

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4 April 2012

AUTHOR/S: Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

S/2377/11 – LITTLE GRANSDEN

Proposed 2 storey dwelling with associated parking for Tom Stroud

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 28th February 2012

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination, as the Officer recommendation is contrary to the response of Little Gransden Parish Council.

Site and Proposal

1. The site is located within the Little Gransden Development Framework, it sits very close to this framework edge and is approximately 130m from the restored Great Gransden Windmill. This is a grade II* building and not within the District boundaries. It is not within the designated Conservation Area. The site is currently unused and unkempt land that has an existing agricultural access that allows access to the field beyond. Two mature trees have since been removed from the northeast boundary but the remainder of the site is reasonably well screened by a mixture mature hedgerow and boundary fencing. An established hedge fronts Primrose Hill other than at the point of access. Open countryside is located to the north; a paddock is located to the northeast and residential development to the south and west.
2. The planning application dated 25th November 2011 proposes one detached two-storey dwelling, comprising 3 bedrooms. It proposes a modern design and is submitted with a Design and Access Statement and a Code for Sustainable Homes Assessment.

Planning History

3. S/1138/10/O – New Dwelling with Garaging and Access – Approved.

The outline consent saw the development scale no higher than 6m to the ridge, similar to that of No 47, which is a 1.5 storey dwelling with room in the roof space. Such a scale of dwelling was considered appropriate as future development would be subservient or the same height to the neighbouring property and could be designed to avoid overlooking.

Planning Policy

4. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007: Policy ST/7
5. Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007 (LDF) policies:

DP/1: Sustainable Development
 DP/2: Design of New Development
 DP/3: Development Criteria
 DP/4: Infrastructure and New Developments
 DP/6: Construction Methods
 DP/7: Development Frameworks
 HG/1: Density
 SF/10: Outdoor Play space, Informal Open Space and New Developments
 SF/11: Open Space Standards
 NE/1: Energy Efficiency
 NE/6: Biodiversity
 NE/15: Noise Pollution
 TR/1: Planning for More Sustainable Travel
 TR/2: Car and Cycle Parking Standards

6. South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Open Space in New Developments – Adopted January 2009
 Biodiversity – Adopted July 2009
 Landscape in New Developments – Adopted March 2010
 District Design Guide – Adopted March 2010

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. **Little Gransden Parish Council** – recommends refusal for the following reasons:

- Inadequate provision for sewerage – dwellings further down the hill have been adversely affected by blockages caused by newer developments that have linked into the existing sewer system
- The proposed design does not fit in with the village
- The proposed finish of the building would be too high
- There were concerns about the glass frontage
- There were concerns about potential glare from the glass frontage adversely affecting oncoming vehicles, particularly those emerging from Windmill Close onto Primrose Hill
- Councillors registered their disappointment that an oak tree and other mature trees had already been removed from the plot and requested that replacement trees be planted.

10. **Trees Officer** – No objections. The hedge should be retained other than the point of access. Landscaping conditions to be included if minded for approval.

11. **Environmental Health Manager** – No objections have been raised however, conditions regarding the operation of machinery on site and driven pile foundations have been requested and informatives regarding construction, bonfires and the burning of waste included on the decision notice if minded for approval.
12. **The Local Highway Authority** – Following a site visit the LHA can confirm that the existing access is for agricultural use only and will therefore need to be constructed to an appropriate standard for the proposed dwelling. It requests that conditions are included to ensure the appropriate visibility splays are in place, that ground levels do not add to surface water run off into the public highway, bound material should be used for the access and that any works in the highway will require prior permission.
13. **Huntingdon Conservation Team** – No objections

Representations

14. Three letters of representation have been received. The concerns raised are as follows: -
 - The mature trees that were located to the right of the site should have been afforded some protection but have since been removed, even before the application has been determined. These should be replaced.
 - The design of the property is not in keeping with other properties or the local area.
 - At outline the scheme was approved subject to height restrictions. The height of the proposed unit is higher than that of neighbouring units.
 - The reflection from the glass will be very intrusive from my property that is opposite the application site, especially as this is the south facing elevation.
 - This reflection could be a danger to road users when existing onto Primrose Hill in the dark or in the daytime.
 - The sewer system is not adequate for an additional property.
 - General acceptance of development if suitable to its surroundings.

