

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 3rd November 2004
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/1266/04/RM - Willingham
Erection of Six dwellings at 23 Green Street for Meldire Ltd.**

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Members will visit this site on Monday 1st November 2004

Site and Proposal

1. The site is located to the east of Green Street, occupying 0.22ha. An existing two-storey house until recently stood on the frontage, and a collection of former farm buildings sited to the rear have recently been demolished. There is an existing vehicular access to Green Street. The site is bounded by a house and farmyard to the north, by open land to the east, and by two-storey dwellings and an antiques shop in Green Street and Rampton End to the south.
2. This application for approval of reserved matters of siting and design and external appearance of buildings was received on 22nd June 2004 and was last amended on 20th September. The application proposes the demolition of the existing house and buildings, and the erection of six houses and a three-bay car port. Plots 1 and 2 are a pair of semi-detached houses fronting Green Street, each with 2 bedrooms. They have been carefully designed to have the appearance of a single detached dwelling, with a single front door facing Green Street, and the second main entrance placed on the side elevation. The ridge height is shown to be 8.8m, and the design includes a chimney. The proposed materials are buff brickwork with cast stone details to sills and lintels, and a natural slate roof. To the rear, the layout shows a detached house with 4 bedrooms on Plot 3, 8.6m to ridge with a single-storey wing, to be finished in red brickwork and feather edged boarding, and Norfolk pantile roof. Plots 4 and 5 are a pair of linked detached houses 9.0m to ridge, each with 5 bedrooms. These are to be clad in feather edged timber boarding, with Norfolk pantile roof. They have the appearance of converted traditional timber farm buildings. On Plot 6, a similar approach to design and appearance has been taken to the proposed detached 4-bedroomed house.
3. The agent has indicated by letter dated 26th July that the northern boundary will be provided with a brick wall to height 1.8m to finish in line with the proposed rear dwelling on Plot 1, a distance of 13m. The remainder of the boundary would be marked with close-boarded fencing of the same height. The agent has responded to concerns raised by the occupier of 21 Green Street. He states that the close-boarded fence should be adequate in terms of health and safety on this boundary.
4. Amended plans stamped 27th August show revisions to the dwelling on Plot 6 so as to remove overlooking of adjacent properties from first floor windows, and to provide obscure glazing to one window in no 21 Rampton End at the developer's expense in order to improve privacy to each property.

5. The Local Planning Authority was advised on 16th October that the frontage dwelling had been demolished.

Planning History

6. Outline planning permission for six dwellings was granted on 17th March 2003 reference **S/0023/03/O**. The siting, design, appearance of dwellings and the landscaping of the site were matters reserved for subsequent approval. The application was accompanied by an illustrative layout plan that showed a pair of semi-detached houses on the frontage, and three linked-detached houses at the rear of the site, and a sixth detached house positioned centrally adjacent to the northern boundary. The rear garden/site boundary coincided with the position of the village framework boundary.
7. An earlier application for outline planning permission to erect five dwellings was refused on 6th November 2002 reference **S/1458/02/O**. The reasons for refusal included inefficient use of land and extension of development outside the village framework.
8. An application for outline planning permission for the development of five dwellings on land to the rear of 17-19A Green Street to the north of the site is currently under consideration – **S/0710/04/O**. This proposes development in depth in a similar way to the current proposal.

Planning Policy

9. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: **Policy P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development). A high standard of design and sustainability for all new development will be required which provides a sense of place and:
 - responds to the local character of the built environment;
 - is integrated with adjoining landscapes;
 - pays attention to the detail of forms, massing, textures, colours and landscaping.
10. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: **Policy HG10** (Housing Mix and Design) requires residential developments to have a mix of units making the best use of the site. The design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape.
11. **Policy HG11** (Backland Development) – Development to the rear of existing properties will not be permitted where development would: 1) be overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing of an existing residential property, 2) be noisy or disturbing to an existing residential property through use of its access, 3) give rise to highway dangers through use of its access, 4) be out of character with the pattern of development in the vicinity.

Consultations

12. **Willingham Parish Council** – objects to the proposal on the grounds that:
 - the demolition of 23 Green Street would have a devastating effect on the street scene and traditional East Anglian character of Green Street;

- the development would necessitate yet another T-junction on what is already a dangerous road;
 - the development appears to contravene policy HG11
13. The Parish Council requests that the applicant should enter into a S106 Agreement if approval is granted. The Council urges that the application should be considered together with application S/0710/04/O at 17-19A Green Street. The Clerk advised the case officer of the demolition of the frontage dwelling on 16th October.
 14. **The Chief Environmental Health Officer**- recommends conditions to reduce disturbance to nearby occupiers from construction noise.
 15. **Ecology Officer**- requests bird and bat boxes to be installed in the new development.
 16. **Highway Authority** – is satisfied with the amended scheme, provided that the applicant enters into a Section 106 Agreement for the provision of off-site works prior to the occupation of any of the residential units.
 17. **County Archaeologist** – advises that the site lies within the medieval core of the village. The recommended condition to require a programme of investigation has been attached to the outline planning permission.

