

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th January 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/0266/04/RM - Gamlingay
Erection of Four Houses each with Annexe, Land off West Road,
for Potton Developments**

**Recommendation: Approval
Date for Determination: 12th April 2004**

Site and Proposal

1. This application, as amended by drawings received on 29 October 2004, seeks reserved matters for the siting, design, means of access and landscaping of four detached houses, each with an annexe, on a 0.497ha site that formerly comprised part of the garden land to 24 West Road, a large detached house to the south of the site. The site drops in level significantly from east to west.
2. The site is partially screened by trees and conifers on the north and west boundary with the rear gardens of detached houses in Fairfield. To the east is an existing bungalow, also built on part of the original garden of 24 West Road. Access to the proposed dwellings is from West Road as an extension of the existing private driveway serving this bungalow.
3. As amended the application proposes the erection of three four bedroom detached houses, each with an attached annexe which provides an additional bedroom, and attached double garage. The fourth dwelling, adjacent the existing bungalow, is a three bedroom detached house, with an attached double garage. The maximum ridge height of the dwellings varies between 7.5m and 8m. Any two-storey elements of the dwellings are set a minimum of 15m from the boundaries of properties in Fairfield.
4. Materials proposed are yellow stock bricks and terracotta clay roof tiles. Finished floor levels are provided.
5. The density of the development is 8 dwellings per hectare.

Planning History

6. Outline planning consent was originally granted for residential development of the site on 23rd April 1996 (**Ref S/1780/95/O**). In December 1998 an application to allow a further period for submission of reserved matters was approved (**Ref S/1839/98/F**). An additional condition attached to that consent restricted development of the site to a maximum of 2 dwellings to comply with Local Plan policy.
7. In February 2001 consent was granted for variation of conditions to allow a further period for the submission of reserved matters and to allow the erection of four dwellings on the site, reflecting a change in Development Plan policies (**Ref S/2229/00/F**).

Planning Policy

8. **Policy SE3** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (“The Local Plan”) identifies Gamlingay as a Limited Rural Growth Settlement where residential development and redevelopment of up to 30 dwellings can be permitted subject to specified criteria. Development should provide an appropriate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and affordability and should achieve a maximum of 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
9. **Policy SE9** of the Local Plan states that development on the edges of villages should be sympathetically designed and landscaped to minimise the impact of development on the countryside.
10. **Policy HG7** of the Local Plan sets out the Councils policy in respect of affordable housing provision on sites within village frameworks. In villages with a population of over 3000, such as Gamlingay, the requirement to provide affordable housing affects schemes of more than 10 dwellings only.
11. **Policy HG10** of the Local Plan requires residential developments to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes and affordability, making best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs. The design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of local townscape and landscape.
12. **Policy P5/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“The County Structure Plan”) states that average densities of new housing development will need to be increased across the area in order to maximise efficiency in the use of sites. Densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable. Local Planning Authorities should seek to maximise the use of land by applying the highest density possible which is compatible with maintaining local character.

Consultations

13. **Gamlingay Parish Council** recommends refusal of the application as amended. “The Parish Council has strong objections to the density and design of these units, which are not in keeping with Gamlingay. Development is contrary to local plan policies on density and offers no affordable housing.
14. The **Chief Environmental Health Officer** requests a condition restricting the hours of operation of power driven machinery during the period of construction and comments in respect of the use of driven pile foundations and the burning of waste.
15. The **Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board** comments that although the site is outside the Board’s drainage district, the ditches adjacent to the site discharge directly to the Board’s watercourse, Millbridge Brook. This brook is liable to flood during intense rainstorms, hence the Board would be reluctant to accept the discharge of any additional surface water into the watercourse and, therefore, the proposal to use soakaway drainage would be preferred option. It is essential, however, that the ground conditions are investigated and, if found unsatisfactory, the soakaways constructed in accordance with the latest Building Research Establishment Digest. In the event that ground conditions are unsatisfactory, any direct discharge to the nearby watercourse must be limited to the greenfield runoff equivalent and will require the Board’s prior consent.

Representations

16. Letters from the occupiers of 8, 10 and 12 Fairfield were received in respect of the original scheme objecting on the following grounds.
 - Concern about subsidence. Some properties in Fairfield have been underpinned twice in the past 20 years. It is questioned as to who will be liable if the building work adversely affects the subsidence that has been evident in the past.
 - Attention is drawn to an adjoining stream, which has flooded and been a factor in causing some of the difficulties of earlier years and any development may well exacerbate them in the future.
 - If development proceeds then a strong 6ft fence should be erected between the new plots and existing properties to protect both privacy and security. There should be a covenant precluding the planting of conifers as such trees have been contributory to past subsidence troubles.
 - Are all the existing trees to be retained?
17. The occupier of 8 Fairfield has written stating that the amended drawings do not overcome the concerns.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

18. This application seeks approval of reserved matters and therefore the key issues to be considered must be restricted to siting, design, means of access, and landscaping.
19. Outline planning consent exists for the erection of four dwellings on this site. Although I note the concerns of Gamlingay Parish Council about the density of the scheme it is not something that can be addressed under this reserved matters application. Affordable housing was not required at the outline stage and in any event would only apply to a development of more than 10 dwellings as the population of Gamlingay exceeds 3000.
20. As originally submitted the scheme proposed the erection of 4 identical dwellings, each with four bedrooms and an attached annexe. The revised scheme has reduced the size of the unit adjacent to the existing bungalow and as a result the relationship between these two dwellings is now satisfactory as well as improving the mix of units within the scheme.
21. The relationship with existing dwellings in Fairfield is acceptable.
22. The design of the proposed houses does not reflect the character of existing dwellings in the area, however the site is reasonably self-contained with modern estate houses to the north and west, bungalows to the east, and a large detached house to the south. In my view it would be difficult to sustain an objection on design grounds in this case. The precise colour of tiles to be used for the roofs should be the subject of further discussion. In my view a dark tile would be more appropriate here.

23. The outline consent requires the submission of a scheme for surface water drainage. The comments of the Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board can be passed on to the applicant.
24. Although the application form states that approval is sought for landscaping insufficient details have been submitted to allow that matter to be dealt with at this stage. Treatment of the site boundaries will be particularly important. Existing trees are shown as being retained.

Recommendation

25. That reserved matters consent is granted in respect of the siting, design and means of access to four dwellings, subject to compliance with outstanding conditions on outline consent reference S/2229/00 dated 13th February 2001 and to additional condition:
 1. Sc5a - Details of materials for roofs (Rc5aii).

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:**
 - SE3** (Development in Limited Rural Growth Settlements)
 - SE9** (Village Edges)
 - 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
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Density

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning files Ref. S/0266/04/RM: S/2229/00/F; S/1839/98/F and S/1780/95/O

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