

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee      2<sup>nd</sup> November 2005  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/1273/05/F - Gamlingay**  
**Erection of Dwelling to Replace Existing Living Accommodation**  
**4 & 5 Little Heath for Mr and Mrs P Halpin**

**Recommendation: Refusal**  
**Date for Determination: 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2005**

### Departure Application

#### Site and Proposal

1. Members will recall this application being withdrawn from last months agenda (Item 29) in order to allow further discussions to be held with the applicant. Members are requested to refer to last months agenda for a description of the site, planning history, policies, consultations and representations.
2. Following a meeting amended drawings have been formally submitted. The proposed dwelling remains a 4-bedroom property with a two-storey central section with a vaulted roof rising to a height of 6.9m. The width of this section has been reduced from 13m to 10m. Attached to either end of the central section, at an angle, are two pitched roof wings, both with a ridge height of 5.9m. The north wing, which contains a double garage with ensuite bedroom above, has a frontage width of 5.2m. The south wing, which contains a family and utility room at ground floor, with dressing area and ensuite to bedroom 1, has a frontage width of 4.5m. Previously the south wing was single storey. The total gross internal floor area of the dwelling is 290m<sup>2</sup>. The walls are to be clad in timber or rendered and the vaulted roof will have a standing seam cladding, clad either in copper with pantiles for the pitched roofs or, in zinc coated aluminium and slates.
3. The dwelling is set back from and angled to the road to avoid the mature Oak Tree at the front of the site.

#### Consultation

4. The comments of **Gamlingay Parish Council** in respect of the revised plans will be reported verbally. It previously recommended approval.

#### Representations

5. Any representations received in respect of the revised plans will be reported verbally. None was received to the original scheme.

#### Planning Comments - Key Issues

6. The principle of the erection of a dwelling on this site to replace the two existing living units has been accepted with the granting of outline consent. However, this application has to be treated as a departure from the development plan (Policy HG15 of the Local Plan in respect of scale of replacement dwellings) as it is a full application rather than one seeking approval of reserved matters under the outline consent. Such a submission

is not possible, as the current application does not comply with the condition attached to the outline consent restricting any dwelling to single storey only. The key issue that needs to be considered with this application is whether the proposed dwelling is in character with the area and acceptable in terms of its visual impact in the countryside.

7. The outline consent is restricted to a single storey dwelling to ensure that the height of any new building respects the height of the existing accommodation on the site in order to minimise its visual impact in the countryside. Given the nature of the existing accommodation on the site, two mobile homes and associated outbuildings, it is inevitable that any new dwelling will be larger in scale. In this case evidence from an illustrative layout plan submitted by the applicants at the outline stage suggest a footprint of existing mobile units and buildings of 137sq.m, all being single storey. This compares with a proposed footprint of 192sq.m. and gross internal floorspace of 290sq.m.
8. There is a chalet bungalow to the north of the site that has a ridge height of 7.1m (this height has been checked on site and adjusted slightly since last months report) and other properties in the area are a mixture of single and two-storey. I am therefore of the view that despite the condition attached to the outline consent it may be possible to design a dwelling with an element of first floor accommodation that would not be out of character nor have an adverse visual impact on the surrounding countryside. I am however of the view that the proposal should be judged against the criteria set out in Policy HG15 of the Local Plan.
9. I am pleased that the central barrel roof section of the dwelling has been reduced in width from 13m to 10m. This compares to the 14m width of the two-storey section of the adjacent chalet bungalow. I am however concerned that, when combined with the two wings either side of the central section of the proposed dwelling, which are 5.9m high, the proposed dwelling does not achieve the above objectives. In discussions with officers prior to submission of the revised drawings a view was expressed that the form of the original scheme with a single storey wing on one side and two storey wing on the other resulted in an unbalanced appearance and that a preferable approach would be for the wings to be of equal height. These design objectives must however be considered alongside the issue of the resulting mass of the building.
10. Whilst the design approach adopted by the applicant does not necessarily reflect the style of properties in the locality I am of the view that such an approach may be acceptable on this site but remain concerned that the overall size and scale of the building is still out of character with the dwelling it is intended to replace and would materially change the impact of the site in the countryside. In coming to this view I have recognised the point raised by the applicant that the bulk of the proposed building appears greater on the elevation drawing than it will on the site due to the two wings being set at an angle to the central section. If the height of the two attached wings can be lowered it may be possible that the overall bulk of the dwelling can be reduced to an extent that would allow me to reach a different conclusion on the proposal. The applicant has previously advised that this is not feasible without compromising the accommodation at first floor, however I have asked that this be looked at again
11. I note the applicants' comments in respect of the sustainable elements of the scheme, which are to be encouraged. However, these considerations do not outweigh the above concerns and in its current form I have to recommend refusal of the application as amended.
12. Notwithstanding the recommendation, if Committee is minded to approve the application, I do not consider that it would be necessary to refer the application to the Secretary of State. Having regard to its scale, nature, location and absence of local objections, it is

not considered that it would significantly prejudice the implementation of Development Plan Policies to warrant referral.

### **Recommendation**

13. That the application be refused as amended by drawings dated 12<sup>th</sup> August 2005 for the following reason:
  1. The proposed dwelling in terms of its size and scale is out of character with the dwelling it is intended to replace and will materially increase the impact of the site on the surrounding countryside. The proposal is therefore unacceptable as it is contrary to the aims of Policy HG15 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

**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/1273/05/F and S/2461/04/O

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