Planning Comments

15. Little Gransden is categorised as an infill village under policy ST/7 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007. As such new residential development is restricted to not more than 2 dwellings comprising a gap in an otherwise built-up frontage to an existing road, provided that it is not sufficiently large to accommodate more than two dwellings on similar curtilages to those adjoining. Having already granted outline planning consent on this site for one residential unit officers consider the site is suitable for one new dwelling. It is not considered suitable for any more than one unit.
16. Housing density policy HG/1 is applicable in this instance and this seeks a minimum density of between 30-40 dwellings per hectare, depending upon sustainability. The developable area in this instance is approximately 0.03ha, hence the development of a single dwelling equates to a density of approximately 33 dwellings per hectare (dph). In this instance it is considered that a development of a higher density would be contrary to the character and appearance of the surrounding patterns of development and would likely have a further adverse impact upon the wider setting of the windmill and neighbouring properties.

17. The proposed unit is outside the scale parameters permitted at Outline stage and therefore this application is a new and 'Full' planning application, rather than a 'Reserved Matters' one. The application benefitted from pre-application advice and the principle of development for a unit on this plot was established through the historic Outline consent listed above.
18. The main concerns with regard to this scheme are the impact of the design and character on its surroundings, landscaping, neighbour amenity and contributions for a development of this scale.

Character of the Area

19. Existing development along Primrose Hill is of mixed character. Towards the proposal end of the street the site is surrounded by 1.5 storey and single storey properties of similar design to each other. At outline application stage, submissions are short on detail, however scale parameters are put in place to ensure any forthcoming proposal be designed to work well with its surrounding character. That is not to say that the dwelling design should be a pastiche, rather that an appropriate alternative design may also be acceptable.
20. The location of the property on the plot is predominately in the developable area in line with the outline scheme, albeit the shape and form of the proposed unit is very different to the neighbouring properties, it was agreed at the pre-application stage that replicating neighbouring units in this manner was not considered essential and by no means an enhancement to the local area.
21. The proposed dwelling is very different to its neighbouring units in terms of design but it also aims to provide a more modern 3-bed property that will achieve a Level 4 Code for Sustainable Homes (CFSH) rating.
22. The new ridge height of the proposed dwelling is closer to 6.8m rather than the agreed 6m at outline and whilst the property is set back slightly from the main building line, the increase in height, albeit by 0.8m raises concern with the residents and the Parish Council. At pre-application stage further discussion suggested that this height could be brought down slightly and the onus was on the architect to convince officers that street scene views and wider context would not be adversely impacted by the proposed development. Due to the plot shape, the proposed design features, its location and potential impact on the wider street context, the proposal is different in character but it is not considered to be adverse. Rather, it increases the interest in the street scene and provides a modern and environmentally friendly approach to 21st Century house building in a rural area. The 0.8m increase in ridge height is not considered to be immediately apparent when compared to its neighbours and therefore the height is not considered to detract from the character of the area. It is relevant to the design of the proposed unit and how it will sit in its surrounding context.
24. The scale reflects well in the wider built form and is not considered to adversely impact on the character of the wider rural area. The large openings, particularly on the front elevation, are not reflective of any building in the near vicinity but the building is considered as a whole, both in design terms and in that as a modern property the purpose of this is for the absorption of solar energy. The proposed 'green walls' will soften the impact the large glazed areas and reduce potential glare, particularly on the front elevation. It is the view of officers that the impact on the wider character is acceptable in this instance.

