

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

11 May 2011

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

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**S/0538/11 - LONGSTANTON**  
**Bungalow following part demolition of barn - Pole Barn, Woodside**  
**for Mr & Mrs C Hicks**

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 11 May 2011**

**This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for  
determination on the request by the Local Member**

**Members will visit the site on 11th May 2011**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. The application site is located outside the designated Longstanton village framework, which runs along the rear boundaries of the properties on Thatchers Wood adjacent to the site. The site is not included within the Longstanton Conservation Area, the boundary of which runs along the front of the site. There are trees in the vicinity protected by Tree Preservation Orders. These include two in the frontage hedge and a number along the boundary with Thatchers Wood. The western side of Woodside is no longer a designated Important Countryside Frontage, although the eastern side remains as such. Opposite the site is the entrance to Manor Farmhouse, a grade II listed property.
2. The full application, received on 16th March 2011, seeks the erection of a bungalow following the part demolition of the barn. 60% of the barn would be removed along with the attached stable block. The bungalow would be located with a 5.5m separation from the barn. It would measure 2.7m and 5.3m to the eaves and roof ridge respectively, and have a length of 18m. Access would be gained from the existing access into the barn. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement and a Protected Species Survey.

### **Planning History**

3. A previous outline application for a bungalow and garage at the site was refused and dismissed at appeal (S/2481/04/O). The application was refused on grounds of its location outside the designated Longstanton village framework, impact on the frontage hedge and setting of the Important Countryside Frontage, and the lack of detail to ensure no harm to the Conservation Area or nearby trees. The Inspector concluded the scheme would be harmful to the character of the area.

## Policies

4. **Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2007: ST/6** Group Villages
5. **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (LDF DCP) 2007: DP/1** Sustainable Development, **DP/2** Design of New Development, **DP/3** Development Criteria, **DP/7** Development Frameworks, **SF/10** Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments, **SF/11** Open Space Standards, **NE/1** Energy Efficiency, **NE/6** Biodiversity, **NE/15** Noise Pollution, **CH/4** Development Within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building, **CH/5** Conservation Areas, **CH/7** Important Countryside Frontages & **TR/2** Car and Cycle Parking Standards.
6. **Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD, Open Space in New Developments SPD, Trees and Development Sites SPD, Listed Buildings SPD, District Design Guide SPD and the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal 2005.**
7. **Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions:** Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.
8. **Circular 05/2005 - Planning Obligations:** Advises that planning obligations must be relevant to planning, necessary, directly related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind and reasonable in all other respect.

## Consultations

9. **Longstanton Parish Council** recommends approval of the scheme and notes the development would enhance the area given the removal of the dilapidated barn, and no harm would be caused to neighbours. Protection measures for the trees and hedges should be put in place prior to construction.
10. The **Local Highways Authority** requests conditions regarding the location of the gates on site, pedestrian visibility splays, drainage from the site, and materials to be used for the driveway. An informative regarding works to the public highway is also recommended.
11. The **Council's Conservation Officer** recommends refusal of the scheme on grounds that the proposal would be detrimental to the setting of a Listed Building and would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This is because of the encroachment of a residential aspect into a rural area.
12. The **Council's Tree Officer** notes the individual ash and walnut trees to the front are protected with a Tree Preservation Order. These are within the hedge and would not be compromised by the development. However, tree protection details would be required to ensure construction activities do not compromise the trees and front hedge.

13. The **Council's Ecology Officer** notes no objection to the scheme. The Ecological Assessment proposes a barn owl box and swallow nest sites, and a condition to ensure they are brought forward is recommended.
14. **Cllr Riley** has requested the scheme be heard by Planning Committee. A number of changes have occurred since the previous refusal. The site is no longer a designated Important Countryside Frontage, and other consents have been granted nearby.

### **Representations**

15. The **Thatchers Wood Residents Company Ltd** support the scheme, and note that the dwelling would be hidden by the front screening. The barn is considered an eyesore and its removal would enhance the area.
16. 29 letters of support have been received from occupiers of nearby dwellings in the village. These note the improvements to the area, the sympathetic design, the reduction in farm-related trips to the site, the potential for reduced crime, the benefit to the setting of the Conservation Area and the grade II listed Manor, and the contribution of the applicant to the local community.

### **Planning Comments**

17. The key considerations for the determination of this application are the principle of development, impact upon the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area and Listed Building, and open space provision

#### *The Principle of Development*

18. The site lies outside the designated Longstanton village framework, and is therefore located in the countryside in policy terms. Policy ST/6 of the LDF CS 2007 allows residential development in Longstanton, but only within the designated frameworks shown in the Proposals Map. Policy DP/7 of the LDF DCP 2007 states that outside village frameworks, only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted. A private dwelling does not therefore meet these criteria. As a result, there is an in-principle objection to the proposal. In determining the previous application (S/2481/04/O), the Inspector stated, "there is a clear conflict with well established planning policy which aims to protect the character and appearance of the countryside". He adds "to continue the residential development between the two parts of the village without a break would be harmful to the character of the area in my view".
19. It is noted that since the appeal, the site has been removed from an area of Important Countryside Frontage through the Report of the Examination into the South Cambridgeshire Site Specifics Policies Development Plan Document dated 28th September 2009. The Inspector, in removing this designation, stated the barn and the adjacent dwellings along Thatchers Wood do not constitute a strong countryside character. This disagrees with the previous Inspector determining application S/2481/04/O. Despite the deletion of the Important Countryside Frontage designation, the barn itself still has a countryside character (although not a strong character). It is considered that the previous appeal decision retains significant weight for the determination of this application.

