

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 7th September 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/1290/05/F - Haslingfield
Erection of Bungalow Following Demolition of Existing Bungalow at 4 Orchard Road
for O P Grell

Recommendation: Refusal
Determination Date: 24th August 2005

Members will visit the site on Monday 5th September 2005.

Site and Proposal

1. The site is accessed by way of a long driveway which runs alongside the northern and western boundaries of the land attached to the Little Rose PH. There is currently a bungalow and garage on the land. A large walnut tree sits in the north western corner of the site which is protected by virtue of a Tree Preservation Order.
2. The full planning application, received on 29th June 2005, proposes the erection of a 3 bedroom 'T' shaped flat roofed bungalow, approximately 3-3.7m in height with a grass and copper roof set 11m back from the northern boundary of the site and 10m from the Walnut tree. An integral garage will provide parking for two cars.

Planning History

3. Full planning permission was granted in January 2005 for the erection of two chalet bungalows following the demolition of the existing bungalow.

Planning Policy

4. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 Policy P5/3 – Density states:

“The average density of new housing development will need to be increased across the Structure Plan area in order to maximise efficiency in the use of sites. In setting density standards appropriate to their area Local Planning Authorities should take into account the following guidelines:

Densities of at least 40 dwellings per hectare should be sought in locations close to a good range of existing or potential services and facilities and where there is, or there is the potential for, good public transport accessibility.

In appropriate locations in or close to the centres of cities and Market Towns and in planned new communities, and in locations with access to high quality public transport services, significantly higher densities should be sought.

Densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable.

Local Planning Authorities should seek to maximise the use of land by applying the highest density possible which is compatible with maintaining local character”.

5. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policy SE4 – List of Group Villages identifies Haslingfield as a Group Village and states:

“Residential development and redevelopment up to a maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village frameworks of Group Villages provided that:

- (a) The retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village;
- (b) The development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape or ecological importance, and the amenities of neighbours;
- (c) The village has the necessary infrastructure capacity; and
- (d) Residential development would not conflict with another policy of the Plan, particularly policy EM8.

Development may exceptionally consist of up to 15 dwellings, if this would make the best use of a brownfield site.

All developments should provide an appropriate mix of dwelling size, type and affordability”.

6. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policy HG10 – Housing Mix and Design states:

“Residential developments will be required to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes (including 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings) 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 landscape. Schemes should also achieve high quality design and distinctiveness, avoiding inflexible standards and promoting energy efficiency. The District Council will support the preparation of Village Design Statements to secure these aims”.

Consultation

7. **Haslingfield Parish Council**
Recommends approval.
8. **Chief Environmental Health Officer**
No objections subject to conditions to control noise during demolition and construction.

Representations

9. Seven letters of support have been received. The main points of support are:
10. Less traffic, less noise, less overlooking, less blocking of light and lower in height than approved scheme for two chalet dwellings.
11. Exciting design which is organic in nature and will enhance the stock of buildings in the village.
12. Very surprised that two dwelling got permission on this small site.
13. Fruit trees and yew will be preserved.
14. One dwelling will have less impact on water and other services.

15. Approved scheme is an overdevelopment of the site and did not enhance the open structure of the village. This proposal respects the neighbourhood.
16. Suggested conditions from occupiers of No. 5 Lilac Close: Roof should be no higher than existing bungalow and no building structure should be within 2m of boundary with 5 Lilac Close.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

17. The key issue is the need to make best use of land, ensuring that densities are appropriate and in line with national and local policies.
18. The site measures approximately 1280m², excluding the access. The proposal therefore represents a density of development of approximately 8 dwellings to the hectare. This is clearly well below the level required by Policy P5/3 of 2003 Structure Plan and is not making best use of land as required in Policy HG10 of the 2004 Local Plan. Such development should only be considered where the character of the area or other constraints such as neighbour amenity issues indicate that the site could not accommodate further dwellings.
19. Planning permission has been granted for two dwellings demonstrating that the site is capable of this greater density of 16 per hectare. Clearly this is also well below policy requirements, however the site is largely surrounded by gardens to properties and I do not consider that any more than two dwellings could be accommodated. The presence of the large walnut tree, protected by means of a Tree Preservation Order also precludes further development.
20. I note the strong local support for the proposal and I accept that it will have less impact on amenity than that approved, not just because it is a single dwelling only, but also due to the very low height of the new dwelling. The design approach is unusual and I note that this too has received local support. Both schemes ensure the retention of the walnut tree. Due to the position of the site away from public views and the low nature of the proposal I would have no concerns over the design or the proposed use of a grass and copper roof, though the details of this would have to be considered. However I cannot recommend approval of this proposal which does not make best use of the site particularly in view of the extant permission for two dwellings.

Recommendation

21. Refusal for the following reasons:

The site benefits from extant planning permission for two dwellings granted under Planning Permission reference S/2055/04/F. The proposal represents a density of approximately 8 dwellings/hectare and does not make best use of the site. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy P5/3 of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and Policies SE4 and HG10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Planning Files reference S/1290/05/F and S/2055/04/F, South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.

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