

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th March 2009

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

**S/2066/08/O - DUXFORD
Demolition of Existing Dwelling and the Erection of 18 Dwellings,
Access Road and Landscaping
For Endurance Estate (Cambridge) Ltd**

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 2nd March 2009 (Major)

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation of officers does not accord with the recommendation of refusal of Duxford Parish Council.

Site and Proposal

1. The application site, measuring 0.64 ha, comprises an existing bungalow with rear garden at No 8 Station Road, together with parts of the rear garden areas of adjacent dwellings to the east at Nos 10, 12, and 14 Station Road. Station Road is a cul-de-sac leading to Whittlesford Parkway railway station which provides main line services to Cambridge and London Liverpool Street. To the south of the site is the A505 providing access to the M11. There is a fall in levels from the north to the south of the site down to the A505 boundary. To the west, the site is adjoined by a semi-detached house at No 6 Station Road which has a single-storey extension adjoining the western boundary with the site. The occupiers have recently submitted an application for development in the rear garden area (S/0044/09/F). To the east of the site access stands No 10 Station Road, a detached two-storey house.
2. The rear garden area of No 6 there is a mature grove of apple trees which are the subject of a recently designated Tree Preservation Order. There are a number of mature trees and bushes on the boundary with the A505, and fencing on the upper western boundary adjoining the garden of No 6.
3. The development in Station Road West is characterised predominantly by detached properties with individual frontages onto the road. Development in depth is present to the east of the site at Owls Close. Recently, planning permission has been granted for the erection of 15 dwellings in depth on adjacent land to the east (S/1890/07/F).
4. This outline application, dated 1 December 2008, proposes the demolition of the bungalow and the erection of 18 detached, semi-detached, linked, and terraced houses with garages on the site. An amended layout plan was received 26 January 2009. This proposes changes to the layout of Plots 16, 17 and 18 and the incorporation of a number of protected fruit trees within their gardens. The access road is shown to come through the frontage of No 8. Details of access, layout and scale are to be determined at this stage; the appearance of development is reserved for subsequent determination. The layout drawing shows 42 car parking spaces, and

S/2066/08/F - Duxford



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Scale 1/2500 Date 13/2/2009

Centre = 548150 E 247137 N

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turning heads to accommodate public service vehicles. An acoustic barrier 2.5 m in height is proposed for the southern boundary with A505. The application is accompanied by a typical front elevation which shows a dwelling of two storeys with rooms in the roof, having a ridge height of 8.6 m. Typical materials are stock bricks, stained timber boarding, and concrete tiles.

5. Dwellings and garages on Plots 1 and 2 are shown to have their gable ends against the western boundary adjoining the garden area of No 6.
6. The proposal includes six affordable dwellings and twelve market dwellings. The mix of market dwellings is: 7 of 4-bed (58%), 2 of 3-bed (17%), and 3 of 2-bed (25%).
7. The proportion of affordable dwellings provision (net) is 35%. This comprises 2 two-bed houses for rent, 2 three-bed houses for rent, and 2 two-bed houses for shared ownership. The application has been supported by an Affordable Housing Statement, which sets out exceptional development costs in terms of a long and expensive access, road noise mitigation measures, underground high-voltage cable, ground conditions mitigation and specialised foundations, and a requirement for foul drainage pumping. The agent has submitted a Housing Corporation Economic Appraisal using the Grimley model in relation to the abnormal costs. This uses a negative value for the land, indicating that the scheme is not viable due to the abnormal costs.
8. The density of development is 28 dwellings per hectare.
9. The amended layout shows 175 m² of public open space, 167 m² formal play area, and 137 m² of informal play area.
10. The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, Ecological Report, Flood Risk Assessment, Traffic Report, Noise Report, Tree Report, Open Space Calculation, and an Affordable Housing Statement.

Planning History

11. **S/1426/08/O** Residential development (21 dwellings) - Withdrawn 13/11/2008
12. **S/0114/08/LDC** Certificate of Lawfulness for existing use of land for garden area approved 8/8/2008
13. **S/0083/08/LDC** Certificate of Lawfulness for existing use of land for garden area approved 8/8/2008
14. **S/1664/82/D** Erection of three houses and garages space - approved 18/2/1983
15. **S/1659/81/O** Erection of three houses - approved 9/12/1981
16. **S/1540/79/O** Gypsy camp - refused 14/11/1979
17. **Land rear of 24 Station Road West**
S/1890/07/F Erection of 15 dwellings with associated access road – Approved 2/01/2008
18. **Land adjacent to 24 Station Road West**
S/1115/04/O and **S/1574/07/RM** - Erection of 2 dwellings on the frontage and formation of access road into the site- details approved 8/10/2007.

