

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

1 September 2010

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services)/
Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

**S/0457/10/F – BASSINGBOURN CUM KNEESWORTH
Demolition of Existing Bungalow and erection of 9 New Dwellings,
At 155 The Causeway for NDR Contracting Ltd**

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 19 May 2010

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the officers recommendation of delegated approval conflicts with the recommendation of refusal received from Bassingbourn Parish Council.

Site and Proposal

1. This full application, as amended by drawings franked 9 July 2010 proposes the erection of 9 houses following the demolition of an existing bungalow on a 0.31ha area of land at 155 The Causeway, Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth.
2. No 155 is a detached bungalow set to the west side of plot of land measuring 30m x 100m to the north of The Causeway. To the west is a semi-detached house with a long garden, to the west of which is the Orchard Close development. To the east of the site is No 157 The Causeway, one of two modern detached houses. To the rear of the site is land associated with a commercial site behind properties in The Causeway and Orchard Close. Opposite the site in The Causeway is open agricultural land.
3. The application, as amended, proposes the erection of 9 new houses, all of which will be served from a central access road. The existing bungalow is to be demolished. The new houses comprise five 2-bedroom units, one 3-bedroom unit, and three 4-bedroom units. Three of the 2-bedroom units are proposed as affordable units.
4. The layout comprises a detached 4-bedroom house fronting The Causeway, either side of the new access road (Plots 1 and 2). Parking areas are provided at the front of the dwellings, but are accessed from the new roadway and not direct from The Causeway. There is space at the front of each property for additional landscaping. These plots have a ridge height of 8m.
5. Plot 3 is a 4-bedroom detached house sited to the west of the new access road, to the rear of Plot 1. Plot 4 is a 3-bedroom house sited to the east of the access road, to the rear of Plot 1. Both have ridge height of 8m and each is provided with two off-street parking spaces.



singbourn

orks

SITE

27.5m

ORCHARD CLOSE

THE CAUSEWAY

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Centre = 534261 E 244412 N

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6. Plots 5-9 are a terrace of five 2-bedroom houses positioned across the rear of the site at the head of the new access road. Three of these dwellings are offered as affordable dwellings. These units have a ridge height of 7.5m. A total of 9 car parking spaces are provided for these units at the head of the cul-de-sac.
7. Density of the scheme is 29dph.
8. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, Environmental Desk Top Study and a Bat Survey.

Planning History

9. There is no relevant planning history.

Planning Policy

10. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007:**

Policy ST/6 – Group Villages

11. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Polices adopted July 2007:**

DP/1 – Sustainable Development

DP/2 – Design of New Development

DP/3 – Development Criteria

DP/4 – Infrastructure and New Developments

DP/7 – Development Frameworks

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/1 – Energy Efficiency

TR/2 – Car and Cycle Parking Standards

12. **Open Space in New Developments SPD** – adopted January 2009.

13. **Biodiversity SPD** – adopted July 2009.

14. **District Design Guide SPD** – adopted March 2010.

15. **Affordable Housing SPD** – adopted March 2010.

Consultation

16. **Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth Parish Council** recommends refusal of the application as amended. "I have been asked to advise you that due to recent information from Anglian Water regarding the existing sewer system being unable to cope with additional building, the Parish Council has now decided not to support the application.

17. Comments made on the revised plans were that footpaths were not shown on each side of the road and that there would be a light problem for 157 The Causeway which might be solved by the rotation of plot 2.'
18. The Parish Council has indicated that it would want compensation for the loss of the open space if the planning application was given approval.
19. The Parish Council recommended approval of the application as originally submitted but expressed concern over the pressure on existing infrastructure. It also suggested that with the additional traffic generated by the development on a 40mph road, consideration be given to reducing the speed limit to 30mph
20. The **Local Highway Authority** has not raised an objection in principle to the application and comments that the scheme as amended will have no significant impact on the public highway.
21. Conditions will be required in respect of the provision of visibility splays; method statement relating to the process of demolition and construction in so far as it may impact on the public highway; adequate drainage to prevent surface water run-off onto the adjacent public highway; no unbound material within 6m of the highway boundary and; the provision and retention of parking spaces.
22. The **Housing Development and Enabling Manager** commented in respect of the application as originally submitted that 4 of the 9 dwellings proposed had been offered up as affordable. The demand for 2 bed houses in South Cambridgeshire is very high and therefore the unit type that has been identified as the affordable units were acceptable. The size and design of the units appeared acceptable and the applicant was in discussions with two registered providers in the District. There had been no discussions on tenure split but the preference in the SPD is for a 70/30 split in favour of rented.
23. Following further discussions with the applicant and the submission of viability appraisals for the scheme it has now been accepted that three two-bedroom units for shared ownership are acceptable in this case.
24. The **Councils' Section 106 Officer** has pointed out that the area of public open space shown on the original drawing does not satisfy the requirements of the SPD, as it is not sufficiently overlooked by family houses. Any off site contributions should be paid prior to the occupation of the fifth dwelling.
25. The development should make a contribution of £3,855.87 in respect of community facilities. The Bassingbourn Parish Plan identifies the demand for a village hall and therefore it is anticipated that this contribution could be used to fund a future facility or improve the availability/use of an existing facility.
26. The applicants' commitment to paying the required contribution towards the cost of waste receptacles and Section 106 monitoring.
27. The viability appraisal submitted by the applicant and it is accepted that the market housing mix needs to be revised in order to secure the provision of 3 affordable dwellings.
28. The **Environmental Health Officer** has recommended that conditions are attached to any consent restricting the hours of operation of power driven machinery during the construction process, and requiring details of any driven pile foundations.