25. The materials proposed are a sand coloured clay roof tile for the main roof, oak timber boarding on the external walls and a Cambridge stock brick for the ground floor plinth, Anthra zinc roofing and cladding for the single storey element, wooden framed high performance glazed windows and painted white barge boards. These are very different to the neighbouring red brick built buildings but not totally at odds with the overall character of Primrose Hill, where towards Main Road, the dwelling types vary in materials and design. Whilst details of the proposed garden/bike store have not been submitted it is clear this would not affect neighbouring amenity or the character of the area due to its location in the rear garden. Full details can be agreed by condition.

Landscaping

26. Landscaping plays an important role in enhancing the appearance of any built development and the site at present comprises substantial landscaped elements. The screening at the front of the site should be retained other than the point of access as indicated in the comments from the Tree Officer as it is evident that the removal of other trees on the site will have to take place. Removal of these should be replaced with other species on the site to enhance the long-term biodiversity of the site.
27. Concern was raised by both by residents and Parish Council with regard to the loss of trees on site. The trees were not afforded any statutory protection and therefore there was no control over their retention. However, discussion with officers has raised concern with regard to the siting of the property and the proximity of the property to the northeast boundary. It was suggested to the agent that the property be moved away from the boundary edge to allow for further planting and better screening of this boundary due to its proximity to the village edge. It was agreed by the agents that this could be achieved and amended plans were submitted. Amended drawing no. 0305/D/0/110/2 franked 8th March 2012 shows the property moved away from the northeast boundary and provision for a 2m high hedge comprising field maple, hawthorns, crab apple, wild hedge roses, guelder rose, holly, hazel, elder, wild cherry, hornbeam and mountain ash. Whilst the amended plan provides details regarding species and maintenance it has not benefitted from comments from the landscape officer at the time of writing the report. Additionally the proposal to provide space for planting is considered necessary as part of the wider development, a condition for a landscaping scheme is still required to agree the content of the proposed hedging to ensure its proper establishment.
28. The mix provided is not considered to be achievable. Further landscaping would be beneficial from both a visual and biodiversity viewpoint.

Neighbour Amenity

29. In accordance with policy **DP/3** the proposed development should be sited and designed so as to ensure that there is not a significant loss of privacy to neighbouring dwellings arising from any proposed windows. Similarly the development should be sited so as to preclude any significant overshadowing and overbearing to the adjacent dwellings.
30. In this instance it would appear that the most sensitive neighbouring dwelling would be no.47 itself. The application dwelling has been designed to address issues such as overlooking and the majority of openings are located on the 3 alternative elevations. The only openings on the southwest elevation at first floor comprise 3

roof lights. All 3 could be raised to 1.7m from internal floor level and address overlooking from them. Two are for the bathroom and one is for a secondary window to Bedroom 2. It is considered this is easily achievable. It is not considered that residential amenity would be adversely affected in this instance, subject to appropriate conditions.

Infrastructure

31. This development would be required to contribute towards public open space infrastructure within the village in accordance with Policies **DP/4**, **SF/10** and **SF/11**. Financial contributions are index linked and calculated on the number of additional bedrooms created and would be secured by a legal agreement known as a Section 106 Agreement (S106). The provision of a four-bedroom dwelling on the site would attract a financial contribution of approximately £4258.90.
32. In order to meet the increased demand resulting from this development, the Council would also seek to secure a contribution towards community facilities space within the village. This would be secured by legal agreement (S106). The provision of a four-bedroom dwelling on the site would attract a financial contribution of approximately £703.24.
33. You may also be required to contribute towards the costs of providing refuse bins for the site, currently £69.50 per household.
34. On 5th November 2009, this Council agreed to introduce an additional monitoring fee to be applied in relation to the completion of all Section 106 agreements. This amounts to £50 per dwelling. As part of the supporting Planning/Design and Access Statement, you would need to confirm your client's agreement to the payment of this sum.
35. The applicants' agent has confirmed, in writing agreement to such payments.