19. **6 Station Road West**
S/0044/09/F - Change of use of garage/workshop to residential use and construction of glasshouse enclosure and swimming pool- current application registered 9 February 2009.

Planning Policy

20. In the LDF Adopted Proposals Map (2008) the site is shown to be wholly within the development framework of Whittlesford Bridge (Inset No 107).
21. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD 2007
ST/3 (Re-Using Previously Developed Land and Buildings)
ST/6 (Group Villages)
22. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
DP/1 (Sustainable Development)
DP/2 (Design of New Development)
DP/3 (Development Criteria)
DP/7 (Development Frameworks)
DP/4 (Infrastructure and New Developments)
HG/1 (Housing Density)
HG/2 (Housing Mix)
HG/3 (Affordable Housing)
SF/10 (Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments)
SF/11 (Open Space Standards)
NE/3 (Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development)
NE/6 (Biodiversity)
TR/2 (Car and Cycle Parking Standards)
23. Trees in the rear gardens of the dwellings at 8 and 10 Station Road West are subject to a provisional Tree Preservation Order made on 1 December 2008.

Consultations

24. The application site relates to land in Duxford Parish but is on the border of Duxford and Whittlesford Parishes.
25. **Duxford Parish Council** - objection.
- a) The LDF designates Duxford as a 'Group Village' whereby a maximum of only 8 dwellings can be built in any development, or up to 15 dwellings on a brownfield site. The proposal exceeds that limit. Taking into account the adjacent development, by the same developer, there will be a total of 30 dwellings and it is clear that the layout of the new roadways could be easily linked together to form one estate.
- b) The number and allocation of affordable homes in terms of size, shared equity and rented does not meet SCDC's criteria and is unacceptable to the Parish Council. The Parish Council considers that one 2-bedroom and one 3- bedroom dwelling should be allocated for shared equity should South Cambridgeshire District Council resolve to approve the application despite the Tree Preservation Order.
- c) The proposal is not compatible with the Tree Preservation Order that has been applied to part of the site area and impinges on six of the proposed dwellings.

26. **Whittlesford Parish Council** – objection. Station Road is already extremely busy at peak hours in the morning and evening. The additional traffic created by this development, and the one for a further 17 dwellings in the adjacent plot along Station Road, will give rise to safety and noise issues. This development, together with the one already approved, will double the number of dwellings on Station Road, which will have a detrimental effect on the enjoyment of life for the present residents of Station Road. The Parish Council goes on to comment that financial contributions should be made for education provision as open space provision in Whittlesford, which although to be paid to Duxford Parish Council should be ring fenced for this purpose in the event of a boundary change in the future.
27. **Local Highway Authority** – no objection in principle. With the exception of plot 4B the scheme would not be adopted. Recommended conditions.
28. **Cambridgeshire County Archaeology** – no objection. A scheme of archaeological evaluation is required.
29. **Council's Landscape Officer** - no objection to the scheme. Final details required to be submitted by condition.
30. **Council's Trees Officer** – no objection to the revised layout including retention of selected apple trees, subject to adequate protection during construction in accordance with British standards.
32. **Council's Ecology Officer** - no objection to the revised layout including retention of selected apple trees.
32. **Council's Environmental Health Scientific Officer (Contaminated Land)** - a detailed scheme of contamination and remediation objectives and method statement is required.
33. **Council's Environmental Health Officer (Environment)** - The submitted Environmental Noise Assessment for the development appears comprehensive and acceptable. However, to cover all details, he recommends the use of a condition for the provision of a scheme for the protection of proposed dwellings from noise from the road.
34. **Council's Housing Development and Enabling Manager** - Although the provision of affordable housing is less than the required 40% on site, the applicant has pointed to abnormal costs which will impact on the viability of the scheme. The HDEM is prepared to accept a reduction in the affordable housing contribution in this case. The total loss equates to one unit. The unit sizes and standards of build and design are acceptable and she understands that the applicant has already started discussions with Granta Housing Association.

