
MAIN CASE

Reference No: 17/00330/OUT

Proposal: Erection of a dwelling house plus garage.

Site Address: 90 Aldreth Road Haddenham Ely Cambridgeshire CB6 3PN

Applicant: Mr John Papworth

Case Officer: Toni Hylton, Planning Officer

Parish: Haddenham

Ward: Haddenham

Ward Councillor/s: Councillor Steve Cheetham
Councillor Mark Hugo
Councillor Stuart Smith

Date Received: 1 March 2017

Expiry Date:
5th May 2017

[R280]

1.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 Members are requested to REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons;

1. The proposed dwelling is located within the countryside and, by virtue of its distance from the main settlement of Haddenham, is considered to be an unsustainable location. The proposal does not promote sustainable forms of transport and the future residents of this dwelling will be reliant on motor vehicles in order to access any local services or facilities. The proposal does not meet any of the special circumstances as identified in Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal fails to comply with the policies GROWTH 5 and COM7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and Paragraphs 14 and 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework, as it fails to promote sustainable development.
2. Located within open countryside and remote from the development envelope of any settlement, the proposal would be visually intrusive form of development that would cause demonstrable harm to the character of the rural landscape and its setting within the surrounding countryside contrary to the requirements of Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan and paragraphs 14 and 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.0 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 2.1 Outline planning permission is being sought for the erection of a detached dwelling, with some matters reserved. Matters of access and scale are to be considered as part of the application; however matters relating to appearance, layout and scale are reserved.
- 2.2 Access to the dwelling would be from an existing access used for the farming operation located to the rear.
- 2.3 The scale of the proposal is for a dwelling approximately 8 metres in height to accommodate two storey's, with an overall footprint of 122 metres². A detached garage is also proposed, with an approximate footprint of 64 metres². This has been described as subordinate to the main dwelling. No details relating to the scale of the garage have been submitted.
- 2.4 The full planning application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>. **Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, in the application file.**
- 2.5 This application has been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Mark Hugo who considers the application is a form of infill development; does not set a precedent for similar development; the site is no longer in agricultural use; the proposed dwelling would be occupied by someone who is retired and; the footpath to Haddenham is well used.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 01/00854/OUT Proposed a detached dwelling. Refused 09.11.2001

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 The site is located in the open countryside on the road between Haddenham and Aldreth. The site is approximately 0.4 miles from Haddenham and 1 mile from Aldreth.
- 4.2 The site has dwellings in close proximity to the proposed dwelling, however, the character of Aldreth Road, is sporadic development, most of which relates to existing agricultural or horticultural uses or contributes to the rural economy.
- 4.3 The site itself is relatively flat with planting to the northern, southern and eastern boundaries. To the west is the remaining agricultural land which is shown to be in the ownership of the applicant. On the site are some agricultural machinery and a caravan. Having reviewed the planning history of the site, no planning permission exists for the caravan.

4.4 Opposite and to the rear of the site are open fields which are mostly arable. The site is elevated from the east, as the land opposite to the site starts to drop away to rambling fields, with views over East Cambridgeshire.

4.5 The site is located within Flood Zone 1.

5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

5.1 Responses were received from the following consultees and these are summarised below. The full responses are available on the Council's web site.

Haddenham Parish Council - No concerns were raised although it was noted the site is outside the development envelope.

Ward Councillors – Cllr Mark Hugo requested the application be discussed at Planning Committee. His reasons are given in paragraph 2.5 of this report.

Local Highways Authority – No objections on the grounds of highway safety and seeks no conditions.

CCC Growth & Development - No Comments Received

Senior Trees Officer – No objection subject to the retention of hedging and trees that surround the site. A condition would need to be applied to any approved decision to protect the trees and hedges.

Waste Strategy (ECDC) - No objection, subject to informatives.

5.2 Neighbours – 3 neighbouring properties were notified and no responses have been received. A site notice was posted on a telegraph pole outside 90 Aldreth Road.

