

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 13th May 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/2445/03/F - Linton Demolition of Existing Dwellings and Erection of 10 Flats at 6-8 Cambridge Road for Moore Associates

Recommendation: Delegated Approval of Amendment

Site, Background and Proposal

1. The application site is located on the north side of Cambridge Road, to the west of its junction with the High Street, and is occupied by a semi-detached pair of flint cottages. Members may recall that, at Committee in March 2004, consent was granted for the erection of 10 flats on the site following the demolition of the existing pair of dwellings. A copy of the Committee report is attached as an appendix.
2. The proposal, received on 18th March 2005, seeks a minor amendment to the approved scheme by increasing the overall length of the development (approved length 36 metres) by approximately 1.5 metres and its depth by around 0.7 metres. A covering letter explains that the floor plan is slightly larger than approved as a consequence of new legislation with regard to sound insulation between floors and around staircases and the new access legislation with regard to increasing the width of stairways and size of treads. The overall ridge height of the scheme remains as approved.

Consultation

3. **Linton Parish Council** recommends refusal of the amendment stating:

“Councillors were concerned to note an amendment, for comment, for an application which had already had a Decision Notice with relevant conditions. Councillors object to this amendment on the grounds that it will result in direct violation of Conditions 4 and 5 regarding the treatment of respective boundaries and landscaping.”
4. **The Conservation Manager** raises no objections, stating that the amendment will not increase the impact of the development upon the Conservation Area.
5. **The Landscape Design Officer** has expressed concern verbally about the encroachment of the retaining wall shown at the front of the building into the front boundary hedge and about the lack of planting on the west side of the building.

Representations

6. No.2 Cambridge Road raises no objections to the amendments.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

7. The key issues in relation to this amendment are:

- The impact of the changes upon the character and appearance of the nearby Conservation Area to the east;
 - Residential amenity;
 - Impact on boundaries/landscaping.
8. The development would be extended to the west, i.e. – towards the vehicular access, and marginally to the north. I am satisfied that the proposed amendments would not materially harm the amenities of occupiers of adjoining properties.
 9. The Conservation Manager has advised that the setting of the nearby Conservation Area would not be harmed as a result of this minor revision.
 10. The Parish Council has objected to the amendment on the basis that it would violate two conditions of the planning consent. Condition 4 relates to the implementation of landscaping whilst Condition 5 requires the submission and prior agreement of boundary treatment details before development starts.
 11. The approved site plan did indicate that a hedge would be planted between the access and the flats and, given the increase in length of the development, it would no longer be possible for this to be provided in its entirety. However, the landscaping of the site did not form part of the approved plans with the planning consent being subject to a condition requiring the submission of a suitable landscaping scheme.
 12. Following the concerns expressed by the Landscape Design Officer, a meeting was held with the applicant's agent where it was explained that the parts of the retaining wall encroaching into the front boundary hedge should be moved out of the hedge. In addition, the applicants would need to demonstrate that the hedges, shrubs and trees shown could survive in such close proximity to the building and retaining walls. [If this could not be demonstrated, the building would need to be moved back into the site – this would need to form the subject of a separate amendment and consultation with the Parish Council and neighbours]. Finally, changes to accommodate more planting and screening on the site, particularly around the west side of the flats, were discussed.
 13. Since the meeting, It has been confirmed in writing that the site is underlain by sand and gravel which, being granular materials, are unaffected by tree roots. As such, there would be no restrictions on planting trees and shrubs close to the building and retaining walls. In addition, further amended plans are shortly to be submitted showing:
 - The addition of a hedge to abut the existing close boarded fence along the northern site boundary;
 - The addition of an ornamental tree adjacent to the eastern site boundary;
 - The addition of a climbing plant species to the western gable of the flats;
 - The addition of hawthorn hedging to the front/southern boundary set behind the highway visibility splay with a low ground cover species planted in the zone of the sight splay and the site edge being defined by a low post and rail fence;
 - Confirmation that there is tall hedging on the west side of the access (on County Highways owned land) that would be unaffected by the proposal.
 14. These amendments appear to be in accordance with discussions at the meeting held with the applicant's agent and the Landscape Design Officer. A copy of the letter and amended plans will be forwarded to the Parish Council and Landscape Design Officer

once received and any comments reported verbally to Members at the Committee meeting.

15. Finally, I can confirm that the boundary treatment details have not, to date, been agreed and the proposed amendments do therefore not violate any details approved as part of the planning consent.

Recommendation

16. Subject to the Landscape Design Officer being satisfied with the extent of landscaping shown on the revised plan and with the feasibility of planting being carried out in close proximity to built structures, approve the amendment to the application.

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

- Planning application ref: S/2445/03/F

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