29. Informatives should be attached regarding the requirement for a Demolition Notice and that there should be no bonfires or burning of waste on site during demolition and construction without prior permission.
30. The **Scientific Officer (Environmental Health)** has commented that he has considered the desktop study supplied and is satisfied that a condition relating to contaminated land investigation is not required.
31. The **Environment Agency** has confirmed that the site is located in Flood Zone 1 and therefore its standing advice applies in respect of flood risk and surface water drainage.
32. The **Landscapes Officer** comments in respect of the scheme as originally submitted, which at that time contained an area of open space within the site, that the area of play space should be relocated to a position where it is overlooked and a suggested alternative layout was provided. The space provided for parking in respect of Plots 1 and 2 seems excessive and more space could be provided for landscaping. Details of the treatment of the overrun strip of the access road should be provided to ensure it is appropriately planted.
33. The **Architectural Liaison Officer, Cambridgeshire Constabulary** noted in respect of the original submission, that the housing would comply with Level 3 Code for Sustainable Homes. There were no issues with the general layout of the site and the basic principles of secured by design could be adopted to the scheme.
34. The **Ecology Officer** accepts the findings of the bat survey.
35. The comments of **Anglian Water** will be reported at the meeting.

Representations

36. In respect of the application as originally submitted the occupiers of **157 The Causeway**, to the east of the site expressed the following concerns:
37. Construction of 9 dwellings on a confined plot appears excessive and will increase traffic onto an already busy road, especially during rush hour periods, when it is not uncommon to have cars queuing from the A1198 roundabout up to the application site.
38. There is concern about the impact of the dwelling on Plot 2 and it is suggested that it be changed to reflect more of a mirror image to No 157 to limit the enclosing effect to the area around the front door. The current layout will impede light entry into the lounge and hallway of No 157. With the proposed house being only 1m away from the boundary and the fact that No 157 has its lounge set back and kitchen set forward it will create a tunnel effect, causing loss of light and a very dark shady area. The impact will be worse in the afternoon and the new building will represent a somewhat overpowering and depressive sight on immediate exit from No 157.
39. The Design and Access Statement comments that there is no coherent vernacular design to houses fronting The Causeway, so uniformity should not be an issue in effecting a change of design. It is suggested that the final exit door for plot 2 should face the front door of no 157, or that there should be a different design of frontage with a central porch, similar to the design of properties at the rear. Either would allow

more light to No 157 and provide for greater security between properties through improved natural surveillance.

40. Proposed tree planting along the boundary of No 157 is of concern and tree selection will be critical to avoid excessive shading. It is already noted that the survey plan incorrectly identifies some incorrect tree species and sizes, which does not instil confidence. There is concern about the possibility of piled foundations being needed for the new properties and the possible impact on the foundations of No 157.
41. It is questioned whether there will be an electricity sub-station on the site, and if so where this would be sited, as there are concerns as to potential health implications.
42. Bats have roosted in No 155 and whilst having been in hibernation between October and April they have now reappeared. It is noted that bats are a species that is protected by law.
43. A further letter has been received in respect of the amended plans reiterating the objection to the house on plot 2, which it is felt should still be positioned as plot 1. This view is supported by the Parish Council. A sketch plan showing the suggested change is submitted. As senior citizens the cost of keeping lights on in the house in the daytime is not affordable, as well as not being eco-friendly given the Government's aim for an 80% reduction in CO₂ emissions in existing properties.
44. At a recent Parish Council meeting a nearby householder has reported flooding from the main sewer pipe that runs along The Causeway. Having contacted the local water authority the householder was advised that the existing sewer, being only a 6" pipe is already overburdened. It is now proposed that this will be added to be 9 more houses, in addition to the newly completed development of 20 affordable homes in The Causeway.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

45. The key issues to be considered in the determination of this application are: the principle of development, density and housing mix, appearance, affordable housing, access and parking, impact on street scene, neighbour amenity, open space provision and drainage.

Principle of Development

46. The site is within the village framework. Bassingbourn is identified in Policy ST/6 as a Group Village where residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings can be permitted, subject to compliance with other policies of the Plan. The scheme proposes a net increase of 8 dwellings and therefore the scale of the development is therefore acceptable in principle. The existing bungalow is of no architectural merit and therefore there is no objection to its demolition.
47. This end of the The Causeway is characterised by both frontage development and development in depth.