6.0 The Planning Policy Context

6.1 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

GROWTH 1	Levels of housing, employment and retail growth
GROWTH 2	Locational strategy
GROWTH 4	Delivery of growth
GROWTH 5	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
ENV 1	Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2	Design
ENV 4	Energy efficiency and renewable energy in construction
ENV 7	Biodiversity and geology
ENV 8	Flood risk
ENV 9	Pollution
COM 7	Transport impact
COM 8	Parking provision
HOU 2	Housing density

6.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations
Design Guide
Contaminated Land

6.3 National Planning Policy Framework 2012

- 1 Building a strong, competitive economy
- 4 Promoting sustainable transport
- 6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- 7 Requiring good design

7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

- 7.1 The main issues to consider when determining this application relate to the principle of development, the impacts upon the character and appearance of the area, ecology, highway safety and residential amenity.

7.2 Principle of Development

- 7.2.1 The application site lies outside of the defined development boundary. The development of the site for housing would therefore conflict with Policy GROWTH 2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan which seeks to focus new housing development within defined settlement boundaries. However as the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land, Policy GROWTH 2 cannot be considered up to date in so far as it relates to the supply of housing land. In this situation, the presumption in favour of development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) means that permission for development should be granted unless any adverse impacts of so doing would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.
- 7.2.2 Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that isolated new homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances. This site is considered to be isolated from any built settlement, being 0.4 miles from the edge of nearest settlement of Haddenham and 1 mile from Aldreth. The site is located along a 60mph road in a rural location. A track is opposite the site which can accommodate pedestrians walking in single file, walking side by side is difficult as it is grassed and uneven and does not constitute a traditional footpath. On this basis it is unlikely to encourage the occupiers of the dwelling to use the footpath on a regular basis, as it is limited in its functionality. It is therefore considered to be an unsustainable location for the erection of a new dwelling, as it would rely heavily on the use of the private motor vehicle.
- 7.2.3 Sustainable is defined in the dictionary as 'able to continue over a period of time' or 'causing little or no damage to the environment and able to continue for a long time'. In allowing residential development in such rural locations, it does not enable the rural area to continue as essentially land is being lost from farming and other rural enterprises to residential development. The site itself is classified as 'very good'

agricultural land according to the Natural England Land Classification Map; its loss would be detrimental to the rural area and its function for agriculture. On this basis its loss would be detrimental to the character of the rural area and it is not a sustainable use of the land for generations to come. Paragraph 109 of NPPF seeks to retain high quality land. Whilst this is not a reason for refusal it is a factor in the determination of the application.

- 7.2.4 It is acknowledged that there are existing examples of residential dwellings in the area, however some of these dwellings have been in situ for some time and none have been erected since the previous application in 2001. Their presence does not mean that new development should be accepted on a field in the rural area. A recent appeal decision that was issued, supported this view by stating “existing development is not a *fait accompli* for subsequent development; each case must be decided on its own merits”.
- 7.2.5 Policy COM7 of East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 requires that development is designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car and to promote sustainable modes of transport. Haddenham has 13 buses each day going to and forth to Ely. The nearest bus stop is in the centre of Haddenham and no buses operate on a Sunday. Having limited access to a regular bus service, will encourage the use of the motor vehicle which is contrary to the provisions of the policy. Whilst this is a rural area and most people do have access to their own private transport, it is important not to encourage the use of the private motor car, introducing another dwelling in this location will encourage the use of the private motor car and as such would be contrary to Policy COM7 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 7.2.6 The proposal fails to meet the requirements of sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.

7.3 Residential Amenity

- 7.3.1 The proposed dwelling could be sited within the site so as not to impact on the residential amenities of the adjoining neighbours. At this stage there are no layout plans, only an indicative plan which indicates that the site can support a dwelling of the scale proposed. It is considered that the siting and design of any dwelling could protect the residential amenities of adjoining neighbours at 90 and 88a Aldreth Road.

7.4 Visual Amenity

- 7.4.1 The area around the site is rural in nature with sporadic residential development between two settlements. The application site is part of an agricultural unit, which is owned by the applicant. It is an elevated site with views over open countryside to the east with views of development in the distance to the west.
- 7.4.2 Policy ENV1 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 requires new development proposals to demonstrate that their location creates positive complementary relationships with existing development and protects, conserves, and where possible enhances space between settlements and their wider landscape setting. Furthermore, Policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 requires all new development proposals to respect the landscape of the surrounding area and ensure

the location of the buildings relates sympathetically to the surrounding area. The NPPF also seeks to protect the intrinsic character of the beauty of the countryside.

