

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

4th August 2004

S/1159/04/F – Little Shelford
Erection of Dwelling Following Demolition of Existing Dwelling at 40 High Street
For Mr & Mrs D Munro

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is a 0.24 hectare (0.59 acre) plot of land occupied by a detached brick and tile bungalow. The dwelling is set approximately 13 metres back from the frontage of the site which is bounded by a low hawthorn hedge. There are a number of trees on the site including two well-established horse chestnuts, one within the front garden and the other adjacent to the south-east boundary of the property. The existing point of vehicular access is in the north-western corner of the site. Beyond the plot to the north-west is a render and tile two storey dwelling whilst to the south-east is a substantial red brick dwelling.
2. The full application, submitted on 3rd June 2004 and amended on 15th July 2004, seeks to erect a two storey dwelling on the site following the demolition of the existing bungalow. The replacement dwelling would be a six-bedroom red brick and clay plain tile property sited approximately 15 metres back from the frontage of the site. The main element of the property would be sited some 2 metres behind the line of the existing bungalow whilst a projecting single storey element comprising a double garage would extend approximately 4 metres closer to the road than the existing property. The dwelling would comprise both two storey and single storey elements with the main part of the dwelling standing approximately 8.4 metres high (2.5 metres high to eaves). The existing vehicular access would be closed off and a new point of access created in a central position. The density of the development equates to approximately 4 dwellings/hectare.

Planning History

3. **S/1160/04/CAC** – A concurrent application for the demolition of the existing bungalow has been submitted.

Planning Policy

4. Little Shelford 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.

5. **Policy P1/3** of the County Structure Plan 2003 stresses the need for a high standard of design and a sense of place which corresponds to the local character of the built environment.
6. The site lies within the village Conservation Area. **Policy P7/6** of the County Structure Plan 2003 requires development to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment, whilst **Policy EN30** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 requires new development in a Conservation Area to either preserve or enhance the character of the area.

Consultation

7. **Little Shelford Parish Council** objected to the original application stating:

“Considerable increase in size from original footprint of existing building. Poorly designed with little consideration of its surroundings. Directly opposite two buildings of historical and architectural interest Grade II. Will be overbearing and have a major impact on street scene.”

The comments of the Parish Council in respect of the amended plans are awaited and will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting.

8. **The Conservation Manager** objected to the original application and recommended that a number of changes be made to the plans, namely:
 - Omit the raised ridge detail (which gives the dwelling a busy appearance) and replace catslide roofs to dormers with lead flat roofs to give the house more of an ‘Arts and Crafts’ feel;
 - First floor walls to central bay over front door set vertically rather than inclined;
 - Replace central bay on rear elevation with a paired dormer in order to give the building more of a horizontal emphasis and make the verandah more prominent;
 - Revise gable vent to roof and fenestration on north-west elevation.

The Conservation Manager’s comments in respect of the amended plans will be reported verbally at the Committee Meeting.

9. **The Trees and Landscape Officer** objected to the original application due to the proximity of the dwelling and parking/turning area to the two horse chestnut trees. Indeed the tree adjacent to the south-east boundary would have been lost as a result of the development. The amendments have sought to address both elements and the further comments of the Trees Officer will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting.
10. **The Chief Environmental Health Officer** raises no objections in principle although does express concerns about potential noise disturbance to residents during the construction period. As such, it is recommended that a condition restricting hours of use of power operated machinery be applied to any planning consent.

Representations

11. Letters of objection have been received from 5 local residents, Nos. 38, 42, 65, 67 and 71 High Street. The main points raised are:

- The development may need to be moved nearer to the boundary with No. 42 in order to accommodate the dwelling on the site;
- Some trees are not shown on the plans. The loss of the horse chestnut tree adjacent to the boundary with No. 42 would affect the character of the Conservation Area and the amenities of local residents. Full landscaping details should be included with the application;
- The replacement dwelling is too large and too high;
- The front windows of No. 42 would be overlooked by windows to the side and rear of the proposed dwelling;
- The garden room adjacent to No. 42 could be a source of noise disturbance to the occupiers of this neighbouring dwelling;
- The dwelling would cut out sunlight to No. 38;
- Nos. 65 and 71 opposite would be overlooked;
- The creation of a new access in a centralised position at the front of the site would open up views of the dwelling from No. 65 opposite thereby affecting the outlook from this property;
- The design of the dwelling is out of character with the style of the village. The front elevation is too fussy and has too much glazing;
- Any movement of the building line forwards should be resisted. The dwelling should be set back, in line with No. 42.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

12. The key issues in relation to this application are:
 - The impact of the development upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
 - Residential amenity;
 - Impact on trees
13. The site lies within the village framework where policies state that the principle of replacing the existing dwelling is acceptable providing the site in its present form does not form an essential part of village character and providing development is sympathetic to the character and amenities of the surrounding area.
14. The plot is presently occupied by a brick bungalow and the Conservation Manager has raised no objections in principle to its demolition and subsequent replacement. The Parish Council and a number of local residents have expressed concerns on the basis that the development is out of keeping with the character of the area. There is a large variety in the style and period of development in the vicinity of the site including thatched cottages opposite, a modern brick dwelling to the south-east and a render/tile property to the north-west. Policies require development in a Conservation

