

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

5 November 2014

**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

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<b>Application Number:</b>	S/2762/13/FL
<b>Parish:</b>	Linton
<b>Proposal:</b>	Erection of 12 dwellings following demolition of dwelling
<b>Site address:</b>	Newdigate House, 3 Horseheath Road
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr Andrew Hodgson (Savills (UK) Ltd)
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Delegated Approval
<b>Key material considerations:</b>	Principle, density, mix and affordable housing, character of the area, residential amenity, highway safety and parking, drainage and other matters.
<b>Committee Site Visit:</b>	No (Site visited July 2014)
<b>Departure Application:</b>	No
<b>Presenting Officer:</b>	Paul Sexton
<b>Application brought to Committee because:</b>	The officer recommendation of delegated approval is contrary to the recommendation of refusal from Linton Parish Council
<b>Date by which decision due:</b>	6 March 2014

### Background

1. Members will recall that this application was deferred at the October meeting to allow for further discussions to take place between the applicant, officers, Linton Parish Council and local residents, with a view to securing further amendments to the scheme. A meeting was held on 13 October 2014, and further revised drawings were submitted on 17 October 2014, which are detailed later in the report.
2. The application was previously withdrawn from the July agenda at the request of the applicant to allow the proposed scheme to be considered by the Design Enabling Panel at its meeting on 14 August 2014.
3. A copy of the officer report to the July meeting is attached at Appendix 1 and Members should refer to that report for the Site History, Policy, Consultations and

Presentations (updated in this report), Site and Proposal, and Planning Considerations (updated in this report in response to revised drawings).

4. The officer report to the October meeting has been updated and incorporated into this report.

#### **Comments of Design Enabling Panel**

5. The Design Enabling Panel considered this to be a generally interesting scheme, which has been quite carefully developed, as demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement. The scheme has the potential to accommodate the proposed number of dwellings for this site, which is at the upper end of the allowable density. It was felt that the scheme would benefit from some further detailed design considerations.
6. The Panel considered the question of whether the proposed density, layout and design of the scheme was appropriate to the context of the site and surrounding residential properties. It concluded that the proposal was just acceptable in these terms, but some concerns were expressed in respect about the limited distance between Plots 6/7 and Plot 9; the roof design for Plot 1; and private amenity space provision for Plots 6/7 and Plot 9.
7. The Panel considered the question of whether the scheme was sensitive and responsive to its immediate and wider context. It concluded that the scheme was reasonably sensitive and responsive to its setting, and in particular it appreciated the references and design development based on the experience of the more historic parts of Linton.
8. In respect of Plot 9 the Panel was asked to consider whether the principle of having a landmark building in this position was appropriate. The Panel concluded that the relative height of Plot 9 to the Horseheath Road itself would add significance to the building. This coupled with the proposed elevational treatment and roof form combined make Plot 9 sufficiently significant.
9. In addition the Panel considered that Plots 6 and 7 would benefit from accessible balconies/terrace as there is a lack of private outdoor amenity space for these units. The Panel suggested that consideration could be given to modifying the layout so as to allow some increase in the rather tight space between Plots 6/7 and Plot 9.
10. The Panel recommended that the flat roofed area to the rear of Plot 1 could be reduced and/or modified. Further consideration should be given to the materials for the flat roof areas which will be viewed from both the new properties and in the view south from Keene Fields.
11. The efficiency of the internal layout of Plot 1 was questioned.
12. Consideration should be given to modifying the design of the proposed balconies to Plots 10 and 11, or removal of these features.
13. Plot 8 should have fenestration to facilitate principle living room views to the south, to help reduce potential impact on neighbouring property to the south east.
14. Consideration should be given to raising the garden level of Plot 9 in the south east corner.