- 7.4.3 Due to the matters of layout, landscaping and appearance being reserved, no details of the design of the dwelling and detached garage have been submitted and therefore cannot be considered. However, the scale of the proposed dwelling has been submitted for consideration. The scale of the proposal is commensurate with a two storey dwelling approximately 8 metres in height. The length of the dwelling is shown to be 16 metres with a width of 8 metre (making an overall footprint of 128² metres, although the application submitted says 122 metres²). A detached garage is also proposed, but no details of this has been submitted although it suggested the footprint of this building would be approximately 60 metres ². The applicant does state that this would be subordinate to the main dwelling. The proposed dwelling would not occupy a third of the plot in size, in line with the guidelines set out within the SPD Design Guide. However it is considered that the erection of a dwelling in this area would create an urbanising impact, which erodes the rural character and nature of the area.
- 7.4.4 Whilst there are dwellings in the area, the continued erection of dwellings in the rural areas, does erode the rural character of the area. Adding another dwelling in this location will start the erosion of the rural character and nature of the area. As such the proposals are contrary to policies ENV1 and ENV2 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and Paragraphs 14, 17 and 56 – 58 of the NPPF.

7.5 Highways

- 7.5.1 The vehicular access that already exists for the farming activities is proposed to be used as the access for the proposed dwelling. Having consulted with the Highways Authority, no objection in terms of highway safety has been raised. Adequate visibility can be achieved.

7.6 Ecology

- 7.6.1 In order to protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015, a condition should be placed on any approval to ensure that measures to enhance the biodiversity in the vicinity are installed prior to occupation of the development

7.7 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.7.1 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is not therefore considered to be at high risk of flooding. Any planning permission granted will be subject to a condition requiring a detailed drainage strategy to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

7.8 Other Material Matters

- 7.8.1 In 2001 planning permission was sought for the erection of detached dwelling by the same applicant. The application was recommended for refusal by the case officer and subsequently refused at Planning Committee in November of 2001. Whilst this is some time ago, the reasons for refusal have some relevance. The application was refused using the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2000, however the

fundamental principles of those policies have come through to the current Local Plan.

- 7.8.2 The first reason for refusal was the principle of a dwelling in the rural area and how it “would result in the consolidation of the existing sporadic development along this part of Aldreth Road, creating a built up appearance in an otherwise characterised as rural”. There have been no additional dwellings built in the area since this application was refused and on this basis it would appear there have been no significant changes to the area that would deem an additional dwelling in the rural area to be considered acceptable. As such the principle of development in the area would be contrary to policies GROWTH 2, GROWTH 5 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 7.8.3 A second reason for refusal was the introduction of an additional dwelling in the rural area, which had limited facilities and would lead to the increase in the use of the motor car. Whilst the policies were within the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2000, and it has since been updated, the principle remains the same. The introduction of a dwelling in this location would lead to a dependence on the motor car, contrary to Policy COM7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.

7.9 **Planning Balance**

- 7.9.1 The proposal would provide the following benefits; the provision of an additional dwelling to the district’s housing supply for which we know we have a current shortfall. The dwelling would be constructed to modern building standards and during construction would make a positive contribution to the local and wider economy in the immediate short term future.
- 7.9.2 However, it is considered these benefits will be for a short period of time and would not outweigh the significant and demonstrable harm which would be caused by the proposed development.
- 7.9.3 The creation of an additional dwelling in the rural area, compromises the aims of the provisions of Policy GROWTH 2 of East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 which restricts development in the rural area unless it is for the efficient operation of agriculture, horticulture and the rural economy. The proposed dwelling would not be related to an agricultural activity and would not make a long term contribution to the rural economy. As such it fails to meet the provisions of the policy.
- 7.9.4 Whilst, the decision for an additional dwelling on the same site in 2001 was some time ago there have been no significant changes in the area or Local Plan policy that would see a shift in allowing an additional dwelling in the rural area. The only change relates to the districts shortfall in housing supply, however the reasons for refusal far outweigh this need and one dwelling does not make a significant contribution to this shortfall.
- 7.9.5 In conclusion, this proposal conflicts with Policies GROWTH 2, GROWTH 5, ENV1, ENV2 and COM7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the core principles of the NPPF.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
17/00330/OUT	Toni Hylton Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Toni Hylton Planning Officer 01353 665555 toni.hylton@eastcambs.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 -

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20April%202015%20-%20front%20cover%20and%20inside%20front%20cover.pdf>