Representations

35. **6 Station Road West**
 - a) There is only minimal additional planting proposed to screen the access road and properties from the main road.
 - b) Extremely high densities and the properties are of similar and bland design, which will reduce the charm and quality of the neighbourhood.
 - c) The number of dwellings exceeds that outlined for brownfield sites in Duxford in policy, which is 15, and adjoins a similar scheme.

- d) The high-density is vastly different to the current low density of residential dwellings in Station Road West. This is an urban type development that is out of context with its rural location.
- e) The density is justified by the extensive cost of developing the site, but this should have been considered during the initial negotiation of the purchase of the site.
- f) The scheme should use the already consented access serving the adjacent site for 15 residential dwellings.
- g) Inappropriate housing mix, which does not address the needs of the retired or disabled.
- h) Garden areas are too small.
- i) Additional pressure on local school facilities.
- j) The site could be linked to the adjoining development in the future and this would add to vehicular use of the proposed inadequate access.
- k) The road layout makes possible a future extension to the west.
- l) The tree preservation order should be fully protected. This is not recognised in the amended layout.
- m) Loss of ecological interest from the development of the extensive back gardens.
- n) Light pollution from street lamps.
- o) Noise and disturbance from traffic generation to a bedroom window at 6 Station Road West.
- p) Noise disturbance from commuters parking on the new access road.
- q) Will the developers take responsibility if the water table is contaminated by the proposed development?
- r) The development will provide access to the side boundary of No.6 with increased security risk. This boundary should be securely fenced.
- s) Loss of outlook from the construction of dwellings on Plots 1 and 2.
- t) Loss of privacy and visual impact to the house and garden from the construction of dwellings on Plots 1 and 2. This will be extremely detrimental. Existing landscaping will not adequately screen the side elevations of these proposed dwellings. Landscaping of these side elevations should be provided for in the application. The drawing 'Site Cross Sections As Proposed' is misleading as it shows dense vegetation on this boundary.
- u) The revised parking arrangement will lead to a further loss of trees.
- v) Overlooking of the rear garden area and patio area of No.6 from the development on Plot 1 and overshadowing from the developments on Plots 1 and 2.
- w) Plots 1 and 2 should be replaced with bungalows, or repositioned to be on the eastern side of the access road.

36. 7 Station Road West

- a) The development does not comply with policy HG/3 relating to social housing. All such affordable housing should be managed by a housing association. Local families should be given priority. The requirement should be applied to the 18 dwellings in total.
- b) Loss of view to the front of the property.
- c) Increase in noise and light pollution. The headlights from cars leaving the site would shine directly into the living room and bedroom.
- d) More traffic on an already busy road and a busy junction with the A505. Together with the already consented scheme there will be a minimum of 68 additional vehicles movements on the road each day. The submitted statistics under estimate the likely volume of traffic as most residents will drive to the nearest shop rather than walk or cycle. There are several commercial businesses on Station Road, each of which generate traffic.
- e) The increase in number of dwellings on Station Road is out of character with the low-density nature of the rest of the road.

- f) Loss of mature trees and hedgerow. This will be an aesthetic loss and will lead to increased vehicle noise from the A505.
- g) Precedent for further such development adjacent to the A505.
- h) Cars parked by the new junction with Station Road will make use of this junction dangerous.
- i) Totally inadequate provision of open space.
- j) The exceptional costs quoted in respect of the affordable housing provision are not convincing. They represent the difference between a huge margin and a decent margin, not between a small margin and a break-even.
- k) "The proposed development offers villages little in the way of guaranteed and sustainable affordable housing for its residents, offers no new facilities even for the proposed new residents and has a detrimental impact on the environment, local infrastructure and lives of the current villages."

37. **30 Station Road West**

- a) Overdevelopment of the site.
- b) Additional traffic on Station Road.
- c) Parking on Station Road.
- d) Noise barriers to the A505 are necessary.
- e) Additional pressure on Whittlesford School.
- f) Doubling of the number of dwellings on this section of Station Road.

Representations from the agent

38. **Whittlesford Parish Council**

Response:

- a) The development accords with all relevant policies in the LDF. Furthermore the land was included within the village framework by an Inspector at a previous Local Plan review with a view to its development. It is previously developed land.
- b) The Highways Authority has no objections to the scheme in terms of traffic generation or access.
- c) The application is not a red-line outline application but supported with a fully worked up scheme with full details of noise barrier and planting proposed and preliminary elevations.
- d) The developer will make education contributions to the County Education Authority and how the County Council choose to use those funds is a matter for them.
- e) The developer will make commuted open space contributions and how the Council choose to use those funds is a matter for them.

