

APPENDIX

4. S/2445/03/F - LINTON
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLINGS AND ERECTION OF 10 FLATS AT 6-8
CAMBRIDGE ROAD FOR MOORE ASSOCIATES

SITE AND PROPOSAL

1. The application site is a 0.39 acre (0.16 hectare) area of land sited on the north side of Cambridge Road, approximately 65 metres west of its junction with the High Street. The site comprises a pair of extended flint cottages situated towards the frontage of the plot and fronting Cambridge Road. The existing point of vehicular access is at the eastern edge of the site. To the north is a terrace of 4 dwellings that are accessed by a road that lies beyond the western edge of the site. Beyond this access to the west is the Cambridge Van Centre whilst to the east is a bungalow.
2. The full application, submitted on 1st December 2003, and amended on 4th February 2004, seeks consent for the erection of 10 2 bedroom flats on the site following the demolition of the existing dwellings. The scheme comprises a terrace of 5 gables fronting onto Cambridge Road resulting in a 'saw-tooth' profile. The dwellings would be 2 storey, 8 metre high properties containing 2 flats per gable and comprising brick and light stained timber boarded walls and slate roofs. The existing access at the eastern edge of the site would be closed off with access to the site being gained via the driveway serving Nos. 12-18 Cambridge Road to the north/rear. The dwellings would be served by a rear driveway running along the northern boundary of the site and providing access to 15 parking spaces. The density of the scheme equates to 62 dwellings/hectare.
3. Covering letters submitted with the original application and amended plans state that the scheme has been arranged as a series of gabled and half gabled ends onto the street to provide a terrace to the street front. This gable treatment breaks down the overall scale of the proposal and clearly identifies each pair of flats. A bin collecting area and cycle park are provided to the rear and ample amenity space is arranged between the access points to the flats and the parking layout to the rear.

HISTORY

4. S/1218/02/F – An application to erect 2 bungalows on the site, 1 on either side of the existing pair of flint cottages, was refused as their design was considered to be incongruous and out of keeping with the character of the existing cottages to the detriment of the street scene. In addition, the bungalows were considered to affect the outlook from the existing cottages whilst proposed parking and turning areas adversely affected the amenities of occupiers of adjacent properties.

POLICY

5. The site lies within the village framework. Linton is identified within Policy SE2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 as a Rural Growth Settlement. In such locations, the policy states that residential development and redevelopment will be permitted on unallocated land providing:

- The retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village;
 - The development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape or ecological importance, and the amenities of neighbours;
 - The village has the necessary infrastructure capacity.
6. In addition, the policy 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 dwellings per hectare unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
 7. Policy HG7 of the Local Plan requires affordable housing to be provided at a rate of up to 30% on sites within village frameworks with a population in excess of 3000 and where the proposal involves the erection of 10 or more houses.
 8. Policy HG10 of the Local Plan requires residential developments to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes and affordability, making the best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs. The design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and should achieve high quality design and distinctiveness.
 9. The site lies just beyond the western edge of the village Conservation Area. Policy P7/6 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 requires development to protect and enhance the quality of the historic built environment whilst Policy EN30 of the Local Plan states that development in Conservation Areas or affecting their setting will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area especially in terms of their scale, massing and materials.
 10. Policy P1/3 of the County Structure Plan generally stresses the need for a high standard of design and a sense of place which corresponds to the local character of the built environment.

CONSULTATIONS

11. The comments of Linton Parish Council in respect of the amended plans will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting. However, objections were raised to the original application for the following reasons:
 - The two dwellings to be demolished are original flint cottages circa 1840's and should be conserved;
 - The proposed redevelopment is for EIGHT metre high dwellings and totally destroys the street scene on the approach to the best Conservation Area in the District;

- The access road shown as to be utilised by the developers is owned by the County Council – have they been advised and/or given permission for it to be used?;
 - County Highways should be approached immediately for comments on the proposed access of upwards of 20 car movements twice daily from this extremely dangerous side track onto the A1307;
 - Councillors agree that should any development on this site be agreed, then Highways should insist on a minimum of a 'left turn only' out of the development;
 - Councillors are aware of objections from the residents (4 only at present) who have to use this access road to the proposed increase in cars;
 - Councillors strongly object to the design of the dwellings, not at all compatible with the surroundings.
12. The Conservation Manager raises no objections to the amended plans, stating that they go a long way towards addressing concerns raised in respect of the original plans. The layout has been revised as requested to produce a simpler form to the development with a central range of 3 identical units, and a cross ridge has been introduced with projecting gables at either end. The demolition of the pair of flint cottages is regrettable but, if they are to be lost, they should be replaced with a building of some architectural merit.
The revised proposals are considered to be of sufficient merit for the scheme to be approved especially given the increased site density achieved by the redevelopment.
13. The Chief Environmental Health Officer expresses concern that problems could arise from noise. Limited noise readings indicate that noise levels would fall within Noise Exposure Category B or C for road traffic noise and the applicant should therefore determine which category applies and take appropriate measures to protect the properties from the noise source. In addition, it is recommended that a condition be applied to any consent restricting the hours of use of power operated machinery and requiring details of driven pile foundations if proposed.
14. The Environment Agency raises no objections in principle but notes that the application does not consider sufficiently issues of surface water drainage and therefore recommends that a condition requiring such details be applied to any planning consent.
15. Anglian Water raises no objections, stating that foul water flows from the development can be accommodated within the existing system. Details would need to be conditioned as part of any planning consent.
16. The comments of the Local Highways Authority will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting.

