

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2005  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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### **S/0039/05/F - Swavesey Erection of 12 Affordable Dwellings (1 Bungalow, 7 Houses and 4 Flats) for the Guinness Trust Following Demolition of 4 Existing Dwellings**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval  
Date for determination: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2005**

#### **Site and Proposal**

1. The site is located within an estate of Council and ex-Council dwellings. To the south the site adjoins open agricultural land. The southern boundary is marked with mature hedgerow and trees. Two pairs of semi-detached Airey houses stand on the frontage, and there is a mature Willow within the site. The site area is 0.33ha.
2. The full application, received 7<sup>th</sup> January 2005, as last amended by layout plan dated 18<sup>th</sup> July, proposes the demolition of the existing dwellings and the erection of 1 bungalow, 7 houses and a two-storey block of 4 flats. The development will be served by a small estate road to adoptable standard. A total of 22 car parking spaces are proposed. The Willow tree is to be removed. The design of the development is different to the other dwellings on the estate, having asymmetrical roofs and material finishes combining brick, render and red cedar timber cladding. The application has been accompanied by a flood risk assessment, a tree survey and a design statement.
3. The development represents a density of 36 dwellings/hectare on a site of 0.33ha.

#### **Planning History**

4. **S/2285/04/F** Erection of 11 affordable dwellings following demolition of 4 existing dwellings. This was withdrawn in order to submit the current application.

#### **Planning Policy**

5. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:  
**Policy P1/1** (Approach to Development) – development sites involving the use of previously developed land and buildings within existing settlements should be afforded the highest priority.  
**Policy P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development) requires compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities that responds to the local character of the built environment. A high standard of design and sustainability for all new development will be required which provides a sense of place which responds to the local character of the built environment; is integrated with adjoining landscapes; includes variety and surprise within a unified design; and pays attention to the detail of forms, massing, textures, colours and landscaping.  
**Policy P5/5** (Homes in Rural Areas) – small scale housing developments will be permitted in villages only where appropriate, taking into account the need for affordable rural housing, the character of the village and its setting, and the level of

jobs, services, infrastructure and passenger transport provision in the immediate area.

6. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004  
**Policy SE2** (Rural Growth Settlements) – residential development will be permitted provided that the retention of the site is not essential to the character of the village, the development would be sensitive to the character of the village and the amenity of neighbours; and the village has the necessary infrastructure capacity. Development should achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.  
**SE9** (Village Edges)- development on the edge of villages should be sympathetically designed and landscaped to minimise the impact of development on the countryside.  
**Policy HG7** (Affordable Housing on Sites within Village Frameworks) In settlements with a population of up to 3,000, affordable housing should represent up to 50% of the total number of dwellings for which planning permission may be given, dependant upon the level of clearly identified local need, although higher or lower percentages may be agreed in the light of such factors such as proximity to local services, access to public transport, the particular costs associated with the development, and whether provision of affordable housing would prejudice other planning objectives warranting greater priority in the particular case. Such affordable housing to be occupied by qualifying persons and to be subject to cascade provisions secured by a Section 106 Agreement or an alternative form of equally effective provision.  
**Policy HG10** (Housing Mix and Design) requires residential developments to have a mix of units making the best use of the site. The design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape.  
**Policy TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel) – car parking requirements will be restricted to the maximum levels set out in Appendix 7/1. (For dwellings, Appendix 7/1 gives a level of an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, up to a maximum of two per 3 or more bedrooms in poorly accessible areas).

### Consultations

7. **Swavesey Parish Council**- no objection in principle to the proposal. However it has detailed concerns about:
- a) S106 Agreement required to ensure that priority is given to future tenants from Swavesey or to persons having a strong local connection;
  - b) Additional parking for the flats – 6 spaces for 4 units are shown. An additional 2 spaces are recommended so as to avoid parking on the turning head.
  - c) Design of the houses with monopitch roofs. Although the bungalows opposite do have this type of roofline, Whitton Close is made up predominantly of standard dual-pitch rooflines on two-storey houses. The PC would prefer to see new development with dual pitch rooflines.
8. **Local Highway Authority**- No objection in principle. Final clearance of highway details awaited.
9. **Council's Trees Officer**- no objections to the felling of the Willow, which has been causing damage to the structural integrity of nearby dwellings. He recommends that care should be taken when removing the Willow to avoid further damage to properties through swelling of the soil.
10. **Council's Chief Environmental Health Officer** – No objections in principle. Recommends conditions to mitigate noise disturbance during the construction period.