Density and Housing Mix

48. The density of development is 29dph which complies with the requirements of Policy HG/1. Although the recent changes to Planning Policy Statement 3 have removed the national minimum density figure of 30 dph there is still an obligation to make best

use of sites and I am therefore of the view that a density of 29dph on this site is acceptable providing the scheme satisfies all other necessary policies and criteria.

49. The scheme, as amended, provides a housing mix of five 2-bedroom houses (three of which are affordable units), one 3-bedroom houses and three 4-bedroom houses. To fully satisfy the market housing mix required by Policy HG/2 would require an additional 2 or 3-bedroomed house in lieu of a 4-bedroom one, however the applicant has provided figures on the viability of the scheme which indicate that such a change to the mix would prejudice the ability to bring forward three affordable dwellings as part of the scheme. The viability appraisal has been checked in detail by officers and accepted. I am therefore minded to accept the market housing mix as proposed as the alternative would be to accept a reduction in the number of affordable dwellings provided.

Affordable Housing

50. The scheme provides for 3 affordable dwellings for shared ownership, which equates to 40% of the net increase in the number of dwellings provided as a result of the development. The Housing Development and Enabling Manager confirms that the provision is acceptable, having regard to the viability appraisal submitted

Appearance

51. The existing dwellings in The Causeway have a mixed character, with the majority being two-storey properties. The proposed two storey houses on the application site have a different character again from the immediately adjacent properties, with balconies on the front elevation. I am of the view however that with the use of appropriate materials and landscaping at the front of the site that the new dwellings can be adequately assimilated into the surrounding area.

Access and Parking

52. The Local Highway Authority has raised no objection to the application. Whilst I note the local concern about the additional traffic that will be generated and its potential impact upon the existing traffic levels in The Causeway the Local Highway Authority has not raised a concern.
53. Adequate on plot parking is provided for the detached dwellings and sufficient parking provision has been made in front of the terrace of properties at the rear of the site to serve those dwellings.

Impact on Residential Amenity

54. As a result of the concerns expressed by the occupiers of 157 The Causeway the position of the house on Plot 2 has been revised by the applicant, with it being set a further 1m back into the site from the position originally proposed. The front of the proposed house is located 2m further forward than the front wall of No157, immediately adjacent to the boundary. No 155 has a lounge window in the front elevation, facing south and door into the hallway and kitchen window in the west facing elevation. Although there will be some loss of sunlight to these windows as a result of the proposed dwelling I am of the view that it will be unimpeded for the majority of the day. I am of the view that whilst the proposed dwelling on Plot 2 is close to the common boundary any overbearing impact will not be such as to warrant a refusal of the scheme as amended.

55. Having had regard to the further comments of the occupiers of No 157 The Causeway, which are supported by the Parish Council, I have asked the applicant again to consider handing the proposed house on Plot 2, which would further reduce any impact on No 157.

Drainage

56. Anglian Water did not originally comment on the application, however following the objection of the Parish Council to the revised scheme, based on drainage capacity grounds, I have written to Anglian Water for its formal comment on whether there is capacity in the existing foul drainage system to cater for the proposed development.
57. The applicant has supplied a letter from Anglian Water indicating that capacity does exist.
58. I will report the comments of Anglian Water at the meeting, however Policy DP/4 states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.

Open Space Provision

59. The scheme as originally submitted a small area of public open space was provided within the site to the rear of Plot 1. The area was not well overlooked by dwellings. In the revised scheme, in order to accommodate the increase in size from a 3-bedroom to a 4-bedroom house on Plot 3, the area of open space has been deleted from the scheme. As the scheme is for less than 10 dwellings the amount of on site informal open space is subject to negotiation. In my view the shape of the site and layout of the development means that it is difficult to provide a satisfactory area of open space on site, without compromising the relationship between dwellings or the number of dwellings to be constructed, which would impact on the level of affordable housing secured. In my view it is appropriate that an off-site open space contribution is secured and the applicant has agreed to this.

Other matters

60. The Ecology Officer has confirmed that he is satisfied with the bat survey that has been carried out and that no further work is required.
61. The applicant has confirmed his willingness to make the required contributions in respect of public open space, community facilities, waste receptacle provision and Section 106 monitoring fee.

Recommendation

That subject to confirmation from Anglian Water that the existing foul sewerage system has capacity to cater for the proposed development, that delegated powers be given to approve the application

Conditions (to include)

1. 3 year time limit
2. Details of materials
3. Landscaping scheme
4. Boundary Treatment

5. Foul and Surface water drainage scheme
6. Hours of working during construction
7. Highway Authority requirements,
8. Provision/maintenance of car parking spaces
9. Scheme for provision of affordable housing, public open space, and other contribution as required by Policy DP/4

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (adopted July 2007)
- Supplementary Planning documents
- Planning File Refs: S/0457/10/F

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