39. **Council's Environmental Health Scientific Officer (Contaminated Land)**

Response: No ground contamination revealed in ground condition survey submitted with application papers and therefore no need for remediation strategy.

40. **Council's Environmental Health Officer (Environment)**

Response: Acoustic barrier proposed. Designed in accordance with specification provided by Acoustic consultant. Similar approach adopted on adjacent site.

41. **6 Station Road**

Response: Nearest of the proposed dwellings is 52 metres away from rear façade of 6 Station Road and the ground floor of the nearest dwelling is in excess of 1.5 metres lower than the ground floor level of 6 Station Road. Unsupported suggestion that there is rare wildlife on the site is entirely untrue and the site has been the subject of a detailed ecological survey and no rare or scarce wildlife identified.

42 **7 Station Road**

Response: The nearest house to this objector is around 90 metres away and at a level 2.2 metres below the ground floor level of the objector's house so will be 3.7 metres below eye level. Furthermore, the development is separated from the application site by Station Road and will be partially screened by proposed planting along the first section of the access road. The development accords with all relevant policies in the LDF. Furthermore the land was included within the village framework by an Inspector at a previous Local Plan review with a view to its development. It is previously developed land. The Highways Authority has no objections to the scheme in terms of traffic generation or access.

43. **30 Station Road**

Response: The development accords with all relevant policies in the LDF. Furthermore the land was included within the village framework by an Inspector at a previous Local Plan review with a view to its development. It is previously developed land. The Highways Authority has no objections to the scheme in terms of traffic generation or access. The incorporation of a noise barrier along the A505 boundary and the barrier effects of the new houses will serve to improve the aural environment of the area as a whole.

44. **Housing mix Policy HG/2**

Comment: This is for a development of more than 10 dwellings and therefore the dwelling mix set out in Policy HG2 does not apply:

45. "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."

46. The development proposed does provide a range of accommodation.

47. **Affordable housing Policy HG/3**

Comment: The Council's Affordable Homes Officer agrees that the affordable housing provided accords with policy and is acceptable.

48. The development is theoretically short of 0.8 social dwellings. The site has excess development costs of C. £705,000 (see attached schedule), which entirely justifies a perhaps larger reduction in social housing requirements. Policy HG3 is quite specific that excess development costs are a relevant consideration in determining the amount of social housing:

49. "3. Within individual developments, the proportion and type of affordable housing will be the subject of negotiation with applicants. Account will be taken of any particular costs associated with the development (e.g. site remediation, infrastructure provision) and other viability considerations."

50. This was the case in the adjacent site where for a development of 17 dwellings 6 social dwellings were provided which is the same as the application proposal and there can be no justification whatsoever for insisting on the provision of a higher rate of provision on this adjacent site.

51. **Renewable energy Policy NE/3**

Comment: This is appropriately dealt with by condition for this outline application. This was included in the conditions attached to the planning permission for the

adjacent site. The conditions should be generic to provide flexibility to provide renewable energy by other means or a combination of means.

Planning Comments

Principle of development

52. The site is located wholly within the village framework. In addition, the use of the site as garden land falls within the definition of previously used land, or brownfield land. In the Core Strategy DPD the site is selected as a Group Village, where policy ST/6 states that development may exceptionally consist of up to about 15 dwellings where this would make best use of a single brownfield site. The proposal represents a net increase of 17 dwellings, which I consider to comply with policy ST/6.
53. The density of development fails to achieve the 30 dwellings per hectare requirement set out in policy HG/1. The site is constrained by an upper limit imposed by policy ST/6 and I consider this is sufficient ground to justify an exception to policy HG/1. A similar density of development has been approved on adjacent land to the east.
54. The proposal represents developments in depth in an area which is generally characterised by frontage development on Station Road West. However, development to the east in Owls Close and in the recently approved housing estate for 15 dwellings has established a precedent for in-depth development in this part of the village. I consider the proposed development to be consistent with the evolving character of the settlement, as required by policies DP/2 and DP/7.
55. The Council's Housing Development and Enabling Manager has advised that the provision of affordable housing, although short by one dwelling of the formal requirement according to policy HG/3, is acceptable in the context of abnormal costs set out by the applicant. The precise tenure of affordable housing is not a planning matter. The mix of market housing offers dwellings with two, three and four bedrooms. This is a range of accommodation as required by policy HG/2 for schemes in excess of 10 dwellings. I consider that the proposal complies with policies HG/2 and HG/3.