## Amended Drawings

15. Amended drawings received on 29 August 2014 included the following amendments:
16. Introduction of pitched roof to the rear extension of Plot 1. The applicant stated that this provided a more pleasing 'fifth elevation' to the surrounding houses. The internal planning of the unit had been reconsidered, with the increased volume to the roof space of the rear extension being brought into the kitchen/dining space to create a more lofty room. Rooflights were inserted to increase daylight into the otherwise north facing space. This unit was reduced in height from the original scheme to reduce impact on properties in Parsonage Way.
17. On Plot 7 a new staircase was located on the side of the building, which created a landing in the middle of the gable end. The stair was dog legged at the bottom to avoid passing by the lower bedroom window. The space at the bottom of the stair allowed for additional landscaping. The design of the roof was altered, with the roofline being moved further north, and a new gable extended over Unit 5. The applicant stated that this broke up the scale and massing of the building and resulted in a more pleasing and detailed level of design.
18. The large sliding screen on the East elevation of Plot 8 was removed. A small gable window was introduced on the North elevation to break up the blank gable, and to assist with privacy the windows were reduced slightly on the west elevation which faces the street.
19. On Plot 9 the revised drawing reflected the changes suggested by the Panel in respect of external ground levels. The applicant stated that this would create a more distinct boundary to Keene Fields edge of the garden. This unit is now a 3-bedroom unit rather than 4-bedroom
20. Balconies on Plots 10 and 11 were removed, with Juliet boundaries being shown, however the applicant stated that he was prepared to take the Council's recommendation in this respect.
21. On 17 October 2014 further amended drawings were received, which incorporated the following changes.
22. Omission of the pitched roof to the rear extension to Plot 1 (introduced by the earlier amended drawings), with the design reverting back to the original proposal. The applicant states that this will have a much lesser impact on the properties in Parsonage Way.
23. The ridge height of Plot 9 has been lowered by 300mm from 6.94m above finished floor level to 6.64m. The first floor balcony above the sitting room has been omitted and replaced with a lean-to roof. The first floor French doors leading to the balcony have been omitted and replaced with casement windows.
24. The Juliette balconies to Plots 10 and 11 have been omitted and the French doors replaced with casement windows to gable ends. The applicant states that, as with Plot 9, the level of overlooking onto Horseheath Road is therefore significantly reduced.
25. The existing Poplar tree in the garden of Plot 8 is shown as being retained. The existing hedgerow fronting onto Horseheath Road is to be maintained at a minimum

height of 2m above ground level. The applicant states that this will ensure views of the properties from Horseheath Road will be limited.

26. In a letter accompanying the revised drawings the applicant states that whilst the scheme complies with the Council's adopted parking standards he is willing to provide two extra spaces underneath the beech tree on the western boundary of the site, subject to the agreement of the Council's Tree Officer. Two extra spaces can also be provided on the central area of green if Members feel that is appropriate. This would result in 24 spaces being provided in total. The applicant states that if this additional parking is considered necessary, then it could be secured by condition.
27. In respect of the number of properties the applicant states amended plans have responded to the various consultation responses throughout the application, and given the support of officers and the Design Enabling Panel, it is considered that there is no planning reason to remove any properties. The applicant considers that the proposal will make an important contribution to the overall need for housing, and provide much needed affordable housing in Linton.

#### **Consultations** (on revised drawings)

28. The comments of **Linton Parish Council** on the latest amended drawings will be reported in an update report, or at the meeting.
29. The Parish Council comments in respect of the previous amendments to the scheme. stated that its original objections, outline in the July report, remained. It added additional comments that Unit 1 remained overshadowing to 7 Parsonage Way; that Unit 2 had changed from a 4-bedroom house to a 2-bedroom bungalow, but would still have an overbearing effect on Horseheath Road; a planning condition not to allow extensions into the loft space is requested, despite permitted development regulations; and insufficient parking spaces. It expressed concern that the scheme did not fit with the Council's policy on 'under-occupancy'. More bungalows might resolve issues of overlooking. Concern about potential surface water run-off and flooding off the site (an ice hazard in winter). Lack of sustainability in design. Lack of suitable spaces for bins and recycling containers. Concerns about sewage capacity. Silver birch tree should be retained.
30. **Local Highway Authority** – has confirmed that it does not object to the application, subject to conditions, but that it will not be adopting any part of the development
31. **Urban Design Team** – comments on the revised scheme will be reported at the meeting.
32. **Trees Officer** – has indicated that he would not object to two additional parking spaces under the Beech tree, providing these were covered.
33. **Anglian Water** – has no objection stating that the foul drainage from the development is in the catchment area of Linton Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows.
34. Other consultation responses remain as set out in the report to the July meeting.