REPRESENTATIONS

17. Letters of objection have been received from 4 local residents, Nos. 8, 12 and 18 Cambridge Road and No. 17 Joiners Road. The main points raised are:

- The development would be out of character with the area and would adversely affect the street scene;
- The limited access onto the A1307 is inadequate for the number of traffic movements proposed;
- The bulky nature of the development will adversely affect the amenities of the neighbouring properties;
- The two historically valuable flint cottages are being sacrificed for development of little architectural value;
- The driveway splays encroach onto the driveway serving Nos. 12-18 Cambridge Road to the north;
- There is a busy pedestrian/cycle path across the driveway giving access to pupils commuting to and from the Village College;
- The residents of Nos. 12-18 maintain the driveway and do not wish to see access onto this road. Access should be on the eastern side of the site;
- Where will overspill vehicles park?
- The proximity of the parking area to Nos. 12-18 could result in noise disturbance to the occupiers of these properties;
- The dwellings would overlook gardens to the rear/north;

PLANNING COMMENTS

Key Issues – Impact upon street scene/character of Conservation Area Residential Amenity Highway Safety Affordable Housing

Impact upon street scene/character of Conservation Area

18. The site comprises a pair of traditional flint cottages that lie just beyond the western edge of the village Conservation Area. Concerns have been raised by the Parish Council and local residents to the loss of these cottages. However, whilst the Conservation Manager considers their loss to be regrettable, he also acknowledges that it would not be possible to achieve the density of development proposed on the site whilst retaining the cottages. On balance, he considers the amended scheme to be of sufficient architectural merit and a sufficient enhancement to the character of the street scene and of the adjacent Conservation Area to warrant approving the application.
19. The Parish Council has expressed concern about the height and scale of the dwellings and their subsequent impact upon the street scene and character of the area. There are two storey dwellings in the immediate vicinity of the site and, indeed, on the site itself at present. I therefore do not consider a refusal could be substantiated on the basis of the height of the dwellings, particularly in light of the lack of objection from the Conservation Manager.

Residential Amenity

20. Concerns have been expressed by local residents on the basis that the proposed scheme would result in overlooking of their private garden areas. The existing pair of cottages has one first floor rear/north facing window. The proposed development extends deeper into the site than the existing cottages

and comprises a number of first floor bedroom windows in the rear elevation. However, these windows are sited in excess of 20 metres away from the south side elevation of No. 12 Cambridge Road thereby avoiding any undue overlooking between the existing and proposed properties.

21. No first floor windows are shown facing eastwards towards the bungalow at No. 2 Cambridge Road. I am concerned that any windows inserted in this elevation at a later date would adversely affect the privacies of this neighbour and, should Members be minded to grant consent for the scheme, it would be necessary to apply a condition preventing any first floor windows being added to this elevation at a later date without planning permission.
22. With respect to the proposed parking and driveway areas at the rear of the site, I am generally satisfied that these can be provided without unduly affecting the amenities of neighbouring properties. The shared driveway has been set approximately 1 metre off the boundary with No. 12 Cambridge Road in order to allow some space for screening whilst the parking areas have been sited between the driveway and garden areas thereby minimising the number of vehicular movements occurring directly adjacent to the boundary. I am concerned, however, that if shingle/gravel were to be used for the surfacing of the driveway and parking areas, this could result in undue noise and disturbance to immediate neighbours. I would therefore recommend that any consent be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory details of these hard surfaced areas.
22. This Council's Environmental Health Officer has expressed concern about the amenities of future residents of the proposed flats due to the proximity of the development to road traffic noise from the A1307. Noise exposure categories B and C relate to situations where noise mitigation measures may be required in order to ensure that development is acceptable. Should Members be minded to grant consent for the scheme, it would be necessary to apply a condition requiring an assessment of noise exposure together with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures prior to the commencement of any development.

Highway Safety

23. The comments of the Local Highways Authority are awaited and will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting. Prior to the application being submitted, Planning and Highways Officers met the applicant's agent on site in order to discuss the highway safety implications of the proposal. The use of the existing access to serve development of the scale proposed was considered to be unacceptable due to the proximity of this access to a bus stop/layby and to the junction of Cambridge Road with the High Street. The Highways Officer was generally satisfied that the existing access serving Nos. 12-18 Cambridge Road could be utilised without compromising highway safety although stipulated that the site must only accommodate a maximum of 10 dwellings.
24. This Authority's parking standards require an average of 1.5 spaces to be provided per dwelling. The proposal involves the erection of 10 flats and the provision of 15 parking spaces and the scheme therefore complies with the requirements of the Local Plan. Given that the flats are all small 2 bedroom units and in light of the proximity of the site to the centre of the village, I am

satisfied that the level of parking provided is satisfactory to accommodate the needs of residents as well as visitors to the site.

Affordable Housing

25. Linton has a population in excess of 3000 people. The proposed development represents a net gain of 8 dwellings and there would therefore not be a requirement for affordable housing in this instance.

RECOMMENDATION

26. Subject to no objections being received from the Local Highways Authority, delegated powers are sought to approve the application, as amended by plans date stamped 4th February 2004, subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
2. Sc5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5aii);
3. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
4. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
5. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60);
6. Sc5f – Details of materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas (Reason – To minimise disturbance to adjoining residents);
7. Sc22 – No windows at first floor level in the east elevation of the development (Rc22);
8. Surface water drainage details;
9. Foul water drainage details;
10. Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery;
11. Assessment of noise exposure together with appropriate mitigation measures;

+ any conditions required by the Local Highways Authority

Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3 (Sustainable design in built development) and P7/6 (Historic Built Environment);

- b) South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE2 (Development in Rural Growth Settlements),
- c) HG10 (Housing Mix and Design) and EN30 (Development in/adjacent to Conservation Areas)
- 2) The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
- Residential amenity including noise disturbance and overlooking issues
 - Highway safety
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Impact upon setting of adjacent Conservation Area
- 3) All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.