

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

S/1970/04/F - Fowlmere

Erection of Dwelling and Conversion of Barn into Garage/Carport/Workshop and Store following Demolition of 2 Existing Dwellings, Mill Farm, Fowlmere Road, Melbourn in the Parish of Fowlmere for Plum Developments

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Site and Proposal

1. This application, registered on 22nd September 2004, seeks consent for the erection of a dwelling and conversion of an existing barn into a garage/carport/workshop and store following demotion of 2 existing dwellings at Mill Farm, Fowlmere Road, Melbourn, in the Parish of Fowlmere.
2. The site extends to approximately 0.3ha and is bounded to the south by the River Shep. To the north the site abuts the Fowlmere Road and to the east agricultural land and buildings. The existing bungalows, which the applicant has calculated as having a combined floor area of 167m², are located at the southern end of the site.
3. The proposed replacement single storey dwelling, which will be located towards the centre of the site, north of the existing buildings, measures 12.3m x 15.4m (189m²). The dwelling has a ridge height of 4.2m. The external walls will be finished with an insulated smooth white render and the roof will comprise a long strip raised seam weathered zinc system.
4. Existing low former piggery buildings at the northern end of the site are to be demolished with the exception of a clay block barn in the centre of the existing buildings, which will be retained and renovated to provide garage space and storage.
5. Access to the existing bungalows is to the north of the River Shep. That access will be closed and the new dwelling accessed from the north.
6. A letter from the applicant submitted in support of the proposal is attached as Appendix 1. The letter refers to accompanying photographs, which have not been reproduced with this report but can be viewed as part of the background papers and will be available for inspection at the meeting.

Planning History

7. At the September meeting (Item 6) consent was refused following a site visit by Members for a replacement dwelling with a floor area of 215m² on the grounds that the proposal was out of scale and character with the dwellings it was intended to replace (**S/1597/04/F**).
8. At the same meeting Members granted consent of the conversion of existing buildings fronting the road to the west to a single dwelling. (**S/0411/04/F**).

9. In 2003 outline consent was granted for a replacement dwelling on this site (**Ref S/0499/03/O**), although at that time the site did not include the existing agricultural buildings and related to the demolition of one rather than both the existing dwellings.
10. An application earlier this year for the erection of a new dwelling with a floor area of 273 sq metres following demolition of the two existing bungalows (**Ref S/0512/04/F**) was refused on the grounds that the scale of the proposed replacement dwelling does not reflect that of the existing dwellings.

Planning Policy

11. **Policy HG15** of the of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (“The Local Plan”) states that proposals for a replacement of a dwelling in the countryside will be permitted where the proposed replacement dwelling is in scale and character with the dwelling it is intended to replace and; the proposed replacement dwelling would not materially increase the impact of the site on the surrounding countryside. The text to the policy suggests a maximum enlargement of 15%.

Consultation

12. **Fowlmere Parish Council** recommends refusal. “The Committee recommends refusal of this application as the proposal is contrary to planning policies regarding new buildings in the open countryside – have to be capable of conversion and not demolition. The meeting also feels that the style is completely out of tune with the area.”
13. The **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommends conditions restricting the hours of operation of power driven machinery during the period of construction and demolition, and requiring an investigation of the site to assess any contamination.
14. The **Environment Agency** recommends conditions in respect of foul and surface water drainage and that the site is subject of an investigation of contamination as well, as putting forward safeguarding comments.
15. The **Conservation Manager**, who was contacted by the applicant prior to the submission of the application, concludes that the design of the new dwelling will be a very significant improvement to the site and its surroundings, which will also add a piece of good contemporary architecture to the District. He states that it is from works such as these that our future architectural heritage will be drawn and therefore supports the application.

Representations

16. None received at the time of writing the report

Planning Comments – Key Issues

17. Members will need to consider whether this application addresses the reason for refusal of the earlier application namely whether the replacement dwelling is out of scale or character with the dwellings it is intended to replace.
18. The proposed dwelling has a gross floor area of approximately 189m² which compares to the 167m² for the existing bungalows, an increase of approximately 13%, which is within the policy guidelines. The proposed ridge height at 4.2m

remains low and as a result I am of the view that the proposal will not materially change the impact of the site on the surrounding countryside

19. When outline consent was granted for a replacement dwelling in 2003 the site did not include the range of piggery buildings at the northern end of the site. These buildings are now included within the application and shown for removal, with the exception of the clay block building which will be adapted to provide garaging and storage space. In my view the removal of these buildings represents a considerable visual gain to the area which was not secured through the original consent.
20. Although the applicant has chosen to use modern materials, which, in terms of the roof may not reflect adjacent buildings, I do not consider that there will be significant views of the dwelling outside of the site and therefore find this approach acceptable. Members will note the comments of the Conservation Manager who supports the design on the basis that it will be a very significant improvement to the site and its surroundings, and which will also add a piece of good contemporary architecture to the area
21. The retention and conversion of the existing clay block building to provide garaging and storage space is acceptable.

In my view the proposal is acceptable. Conditions attached to the earlier outline consent requiring the submission of a habitat enhancement scheme should be included on any new consent.

Recommendations

22. That the application be approved subject to safeguarding conditions.

Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: HG15 (Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:

Visual impact on the locality (including style of dwelling)

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Planning Application Files S/1970/04/F; S/1597/04/F; S/0512/04/F; S/0511/04/F and S/0499/03/O

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