Conclusion

36. The scheme proposes a development that is in line with HG/1 density requirements, it proposes a modern environmentally friendly family sized house within the village framework, there is scope for further landscaping and it is not considered to have an adverse impact on the neighbouring listed Windmill located in outside of the District. There is no adverse impact on the neighbouring occupiers and the agent and applicant are aware of the required contributions towards public open space and community facilities. Design is not considered suitable to all tastes but it is considered that this is a subjective matter that officers are divided on. On balance it is considered that there are no material planning considerations with regard to this scheme that would warrant a recommendation for refusal. For the above reasons the scheme is recommended for approval subject to being built in accordance with the amended plans and the following conditions.

Recommendation

Approval as amended plans franked 5th March 2012

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 0305/D/0/110 Rev 2, 0305/D/0/100 Rev 1, 0305/D/0/101 Rev 1, 0305/D/0/201 Rev 1, 0305/D/0/200 Rev 1, 0305/D/0/203 Rev 1, 0305/D/0/202 Rev 1, 0305/D/0/300 Rev 1 and 0305/D/0/301 Rev 1 franked 5th March 2012. (Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
3. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall also include specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
4. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting of any tree that tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
5. No development shall commence until details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details

Surface Water Drainage

(Reason - To ensure satisfactory drainage of the site).

Foul water drainage

(Reason – To ensure satisfactory drainage of the site)

Finished floor levels of the building(s) in relation to ground levels.

(Reason - To ensure that the height of the buildings is well related to ground levels and is not obtrusive.)

6. The existing hedge on the front boundary of the site shall be retained except at the point of access; and any trees or shrubs within it which, within a period of five years from the completion of the development or the occupation of the buildings, whichever is the sooner, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

(Reason - To protect the hedge, which is of sufficient quality to warrant its retention and to safeguard biodiversity interests and the character of the area in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

7. During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions.

(Reason – To protect the occupiers of adjacent properties from an unacceptable level of noise disturbance during the period of construction in accordance with the requirements of Policy NE/15 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007)

8. No development shall begin until details of a scheme for the provision of recreational, community facilities, and household waste receptacles infrastructure, to meet the needs of the development in accordance with adopted Local Development Framework Policies DP/4, SF/10 and SF/11 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include a timetable for the provision to be made and shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - To ensure adequate infrastructure is available to support the development in accordance with Policies DP/4, SF/10 and SF/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007 and to the Supplementary Planning Document, Open Space in New Developments, adopted January 2009)

9. Visibility splays shall be provided on both sides of the proposed new access and shall be maintained free from any obstruction over a height of 600mm within an area of 2m x 2m measured from and along respectively the highway boundary.
(Reason - In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

10. The new dwelling, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied until the proposed new vehicular access, and parking and turning areas have been provided in accordance with the details. The access, parking and turning areas shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

11. The access shall be constructed with adequate drainage measures to prevent surface water run-off onto the adjacent public highway, in accordance with a scheme submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Local Highways Authority.

(Reason – To prevent surface water discharging to the public highway, in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

12. The proposed first floor windows in the southwest roof slope of the building, hereby permitted, shall be situated no lower than 1.7m measured internally from the finished floor level at first floor.

(Reason - To prevent overlooking of the adjoining properties in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

13. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, doors or openings of any kind, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be constructed in the southwest elevation or roof slope at and above first floor level unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of adjoining occupiers in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
14. Any removal of trees, scrub or hedgerow shall not take place in the bird breeding season between 15 February and 15 July inclusive, unless a mitigation scheme for the protection of bird-nesting habitat has been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To avoid causing harm to nesting birds in accordance with their protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and in accordance with Policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

Informative

This development involves work to the public highway that will require the approval of Cambridgeshire County Council as Highway Authority. It is an OFFENCE to carry out any works within the public highway, which includes a public right of way, without the permission of the Highway Authority. It is the applicants responsibility to ensure that, in addition to planning permission, any necessary consents or approvals under the Highways Act 1980 and the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 are also obtained from the County Council.

Should driven pile foundations be proposed, then before works commence, a statement of the method of construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.

During construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.

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

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) 2007

Circular 05/2005 – Planning Obligations

Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions

Planning application references: S/2377/11

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