#### **Representations**

35. 8 letters were received in respect to the previous amended plans from the occupiers of 1, 2 Keene Fields, 29, 31 and 33 Parsonage Way, and 2, 3 and 8 Rhugarve

Gardens in respect of the latest amended drawings and objecting on the following grounds, which should be read alongside the comments outlined in the July report. Comments received in respect of the latest amendments will be reported in an update report, or at the meeting.

- a. There are only minor changes to the original design. There remain too many properties. Only solution is to build fewer houses.
- b. Those behind Nos. 1-3 Keene Fields are too high, and on the highest part of the site. Still causing overlooking and overshadowing.
- c. Rooflights in rear section of Plot 1, and kitchen window, will overlook and cause glare to 29 Parsonage Way
- d. Too few parking spaces for residents, visitors and deliveries – will lead to parking on main roads. No disabled parking provision.
- e. Road safety issues will be exacerbated by plans to raise the level of the bank alongside Plot 9. This will restrict visibility further.
- f. No provision on site for refuse vehicles.
- g. Private road is too narrow to accommodate large vehicles.
- h. Should be a lighting column
- i. Pinch points – can the builder impose these on existing residents?
- j. The poplar should not be removed
- k. Possible future flooding
- l. Lack of access to fence at rear of Nos 1-3 and 11 Keene Fields for maintenance.
- m. Concern about safety of junction of access and Horseheath Road, which is well used by pedestrians and children. Error in Transport Statement not corrected – there is only a footpath on the north side of Horseheath Road
- n. Concern about drainage capacity.
- o. Should be more bungalows, allowing older couples to downsize and free up houses for growing families and first time buyers

Prior to the July meeting a number of letters were received from local residents in response to consultation in respect of earlier amended drawings, rehearsing concerns set out in the July report. The reduction to 20 car parking spaces increased local concern about parking problems.

## **Planning Considerations**

### *Site and Proposal*

36. Members should refer to the July report for the main details of the Site and Proposal. The two sets of revisions to the application received since the July report, are set out earlier in this report.

### *Principle of development*

37. The NPPF advises that every effort should be made to identify and then meet the housing needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Additionally the Development Plan (Core Strategy Development Plan Document adopted January 2007 and Development Control Policies Development Plan adopted January 2007) identifies Linton as a 'Minor Rural Centre' where the construction of new residential dwellings within the framework is supported.
38. This proposed development would have been acceptable having regard to adopted LDF and emerging Local Plan policies, had policies ST/5 and DP/7 not become out of date as a consequence of the Council not currently being able to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

### *Density, Housing Mix and Affordable Housing*

39. The officer comments in respect of Density, Housing Mix and Affordable Housing Remain as set out in the July report.
39. The Design Enabling Panel considered that the proposal was just acceptable in terms of density. The distance between Plots 6/7 and Plot 9 has been increased, and officers are of the view that this significantly improves the relationship between these plots, which form the entrance to the development from Keene Fields.