*Impact upon the Setting of the Adjacent Conservation Area and Listed Building*

20. As previously noted, the site is located adjacent to the Longstanton Conservation Area. The Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal notes “the west side of Woodside is outside the Conservation Area and includes some hay barns and storage with an ugly gate at the entrance. Any development on this site could have a significant impact on the character of the Conservation Area”. The previous application was in outline form only, and therefore there was insufficient detail at that time to judge the impact that may be caused.
21. The comments from the Conservation Officer are noted. The existing structure provides a very uncongenial setting for the Listed Building and the Conservation Area, and its part demolition is welcomed. However, the replacement with a residential dwelling would significantly alter the rural character of the street scene in the vicinity to become more urban. This would therefore have a negative effect on the setting of the Conservation Area and the Listed Building (Manor Farmhouse, a grade II listed dwelling located on the opposite side of Woodside), whose setting is the rural nature of the area. A new barn or agricultural building in this location is more appropriate if the existing barn is to be removed. The use of planning conditions is not considered to overcome the harm to the setting of these heritage assets.

*Open Space Provision*

22. The applicant has stated in their letter dated 4th April that they are willing to contribute towards open space provision, community facilities, the Section 106 monitoring fee and the provision of waste receptacles. A condition would ensure this provision. An informative is recommended with the reason for refusal to note these requirements.

*Other Matters*

23. The comments from the Trees Officer are noted. A condition regarding tree protection would be required with any approval. This does overcome a previous reason for refusal. The condition regarding nest boxes requested by the Ecology Officer would also be added to any approval to allow a biodiversity gain on site. A condition restricting hours of demolition and construction would also be required given the proximity to other dwellings.
24. The comments within the letters of support for the application are noted. With regard to trips to the site, these are likely to reduce given the reduction in agricultural storage on site. However, there appears to be no concern regarding noise disturbance or highway safety issues from the existing use of the site. A number of correspondences mention reduction in crime. The bungalow may prevent a number of incidents in the area. However, there are other mechanisms that could achieve this such as use of security cameras or alarm systems. A bungalow in itself is not considered to be necessary to prevent crime. The contribution of the applicant to the local community is noted. However, these matters do not provide a significant justification for the development, and they would have little weight in the decision making process. They are not considered to outweigh the harm caused by the proposal.

## **Decision/Recommendation**

Refusal, for the following reasons

1. The application site is located outside the designated Longstanton village framework, and in an area that provides a valuable break between the two built-up areas of the village. The existing barn, whilst not of any architectural merit, has a distinctly rural character that reinforces the fact this is a village rather than a housing area. No sufficient justification for a dwelling in this location has been provided. The development is therefore contrary to Policy DP/7, which states outside village frameworks, only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted.
2. The site of the proposed bungalow is outside the Longstanton Conservation Area, which runs to the front of the site. On the opposite side of Woodside is the grade II dwelling of Manor Farmhouse. The removal of the agricultural building is considered to enhance the setting of the heritage assets of the Conservation Area and Listed Building. However, the location of a new residential unit in this location is contrary to the rural character of the area, and would provide a more urban setting in this location. The application therefore would be detrimental to the setting of the Listed Building and would seriously detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The application is therefore contrary to Policy CH/4 of the LDF DCP 2007 which states planning permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect the curtilage or wider setting of a Listed Building, and Guidance within Policy HE10 of PPS5 (Planning for the Historic Environment), which states in determining development that affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities should treat favourably applications that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset; and to Policy CH/5 of the LDF DCP 2007, which states development proposals affecting Conservation Areas will be determined in line with national guidance, and Policy HE9 of PPS5 which states where the application will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance local planning authorities should refuse consent.

## **Informative**

The development results in a number of infrastructure requirements to meet the needs of the development in accordance with Policies DP/4 and SF/10 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007. Should financial contributions be proposed, this would total contributions of £2,244.90 towards the off-site provision and maintenance of open space, £378.88 towards the provision of indoor community facilities and £69.50 towards the provision of household waste receptacles. These figures are as calculated on the date of the decision and are index linked so may be subject to change when any payment is made. These contributions would be secured through a scheme (Section 106 Agreement). There would also be additional charges of £50 towards a S106 monitoring fee. The applicant's agent has confirmed, in writing, the client's acceptance to these requirements and this does not therefore form part of the reason for refusing the application.

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

- **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy.**
- **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.**
- **Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD, Open Space in New Developments SPD, Trees and Development Sites SPD, Listed Buildings SPD, District Design Guide SPD and the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal 2005.**
- **Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions.**
- **Circular 05/2005 - Planning Obligations.**
- **Planning File ref: S/0538/11 and S/2481/04/O.**

**Contact Officer:** Paul Derry - Senior Planning Officer  
01954 713159