11. **Environment Agency** – No comment, as the site falls within zone 1 of the Flood Zone Matrix (low risk of flooding). However, the EA recommends that a condition regarding details of drainage to be submitted for approval should be attached.
12. **Middle Level Commissioners**- Having requested the preparation of a flood risk assessment, the MLC is not convinced that the site is suitable for drainage by soakaways. Nevertheless, it acknowledges that this aspect will be carefully examined at building regulations stage.
13. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – Initially concerned about detailed aspects of design and layout. These have been addressed in the revised layout.
14. The **Fire and Rescue Service** does not require additional water supplies for fire fighting.

### **Representations**

15. The occupiers of an adjoining dwelling at No 4 Whitton Close have objected on the grounds of the eyesore of the monopitch roofs which would not be in keeping; concern about the need for continued maintenance of the external cladding materials; need for more car parking for the flats, at least 2 spaces per flat; restriction of occupation to Swavesey residents or those with strong connections to the village only.

### **Representations from the Applicant and Agent**

16. The Guinness Trust has sought to involve all neighbours or those nearby and members of the public in their consultations, including the neighbouring objector.
17. The design statement highlights that there is no particular or prevalent architectural style within this area of Swavesey. The proposed design seeks to provide a distinct but sympathetic identity for the new development, and to provide variety and interest to the Whitton Close street scene. Parking for the flats has been provided on the basis of one space per flat and two spaces for visitors.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

#### ***Design and appearance***

18. The Parish Council and nearby occupier have drawn attention to the appearance of the development in contrast to existing houses in the vicinity. The scale and height of the new housing is similar to those on the estate. Monopitch roofs have already been used in single storey housing on the opposite side of the road. The existing estate has a limited range of external materials compared to the proposed dwellings, but this can be seen as attractive variety within a unified design, as envisaged in Policy P1/3. I consider the design and appearance of the development to be acceptable.

#### ***Car parking***

19. The Parish Council and nearby occupier have expressed concern about the provision of car parking for the flats. Each flat has been provided with 1½ spaces, which accords with the standard set out in Policy TP1 and Appendix 7/1 of the Local Plan.

#### ***Other matters***

20. The provision of affordable housing should be regulated by a S106 Agreement in accordance with Policy HG7. The consideration of qualifying persons and the cascade provisions will ensure that those that live in or employed in or have close local connections with the village will be given priority in receiving accommodation, as requested by the Parish Council and nearby objector.

### **Recommendation**

21. Subject to no objections being received from the Local Highways Authority and to the prior signing of a Section 106 Agreement to secure affordable housing in accordance with Policy HG7, delegated powers are sought to approve the application, as amended by plans dated 18<sup>th</sup> July 2005, 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. Sc22 – No windows at first floor level in the north-east elevation of Plot 11 (Rc22);
7. Before development commences details of the method of felling of the Willow within the site so as to avoid undue swelling of the soil shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed scheme.
8. Surface water drainage details;
9. Foul water drainage details;
10. Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery;  
Plus any conditions required by the Local Highways Authority

**Informatives** as recommended by the Environment Agency and Environmental Health Officer. (Method of construction of pile foundations).

### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: Policy P1/1** (Approach to Development); **Policy P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development); **Policy P5/5** (Homes in Rural Areas).
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE2** (Development in Rural Growth Settlements); **SE9** (Village Edges); **Policy HG7** (Affordable Housing on Sites within Village Frameworks); **Policy HG10** (Housing Mix and Design); **Policy TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel).
2. The development 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 and car parking
  - Visual impact on the locality
  - Design and appearance of new development
  - Retention of natural features

**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 Refs. S/0039/05/F, S/2285/04/F

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