

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee      2<sup>nd</sup> February 2005  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/2366/04/F - Sawston  
2 Dwellings and Garage (amended design) on Land Adjacent 2 Granta Road for  
Hogger Homes Ltd**

**Recommendation: Approval  
Date for determination: 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. The site extends to approximately 0.06 hectares (0.14 acres) and was previously the grassed side garden to No. 2 Granta Road which, like all the other dwellings in this part of Granta Road, is a semi-detached chalet dwelling with flat roof dormers on the front and rear and a flat roof garage to the side. The site falls to the north. There is an existing 1.5m-2m hedge along the sites' road frontages. The site is bounded by Granta Road to the northeast, No.2 Granta Road to the southeast, open land/trees to the southwest and Meadowfield Road to the northwest.
2. This full application, received on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2004, proposes the erection of a pair of 8.2 metres high semi-detached 3-bedroom chalet dwellings on the site. The dwellings are similar in design to the existing dwellings in this part of Granta Road although the dwelling on plot 1 has an attached garage with study above and the dwelling on plot 2 would have a pitched roof detached garage to the rear accessed from Meadowfield Road. The proposed density equates to 33 dwellings per hectare.
3. When construction began to erect the 2 dwellings approved under S/1606/04/F, it became apparent that to build the floor levels of the dwellings at the previously stated 300mm above the highest recorded flood level applicable to this site, the finished floor level of the dwelling on plot 1 would be approximately 0.7m above the existing ground level and the dwelling on plot 2 would be approximately 1 metre above the existing ground level. Construction has stopped on site. This application proposes dwellings of the same design and appearance as previously approved but with a finished floor level of 21.15m ODN as opposed to the previously approved level of 21.55m ODN. In addition to the measures incorporated into the previous scheme which demonstrated that there would be no loss of flood plain by ensuring that the area beneath the dwellings and garages is left open, air bricks allow any water to flow into this area and then drain out after the end of the flood and any small loss of flood plain is counteracted by lowering the ground level beneath the dwellings, the following additional flood proofing measures are proposed: internal walls to be finished with lime based plaster; screws and fixings to be non-ferrous; wall ties to be stainless steel; skirting boards, architraves and door linings to be moisture resistant mdf; kitchen units to have plastic legs; floor finish to kitchen and cloakroom to be ceramic tiles; electricity meter box to be 900mm above finished floor level; ground floor electrical wiring to drop from the first floor zone; pipework to be accessible to allow pipes to be maintained and washed down; install non-return valve within the private sewer and immediately before the connection on the boundary to the public sewer; water supply pipe to be insulated with closed cell insulation; central heating pipework to be plastic operated from manifold; ground floor doors to be solid timber;

stairs to be constructed from moisture resistant mdf; and gas main to have purging point.

### **Planning History**

4. Planning permission was granted for 2 dwellings and garage of the same design as now proposed on the site in April 2004 (**S/1606/04/F**). Condition 3 stated that the ground level of the dwellings shall be 21.55m ODN metres. The application was considered at the October 2004 meeting of this Committee.
5. Planning permission was granted for 2 dwellings and garage on the site in April 2004 (**S/1745/03/F**). The application was considered at the March 2004 meeting of this Committee.
6. An outline application for 2 dwellings on the site was refused in February 2002 (**S/2072/01/O**) for the following reason: "The site is in the recorded floodplain of the River Cam and its tributaries, at a level approximately 600mm below the highest recorded flood level. The proposed development of the site for housing would subject the dwellings to the potential of flooding and reduce the area of floodwater storage, increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere. As such it would be contrary to Policy SP8/6 of the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 1995 and Policy CS8 of the Deposit South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 1999."

### **Planning Policy**

7. The site is within the village framework of Sawston, which is defined as a Rural Growth Settlement in Local Plan 2004.
8. Whilst the front part of the site is outside the Environment Agency's Zone 2 (medium to low risk) Flood Risk Area, the rear part of the site is within it. These Zones replace the Indicative Flood Plain maps previously used.
9. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P1/3** requires a high standard of design for all new development which responds to the local character of the built environment.
10. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SE2** states that residential development will be permitted on unallocated land within village frameworks of Rural Growth settlements provided that (a) the retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village; (b) the development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape or ecological importance, and the amenities of neighbours; (c) the village has the necessary infrastructure capacity; and (d) residential development would not conflict with another policy of the plan. It also states that development should provide an appropriate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and affordability and should achieve a minimum density of 30 dph unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
11. Local Plan 2004 **Policy CS5** states that planning permission will not be granted for development where the site is liable to flooding, or where development is likely to: (1) increase the risk of flooding elsewhere by materially impeding the flow or storage of flood water; (2) increase flood risk in areas downstream due to additional surface water runoff; or (3) increase the number of people or properties at risk unless it is demonstrated that these effects can be overcome by appropriate alleviation and mitigation measures and secured by planning conditions or planning obligation providing the necessary improvements which would not damage interests of nature conservation.

