

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee

13th May 2005

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0475/05/O - Longstanton

Three bungalows, land at Clive Hall Drive/Mills Lane for Mr D J Harradine

Recommendation: Refusal
Determination Date: 4th May 2005

Members will visit the site on the 11th May 2005.

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.25 ha site lies to the north-east of the junction of Mills Lane and Clive Hall Drive and has a frontage to both roads. The site is pastureland, surrounded on its boundaries with hedgerows and young trees. There is a wooden shed close to Clive Hall Drive.
2. The outline application, received on the 9th March 2005 proposes the erection of 3 bungalows on the site. All matters are reserved. The density proposed is 12 dwellings/hectare.
3. In a covering letter the applicant states:
 - “The land in question is a small parcel of undeveloped land within the village but excluded from the village boundary by the Local Plan.
 - The basis for exclusion of the land from the village is not really understood, as the land is effectively an undeveloped section of Clive Hall Drive fronting onto this road. There are clear definable boundaries to the east where there is an extremely mature hedge, which creates a visual separation of the village and countryside beyond.

Adjacent and to the south of the land is a caravan site and to the north is residential development. There are no other known constraints to development such as landscape notations. All main services are adjacent to the site inc a mains lateral already available on the site.

- There are compelling personal family reasons to justify the grant of planning permission as this would enable us to remain in the village where we have lived and worked all our life and would also allow our son (s) to return to the village where they were brought up. As for myself, I have lived in the village for over 70 years and wish to retain that connection, in particular as I grow older I wish to be close to my sons for the anticipated support they can offer.

This accords with my understanding of Government guidance on this issue who seek to provide for and retain local people in rural areas where possible within their own communities.

- There is much development planned for the village of Longstanton, such as the 500 plus dwellings to the northwest and also the 8,000 or more dwellings proposed as Northstowe. Therefore a minor amendment to the village framework for the 3 additional dwellings should be seen in the context of the above.
 - There are no other planning or highway reasons why outline planning permission should not be granted for 3 dwellings.
4. I am prepared to accept a restriction upon the other land to the east which is marked blue on the plan and this could be by way of a restrictive covenant or Section 106 Agreement or whatever is deemed suitable. This would be compatible with the proposed 'Green Separation' for Northstowe.
 5. In conclusion, I consider there are no sound reasons why planning permission is withheld for this small development within Longstanton which would be for me and members of my family who wish to return to the village. I would request that the Council approves permission. I can provide further information if the Council need it in order to determine the application".

Planning History

6. The site has a long history of refusals for residential development dating back to 1975. Two applications in 1994 and 1997 were withdrawn prior to the issue of decision notices refusing planning permission and in 1999 a single bungalow was refused.

Planning Policy

7. The site is outside the village framework defined in the 2004 Local Plan.
8. **Policy P1/2** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure plan 2003 states: development will be restricted in the countryside unless the proposal can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
8. **Policy SE8** of the 2004 Local Plan states: there is a general presumption in favour of residential development within village frameworks. Residential development outside these frameworks will not be permitted.
9. **Policy Longstanton 5** states development in Longstanton St Michael's will be restricted to infilling within the built-up framework of the village. The supporting text states "in particular, the country lane character of St Michael's Lane and Mills Lane will be retained....."

Consultations

10. **Longstanton Parish Council** deferred consideration of the application, but will reconsider it before today's meeting. A verbal report will be made.
11. **The County Archaeologist** requires an archaeological investigation to be carried out by the developers.

Representations

12. 2 letters of objections received from nearby residents concerned at the loss of semi-rural character unnecessary in view of major expansion in the village and Northstowe, loss of agricultural land and conflict with existing planning policies.
13. Two letters have been received from the adjacent mobile home park, one from the owner and one from a resident supporting the application.
14. 9 letters of support have been received from non-adjacent residents. They state the site is well enclosed by hedges, development would “round off” the framework and support for the personal reasons advanced by the applicant.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

15. The key issues to consider in this application are the affect and implications of the proposal on the countryside set against the personal justification advanced by the applicant.
16. The site is outside the village framework defined in the 2004 Local Plan and its development for residential purposes would be contrary to the specific Policy Longstanton 5 which seeks to retain the “country lane” character of Mills Lane by restricting developments to infilling (re no more than 2 dwellings) within the village framework.
17. The personal reason advanced by the applicant to justify an exception being made to planning policies revolve around his desire for his sons to move back to the village where they were raised and for him to relocate from elsewhere in the village to live in one of the proposed bungalows near them. I consider the personal circumstances in this case clearly insufficient to override well-established policies designed to protect the countryside from non-essential development, the argument could be repeated in other villages and granting permission would set an unfortunate precedent.

Recommendation

Refusal for the following reason:

1. The site is located in the countryside and residential development is contrary to the following Policies:
 - (a) **Policy P1/2** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 which restricts development in the countryside to proposals which can demonstrate an essential need for a particular rural location. No essential need has been demonstrated in this case; and
 - (b) **Policies SE8** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 and Policy Longstanton 5 of the Inset Map No 67, in that the development is not infilling by no more than two dwellings within the physical framework of Longstanton as defined on the Inset Map. The country lane character of Mills Lane would be eroded and development in this location would make it difficult to resist further similar proposals, which cumulatively would damage both the rural character of this part of Longstanton and undermine policies aimed at protecting the countryside from unnecessary development.

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

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning file Ref: S/0475/05/O

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