Layout of development and highways

56. The proposal meets open space requirements in accordance with policy SP/10, which should also be the subject of a condition requiring infrastructure provision. I consider that the proposal is provided with sufficient car parking provision, and that garden sizes are adequate. The local highway authority has indicated its acceptance of the scheme, taking into account the nature of the local road network and the level of traffic likely to be generated by the scheme. There is no link proposed to the adjacent approved development, and a proposal for such a link would require a further submission for planning permission.

Landscaping

57. The site is partially exposed on its boundary to the A505. The proposal includes additional planting and screening on this boundary, which is acceptable to the Council's Landscape Officer. Prior to the submission of the current application, a Tree Preservation Order was placed on apple trees in the rear garden of No. 8. The proposal will result in the removal of many of these trees, but this has been proposed in consultation with the Council's Trees Officer and Ecology Officer, who are

recommending the revised proposal as acceptable in the context of the provisional Tree Preservation Order.

Residential amenity

58. The proposed residential dwellings on plots 10 to 18 will be provided with acoustic glazing to comply with British standards, in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in consultation with the Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services), and an acoustic screen will be provided along the southern boundary, with adequate landscaping. I consider these measures are sufficient to ensure sufficient protection from noise intrusion for future occupiers of these properties in the event of planning permission being granted.
59. The occupiers of No.6 have written with concerns about the impact on the amenities of their property from the development. The proposed driveway will be located a minimum of 5.0 m from the boundary with No.6. In the house, there is a room above the garage which has velux- type windows in its roof slope facing towards the proposed driveway. As these are orientated in the plane of the roof, I do not consider that there will be undue noise disturbance from the road to this bedroom. A second bedroom window is located at first floor level at a distance of 11 m from the driveway, and facing towards it. Given the distance from the proposed driveway, I do not consider that undue noise disturbance will result to this bedroom.
60. The occupiers of No.6 concerned at the impact upon their amenity arising from the construction of dwellings on Plots 1 and 2. The flank end wall of each house and garage will directly abut upon the boundary of the rear garden area of this dwelling. The affected area is laid to garden, but is not the main sitting area for the house, which is located some 30 m to the north. There will be a degree of overbearing impact and overshadowing arising from this siting, but I do not consider these as being substantial reasons for refusal given the distance to the main amenity area of the dwelling at present. The occupiers have submitted an application (S/0044/09/F) to introduce a covered swimming pool into this area, which is at present being considered. The applicants were fully aware of the adjacent proposal when submitting this application and I do not consider this consideration carries significant weight as planning permission has not been granted nor the development implemented. The design of the dwellings on these plots does not form part of the current application and as such any overlooking from windows from these properties can be considered in any future application.
61. Whittlesford Parish Council has expressed concern on effect on amenity generally for residents in Station Road West. I acknowledge that there will be an increase in traffic on this road as a result of this and the adjacent approved development; I do not consider that this will result in significant noise or other disturbance from traffic to residents of these properties.

Recommendation

62. Approval of the application dated 1st December 2008 as amended by layout plan number 0802 /PL 2/SP/01E received 26th January 2009.

63. Conditions

1. Standard time limit.
2. Reserved matters – appearance of the development.
3. Details - landscaping.

4. Retention of landscaping.
5. Details - protection of trees.
6. Details - formal play provision.
7. Details - as required by the Council's Ecology Officer.
8. Details - noise protection measures, including acoustic barrier.
9. Details - contaminated land investigation and mitigation.
10. Details - boundary treatments including walls on the western boundary.
11. Removal of permitted development rights - Plots 1 and 2.
12. Details - renewable energy.
13. Infrastructure provision - education, open space and recreation, affordable housing.
14. Details - arrangements for site access and parking during the construction period.
15. Limitation on the hours of operation during the construction period.
16. As required by the Local Highway Authority.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- Planning file references: S/1426/08/O, S/1890/07/F, S/1115/04/O and S/1574/07/RM S/0044/09/F

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