Area to preserve/enhance the character of the area rather than to replicate the historic architecture in the vicinity. The Conservation Manager did consider the original scheme to be overly fussy and to detract from the character of the area and a number of revisions to the design of the dwelling were therefore requested. The majority of the requested changes have been incorporated into the amended plans (ie – omission of raised ridge detail, addition of flat lead roofs to dormers, alteration to fenestration, revised gable detail and omission of central bay to rear). The design of the central bay to the front elevation, however, has not been altered as the applicants agent considers this element to be in keeping with the overall design of the building. Subject to no adverse comments from the Conservation Manager in respect of these amendments, I am satisfied that the development would not detract from the character of the area.

15. Concerns have been raised on the basis that the replacement dwelling would be sited closer to the front of the plot than the existing property. Whilst this is the case, the replacement property would not be sited any further forward than the garage/barn within the garden area of No. 38 just beyond the north-western boundary of the site. There would still be a 9.5 metre gap between the garage and the front of the site and I am satisfied that it would not be unduly prominent in the street scene. Indeed, setting the building deep into the site as suggested would be very alien to the character of the area which is predominated by dwellings set well forward on their plots.
16. The original proposal resulted in the loss of a horse chestnut tree adjacent to the south-east boundary of the site and potentially compromised a mature horse chestnut within the front garden. It is essential to the character of the area and to the amenities of the adjoining dwelling to the south-east (No. 42) that these trees be retained. Within the amended plans, the dwelling has been sited further away from the horse chestnut in the front garden and its rear element redesigned in order to ensure the retention of the other horse chestnut. I await the comments of the Trees Officer in respect of the feasibility of retaining both trees.
17. The replacement dwelling includes a first floor bedroom/ensuite window in the south east elevation looking towards the front of the adjoining dwelling, No. 42 High Street. I consider this relationship to be acceptable, firstly as the adjacent horse chestnut would provide adequate screening between this window and the front of No. 42 for the majority of the year and, secondly, the distance between this window and windows in the front elevation of No. 42 is in excess of 20 metres. I am also satisfied that first floor windows and balcony in the rear elevation of the new dwelling would not result in a significant degree of overlooking of No. 42's rear garden/patio area which is sited some 25 metres away and which is shielded by an existing 2.5 – 3 metre high extension on the north-west side of the dwelling.
18. Residents on the opposite side of the High Street have objected to the application on the basis that they would be overlooked by the development. Whilst this is true, again the distance between habitable windows (at 22 metres) is such that a refusal could not be substantiated on this basis. I am also satisfied that the replacement dwelling is sited sufficiently far away from the front elevation of No. 38 High Street (to the north-west) to avoid any undue loss of light or outlook.
19. The application involves the replacement of the existing access with a new centralised access. Conditions should be applied to any consent requiring the closure of the existing access after the creation of the new access and also the provision/maintenance of on-site turning and parking. In addition, a landscaping

condition should be applied to any consent to ensure that the existing opening is gapped up with a hedge to match the existing hedge along the frontage of the site.

20. Given the location of the site within the Conservation Area, the need to retain trees on the site and the spacious nature of residential development in the vicinity, particularly to the northwest, I consider that the one-for-one replacement at a low density is appropriate.

Recommendation

21. Subject to no objections being received from the Conservation and Trees Officers in respect of the amended plans, delegated powers are sought to approve the application subject to the following conditions:
- 1) Standard Condition A (Reason A);
 - 2) Sc5a – Details and samples of materials (Reason – To ensure that the development does not detract from the character of the Conservation Area);
 - 3) Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
 - 4) Sc52 – Implementation of Landscaping (Rc52);
 - 5) Sc60 – Boundary treatment (Rc60);
 - 6) Sc56 – Protection of trees during construction (Rc56);
 - 7) Sc58 – Protection of front boundary hedge except at point of access (Rc58);
 - 8) During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions (Rc26);
 - 9) Para C3a & b – Permanent turning and parking to be provided before the occupation of the dwelling (Rc10);
 - 10) Para B6 – Closure of existing access (Rc10);
 - 11) Para B10 – Before the occupation of the dwelling, hereby permitted, the new access from the existing highway shall be laid out and constructed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority after consultation with the Local Highway Authority (Rc10);

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:** P1/3 (Sustainable design in built development) and P7/6 (Historic Built Environment);
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** SE5 (Development in Infill Villages) and EN30 (Development in/adjacent to Conservation Areas)
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:
 - Neighbour impact including issues of loss of light, loss of outlook and overlooking;
 - Visual impact on the locality;
 - Impact upon the character of the Conservation Area.
 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. Should driven pile foundations be proposed, then before works commence, a statement of the method for construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.
2. Before the existing property is demolished, a Demolition Notice will be required from the Building Control Department establishing the way in which the property will be dismantled, including any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains and establishing hours of working operation.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: County Structure Plan 2003, South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, File Ref: S/1159/04/F.

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