

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

4th August 2004

S/1018/04/F - Great Shelford
Relocation of Mobile Home to House Temporary Staff Together with Siting of
Portakabin – 144 Cambridge Road for Shelford Lodge Ltd

Recommendation: Approval

Members of Committee will visit the site on Monday 2nd August 2004.

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is located on the north-east side of Cambridge Road and is occupied by a substantial two-storey building used as a retirement home. Residential properties lie either side of the site and also to the rear/north-west.
2. The full application, submitted on 17th May 2004, seeks to site a mobile home on the premises in order to house temporary staff. A letter submitted with the application explains that the mobile home is currently on the site (located to the rear of No.146 Cambridge Road). The proposal involves the relocation of the existing mobile home to a position to the rear of the retirement home that is currently occupied by an unauthorised portakabin. The portakabin, which I understand is used for storage purposes (although this has yet to be confirmed in writing by the applicant), would be resited to a position adjacent to the mobile home. The entrance to the mobile home would face south-westwards – ie – towards Shelford Lodge.

Planning History

3. S/1002/85/F – Consent granted for the change of use of the building to a retirement home. Extensions to the building were approved under planning refs: S/1843/85/F, S/0189/87/F and S/2340/89/F.
4. S/0181/03/LDC – An application for certificate of lawfulness for the siting and use of a mobile home for residential accommodation for staff of Shelford Lodge was submitted. This Authority refused to grant the certificate as insufficient evidence had been submitted to prove that the mobile home had been on the site and used for residential purposes for a continuous 10-year period. An enforcement notice was subsequently issued to require the removal of the mobile home from the site as it encroaches slightly upon land that is within the countryside and Green Belt. Both the Enforcement Notice and refusal of the Lawful Development Certificate have been appealed, although they are in abeyance pending the outcome of this application.

Planning Policy

5. The retirement home lies within the village framework where new development is generally supported. The proposed site is not within the Green Belt.

6. Policy SE2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 generally supports new residential development within Rural Growth Settlements.

Consultation

7. **Great Shelford Parish Council** objects to the application stating:
8. “At present there are two mobile properties on the site – a large mobile home situated within the green belt to the rear of 146 Cambridge Road (which is the subject of a planning appeal against the refusal of SCDC to grant a lawful development certificate) and a small mobile building located in the position shown on the application which appears to be in use as a store. This building is not suitable for residential accommodation and it would seem that if the applicants are finding it difficult to find accommodation for their staff, a purpose built annexe would be a better solution to a series of temporary buildings. Recommend refusal.
9. Since the Committee considered this application we understand that the proposal is not for the existing building in the position shown on the plan, but to move the large mobile home to that position. We do not feel this is an appropriate site and feel that we should await the outcome of the appeal decision. We continue to recommend refusal.”
10. **The Chief Environmental Health Officer** raises no objections.

Representations

11. Letters of objection have been received from two local residents, Nos 138 and 140 Cambridge Road. The main points raised are:
- A mobile home is not in keeping with the character of its surroundings;
 - The mobile home would have an adverse visual impact upon the surrounding countryside/Green Belt;
 - The land upon which it is proposed to site the mobile home is set aside for parking and turning on planning ref: S/0189/87/F. The proposal therefore represents a material change of use;
 - If there is a permanent need for accommodation, a permanent solution should be sought;
 - Mains water has been run from the road to serve living accommodation on this car park;
 - It is likely that the portakabin is intended to be used for toilet purposes.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

12. The key issues in relation to this application are:
- Residential amenity;
 - Siting of mobile home on parking/turning area;
 - Visual impact.

13. The existing mobile home is located marginally outside the village framework and in the Green Belt. Its siting and use for residential purposes therefore contravenes policies relating to development in the countryside and Green Belt. The current application seeks to relocate the mobile home to a position that is both within the curtilage of the retirement home and within the village framework. This would therefore overcome the reasons for taking enforcement action against the mobile home.
14. Objections have been received on the basis that the mobile home would be sited on land set aside for parking and turning within a previous planning approval. The current parking/turning layout on the site does differ from that set out within the most recent approval on the site and the existing temporary storage building is sited upon part of that designated parking area (Ref: S/2340/89/F). However, enforcement action was not taken at the time against the implemented layout. The approved scheme showed 10 spaces on site. There would still be ample room for 10 cars to park and turn on the site and I therefore consider that a refusal could not be substantiated on this basis. Details of the revised position of the existing unauthorised portakabin have been requested. Again, it is essential that this be sited away from the remaining parking area.
15. The relocated mobile home would be sited closer to the boundary with No.140 Cambridge Road than at present. No.140, which is sited close to the north-east site boundary, has 2 first floor windows looking towards the site although these appear to serve non-habitable rooms. Nevertheless, the applicant has agreed to site the mobile home so that the main entrance, and hence area of main activity, faces towards the retirement home rather than towards No.140. This requirement should be a condition of any planning consent.
16. Concerns have been expressed on the basis that permanent staff accommodation should be sought. I agree with this comment – temporary buildings should only be seen as a short term solution to a problem. However, given that this is the first application for the mobile home and portakabin and given that the application seeks to move the mobile home away from a site that is deemed in policy terms to be unacceptable, I would suggest that a temporary 5 year permission be granted for the buildings. This could be accompanied by a covering letter stating that Officer support is unlikely to be given for any further renewals of the structures and, if staff accommodation/storage is required in the long-term, encouraging the applicant to come forward with a proposal for a permanent extension to the building.

Recommendations

17. Subject to confirmation that the portakabin is to be included in the application, together with an amended plan showing details of the siting of both buildings, delegated powers are sought to approve the application as amended by additional information submitted on 18th June 2004:
 1. Standard Condition 3 – Buildings to be removed on or before 30th June 2009. (Reason 3/4a.)
 2. The main entrance to the mobile home, hereby permitted, shall face to the south-west. (Reason – To protect the amenities of the occupier(s) of the adjoining property to the north-east, No.140 Cambridge Road).

3. The mobile home, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied other than by the present or any future owner of the application premises or by an employee of such an owner working at the application premises. (Reason – The creation of a unit of accommodation, unlinked to the existing retirement home, would result in an unacceptable level of amenity to the occupiers of the mobile home due to its lack of private garden space and its proximity to the parking/turning area for the retirement home).
4. No more than one mobile home shall be stationed on the site (Reason – To protect the amenities of the occupier(s) of the adjoining property to the north-east, No.140 Cambridge Road).

Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:** None.
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE2** (Development in Rural Growth Settlements).
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:
 - Residential amenity;
 - Loss of parking and turning area;
 - Visual impact on the locality
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.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: File Refs: S/1018/04/F; S/0181/03/LDC

County Structure Plan 2003
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004

Contact Officer: Lorraine Casey – Senior Planning Assistant
Telephone: (01954) 713251