12. Structure Plan **Policy P1/2** states that no new development will be permitted within or which is likely to adversely affect functional flood plains or other areas where adequate flood protection cannot be given and/or there is significant risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere. Structure Plan **Policy P6/3** states that, if development is permitted in areas where flood protection is required, flood defence measures and design features must give sufficient protection to ensure that an unacceptable risk is not incurred, both locally and elsewhere.

### **Consultation**

13. **Sawston Parish Council** recommends refusal on the following grounds: “in flood plain; more building would create flood problems for neighbouring properties; and dangerous road junction/traffic problems”.
14. At the time of application S/1606/04/F, **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommended conditions relating to the times during the construction period when power operated machinery shall not be used and driven pile foundations are attached to any approval. At the time of application S/1745/03/F, he also specifically confirmed that he had no objections to the proposal in terms of groundwater pollution.
15. **Environment Agency** states that, in line with current Government guidance, the District Council is required to respond on behalf of the Agency in respect of flood risk and surface water drainage related issues. That said, it has indicated that, with the previously approved flood mitigation measures and the additional flood proofing measures now proposed, the proposed finished floor level would be acceptable
16. It indicates that surface water drainage is the only outstanding issue and states that soakaways should be designed and constructed in accordance with BRE365.

### **Representations**

17. An objection has been received from the occupier of No. 20 on the grounds of flooding, traffic and parking.

### **Planning Comments - Key Issues**

18. The main issue in relation to this application is flood risk.
19. The principle of erecting two dwellings and a garage of the designs proposed on the site has already been established by the granting of planning permission under reference S/1606/04/F, albeit at that time the application erroneously stated that the existing average ground level was 20.9m ODN. A survey drawing submitted with this application shows the ground level to range from 20.93 to 20.45m ODN. The current proposal only differs from that permission in that the finished floor level proposed is now lower (in recognition of the actual ground level, to facilitate access to the dwellings and in order to ensure the development has an acceptable impact in the streetscene) and additional flood proofing measures are proposed. The proposed finished floor level is 0.4m below the previously approved level, 0.09m below the highest recorded flood level in the area in 1968 but 0.05m above the finished floor level of the adjacent dwelling, No. 2 Granta Road. Whereas the whole of the site was well within the Environment Agency’s indicative flood plains, the site is now on the very edge of the medium to low risk Flood Zone (the rear part of the site is within the medium to low risk zone and the front part of the site is within the little or no risk zone) which superseded the indicative floodplains. The Environment Agency has carefully considered the proposal and, subject to conditions, I am satisfied that the

scheme satisfactorily addresses and mitigates against the risk of flooding to the site and neighbouring properties.

20. The proposed revised floor levels would be acceptable in relation to the street scene and neighbour impact of the development.

### **Recommendation**

21. Approval, subject to the receipt of details of the previously proposed flood mitigation scheme as part of this application and the following conditions:
1. Standard condition A – RCA.
  2. The external materials of construction for the building works hereby permitted shall be identical to those used for No. 2 Granta Road unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority – RC To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.
  3. The ground floor level of the dwellings hereby permitted shall be 21.15 ODN m – RC To provide a reasonable freeboard against flooding.
  4. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, surface water drainage shall be by means of soakaways designed and constructed in accordance with BRE 365 – RC To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage.
  5. There shall be no raising of ground levels within the site, save for the hereby permitted dwellings and garage – RC To prevent the risk of flooding to other land/properties, due to impedance of flood flow and reduction in flood storage capacity.
  6. The air bricks, shown on drawing no. EDG/04/84/5b, shall remain clear from obstruction at all times – RC To facilitate flood risk conveyance.
  7. Standard condition 21 (Part 1, Classes A and E) ‘Removal of permitted development rights’ – RC To ensure that extensions and outbuildings which would not otherwise require planning permission do not lead to an increased risk of flooding to other land/properties, due to impedance of flood flow and reduction in flood storage capacity.
  8. During the construction period ... Standard condition 26 ‘Times when power operated machinery shall not be operated’ (0800, 0800, 1800, 1300) – RC26).
  9. Standard condition 60 (all) ‘Boundary treatments’ – RC To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development and to protect the amenity of the occupiers of No. 2 Granta Road and the hereby permitted dwellings.

### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: **P1/2** (Environmental Restrictions on Development); **P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development); and **P6/3** (Flood Defence).
  - b) South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: **SE2** (Development in Rural Growth Settlements); and **CS5** (Flood Protection),

2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise: flood risk; and highway and parking problems.

### **General**

In coming to a decision to approve this application, the Local Planning Authority had regard to the Environment Agency's comments that the scheme satisfactorily addresses and mitigates against the risk of flooding to the site and neighbouring properties.

Should driven pile foundations be proposed, before development commences, a statement of the method for construction of these foundations shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the District Council's Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibrations can be controlled.

During construction, there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the District Council's 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 Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning file Ref: S/2366/04/F, S/1606/04/F, S/1745/03/F and S/2072/01/F.

**Contact Officer:** Andrew Moffat – Area Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713169