Representations

18. Letters of concern have been received from three adjoining residents.
 - a. The occupier of 21 Rampton End is concerned about overlooking from first floor windows at Plot 6.
 - b. The occupiers of 23 Rampton End are concerned about the demolition of the existing dwelling at 23 Green Street, which they consider should be converted to provide two dwellings. The house was formerly occupied by Dennis Jeeps, a prominent local historian, and it would be a bitter irony if no trace remained of someone who did so much to record the village's past.
 - c. The occupier of 21A Rampton End is concerned about the removal of trees/hedges on the southern boundary of the site which may affect his existing privacy. He is also concerned about possible noise disturbance during the construction period.
 - d. The occupiers of 21 Green Street (north of the site) are concerned about the loss of the existing brick building that formed part of their boundary with a timber fence. Their property is a working farm, and they are concerned about its security. They are concerned that a fence could quickly fall into disrepair or could be damaged by farm vehicles. Also, a screen wall would be more effective at protecting future residents from the noise of tractor and lorry movements close to proposed rear gardens. He has reiterated his concerns following the amended proposals that show a brick wall for the first 13m adjacent to the farm entrance, which he considers to be insufficient. He requires a more secure, quieter and permanent boundary along the whole length of 85 metres.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

19. The main issues are:
- a. the loss of the existing dwelling at 23 Green Street;
 - b. the siting, design and appearance of the new dwellings;
 - c. boundary treatments;
 - d. highway safety.

Loss of 23 Green Street

20. The indicative layout plan to the outline planning permission showed this dwelling to be replaced by a pair of semi-detached dwellings. In addition the application quite specifically proposed the demolition of the dwelling. The submitted details accord with this principle. The dwelling does not enjoy any special protection, as it is not listed nor does it lie within the conservation area. In my opinion, there is no persuasive ground to have required the retention of this dwelling, in these circumstances, as part of this reserved matters application.

Siting, design and appearance of the new dwellings

21. The Parish Council has raised a concern that the proposal is unacceptable backland development contrary to Policy HG11. This aspect was carefully considered at the outline stage when planning permission was granted, having regard to the criteria in this policy. I consider the current proposal to be in accordance with the outline consent in terms of the siting of development.
22. The design and layout of the dwellings successfully draws from the style of traditional farm buildings, with three units having timber cladding and pantile roof. There will not be undue loss of privacy, overshadowing or overbearing of adjacent properties, and I consider the parking provision to be adequate. I assess that the proposal conforms to Policies P1/3 and HG10.

Boundary treatments

23. The proposal shows new fencing on the southern boundary with Rampton End, together with removal of a section of alder, which was reported to Members when considering the outline permission. On the northern boundary, the adjoining farmer at 21 Green Street has requested a continuous wall, amounting to a length of 85 metres. In my opinion this is an onerous requirement and is not essential to the maintenance of privacy and safety on this boundary. The provision of a boundary wall at the entrance is, in my opinion, sufficient in this case.

Highway Safety

24. The Parish Council has raised concerns about the principle of a junction onto Green Street at this point, presumably referring to increased use of the existing access, following improvement works. This means of access was accepted by Members when approving the outline permission, and has been assessed as acceptable by the Highway Authority. A condition of the outline planning permission requires the access from Green Street to be laid out and constructed before the use is commenced. The applicant will be made aware of the need to enter into a highways Section 106 Agreement to ensure that improvements to Green Street are carried out prior to occupation of any dwelling by way of an informative.

Recommendation

25. Approve reserved matters for siting, design and external appearance of the buildings in accordance with amended plans franked 27th August and 20th September, and in accordance with outline planning permission dated 17th March 2003, reference S/0023/03/O, then:
Approval.

26. Additional Conditions

1. Standard Condition 5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Reason 5a ii);
2. Sc5f – Details of materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas (Reason – To minimise disturbance to adjoining residents);
3. Sc23 – Obscure glazing to windows at first floor level in the south elevation of the development on Plot 6 (Rc23);
4. Before development commences, details of provision of appropriate nesting boxes for birds and bats shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme and shall thereafter be maintained. (Reason - In order to provide nesting opportunities for the native bat and bird populations).

Informatives

27. Outstanding conditions – the following conditions attached to outline planning permission S/0023/03/O are required to be discharged before development can commence:

- a. (landscaping);
- b. (pile foundation details);
- c. (soil survey and decontamination);
- d. (archaeological investigation);

28. The applicant is reminded that the land to the east of the application site (rear of Plots 4, 5 and 6) is not the subject of this planning permission and should not be brought into domestic garden use or other development without the prior grant of a further planning permission for this purpose.
and informatives from S/0022/03/O.

29. The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirement that the off-site works will need to be the subject of a Highways Section 106 Agreement with the Local Highways Authority.

30. Reasons for Approval

1. The 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):
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: HG10** (Housing Mix and Design).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
- Residential amenity including noise disturbance and overlooking issues
 - Highway safety
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Design and appearance of development.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Planning permission S/0023/03/O; Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003; South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 and Reserved Matters application S/1266/04/RM.

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