking spaces would be provided to the front of the 2-bed dwelling whilst 1 space would be provided in the front garden area of the 1-bed dwelling.

Planning History

3. S/0822/89/F – Consent granted for the two-storey side extension.

Planning Policy

4. **Policy P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan requires a high standard of design that responds to the local character of the built environment;
5. Heathfield is identified within **Policy SE5** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 as an Infill-Only Village. In such locations, Policy SE5 states that residential development will be restricted to no more than two dwellings comprising (amongst others) the redevelopment of an existing residential curtilage providing the site does not form an essential part of village character, and development is sympathetic to the historic interests, character, and amenities of the locality.

Consultation

6. **Thriplow Parish Council** objects to the application stating:

“ Councillors oppose this application on several counts.

1. If agreed, it would set a precedent for future applications;
2. The drainage and road network of Heathfield is already overloaded;
3. One Heathfield Councillor states that this is a retrospective application as the property has been used as two dwellings for sometime and should have two

Council Tax bills and must be registered as two members of HRA with regards to maintenance contributions;

4. The site is too small to be suitable for this type of alteration;
5. As no windows are shown on the plan it is not possible to see if neighbours are overlooked."

Representations

7. None

Planning Comments – Key Issues

8. The key issues in relation to this application are:
 - Neighbour impact;
 - Impact upon character and appearance of the area.
9. Policy SE5 of the Local Plan supports, in principle, the subdivision of existing dwellings within infill villages providing there is no adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbours or upon the character of the area.
10. The existing property does appear to have been subdivided into two dwellings already as there are two entrances at the front. The only change to the visual appearance/setting of the building would result from the formation of parking areas to the front of both dwellings together with the subdivision of the garden area. I am satisfied that neither of these alterations would result in undue harm to the character of the area.
11. No.15 occupies a plot that, at 10.5 metres wide, is wider than many plots in the vicinity of the site, particularly those occupied by the remaining dwellings in the terrace, Nos 16-18 Woburn Place, which have gardens ranging in width from 6.0 – 6.5 metres. The proposal involves the subdivision of the plot into two resulting in the creation of a 6.0 metre wide and a 4.5 metre wide plot. There are a number of properties within Woburn Place that occupy 5 metre wide plots, notably Nos 21-23, and I am satisfied that the resultant plots would not appear unduly small when compared to the character and size of plots in the surrounding area.
12. At present the property benefits from no on-site parking. The proposal seeks to provide a total of 3 spaces at the front of the two dwellings and therefore complies with this Authority's parking standards (which require an average of 1.5 spaces per property). There does appear to be an on-street parking problem within the immediate area and I would therefore recommend that any consent be conditional upon the provision of these parking spaces prior to the occupation of the dwellings. This would necessitate the demolition of an existing wooden structure at the front of the proposed new unit.
13. The Parish Council has expressed concern that approving this application may set a precedent for similar applications. There may be other instances within the Heathfield's estate where plot subdivision could be achieved. However, each would require a separate application and would be determined on its own merits. The fact that development could be replicated elsewhere is not, in itself, sufficient justification for refusing an application.

14. The submitted plans do not show existing or proposed window openings although I can confirm that there are existing first floor windows in the front and rear of the property. The applicant has been requested to submit plans showing proposed window/door openings. Whilst I have no objections to the retention of openings in the front and rear of the property, any first floor windows inserted in the south-east side elevation of the dwelling to be created would overlook the garden area of No. 9 Woburn Place. As such, a condition should be applied to any consent preventing the insertion of first floor windows in this elevation without planning permission.
15. The Parish Council has objected to the application on the basis that the drainage and road network is already overloaded. The Heathfield Estate is a private estate with unadopted roads and services. As such, this is not a material planning issue. However, consent would be required from the body responsible for the upkeep of the roads and services (I understand this is the Heathfield's Residents Association). An informative could be added to any planning consent to this effect.

Recommendation

16. Subject to the receipt of amended plans showing existing and proposed window and door openings, delegated powers are sought to approve the application subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard Condition A (Reason A).
 2. Sc22 – No windows etc at first floor level in the south-east elevation of the development, hereby permitted, (Reason – To safeguard the privacy of the occupier(s) of the adjoining property to the south-east, No.9 Woburn Place).
 2. Prior to the occupation of the dwellings, hereby permitted, the parking shall be provided in accordance with layout shown within the 1:500 scale block plan and thereafter maintained (Reason – In the interests of highway safety).

17. Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: Policy P1/3 (Sustainable Design in Built Development).
 - b) South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: Policy SE5 (Development in Infill Villages).
2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: Impact on character of area; neighbour impact; impact upon road and drainage network.
3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

General

1. The Heathfield Estate is a private estate with unadopted roads and services. The relevant consents to access and service the site will need to be obtained.

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 Ref: S/1232/04/F

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