### *Impact on character of the area*

40. The officer comments in respect of the impact of the proposal on the character of the area remain as set out in the July report.
41. The Design Enabling Panel concluded that the scheme was reasonably sensitive and responsive to its setting, and in particular it appreciated the references and design development based on the experience of the more historic parts of Linton.
42. The slight relocation of Unit 9 further from the access road, reduction in height, and elevational changes, improves its relationship with the surrounding area. The Design and Enabling Panel supported the principle of a building in this location.
43. The undertaking to retain the existing hedge fronting Horseheath Road at a minimum height of 2m will help protect the character of the area

### *Residential amenity*

44. Officers addressed the main areas regarding the impact of the scheme on residential amenity in the July report.
45. The latest amended drawings remove the pitch roof over the single storey projection to the rear of Plot 1, and this element reverts to its original flat roofed form. Although

the pitched roof was introduced at the suggestion of the Design Enabling Panel in order to improve visual appearance a flat element will improve the relationship to neighbouring properties on Parsonage Way, and will not have a materially adverse impact on the character of the development.

46. The changes to fenestration details to Plot 8 will help reduce the impact on the adjoining house in Horseheath Road.

#### *Highway safety and parking*

47. The officer comments in respect of the impact of the proposal on the highway safety remain as set out in the July report. The provision of 20 car parking spaces meets the Council's adopted parking spaces for the number of units proposed.
48. However, given the strong local concern that insufficient parking is provided, and the potential impact on the locality of overspill parking, which is already an issue with the existing Keene Fields, officers would support the provision of additional parking in this case.
49. The Trees Officer has confirmed that an additional two covered parking spaces could be provided underneath the Beech tree, bringing the total provision to 22 spaces, although the length of the driveway to Plot 8 is such that it will accommodate 3 vehicles, rather than the 2 shown. 22 spaces equates to 2 spaces for each dwelling of 2 or more bedrooms, and 1 space for each of the 1 bedroom dwellings.
50. It would be possible to provide a further 2 spaces on part of the central green area, however officers are of the view that this would be to the detriment of the character of the central area.

#### *Other matters*

51. The application is accompanied by an arboricultural assessment. Whilst some existing planting within the site will be lost the individual quality of these trees does not of itself warrant retention. The proposed retention of the Poplar tree on Plot 8 addresses local concern about the previous loss of this tree.
52. The applicant has provided a small area of space which meets the requirements for on site provision for the number of units proposed. This development cannot be required to make up any shortfall in open space in the existing Keene Fields development.
53. Anglian Water has indicated that there is capacity in the sewage system to cater for the proposed development.
54. The applicant has accepted the need for contributions in respect of public open space, community facilities and waste receptacle provision, and a draft Section 106 securing these is being prepared. to cover these matters, and secure the provision of the affordable housing. The County Council has confirmed that no education contribution is required.
55. A condition can be imposed on any consent for a scheme of surface water drainage, and renewable energy technology.

#### *Conclusion*

56. The responses to consultations on the revised drawings will be reported. Officers are of the view that the scheme as amended is acceptable. The additional parking offered by the applicant can be secured by condition if Members are of the view it is required.
57. Any adverse impacts of the development are not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the material considerations set out in this report, and the proposed development remains acceptable. As such it is recommended that permission be granted for officers to approve the scheme subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement securing contributions towards open space, community facilities, waste receptacles and monitoring and legal fees, and the conditions outlined below.

### **Recommendation**

58. That subject to the consideration of comments on the revised drawings, and the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement to secure the required contributions to public open space, community facilities and waste receptacle provision, that delegated powers to approve the application.

### **Conditions** (to include)

- (a) 3 year time limit
- (b) Approved drawings
- (c) Landscaping
- (d) Tree/hedge protection
- (e) External material
- (f) Boundary treatment
- (g) Surface water drainage
- (h) Restriction on hours of power driven machinery during demolition and construction
- (i) Levels
- (j) Withdrawal of PD
- (k) No further windows in specified elevations
- (l) Visibility splays
- (m) Traffic Management Plan

### **Background Papers**

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Proposed Submission July 2013
- South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Planning File References: S/2762/13/FL, S/0730/10/F, S/0348/06/O and S/1640/08/RM

**Report Author:** Paul Sexton – Principal Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713255