

MAIN CASE

Proposal: Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of three bungalows

Location: 16 Malvern Close Newmarket Suffolk CB8 8BP

Applicant: Mr Michael Hardcastle

Agent: Graham Waterhouse

Reference No: 12/01063/OUT

Case Officer: Scott Jackson

Parish: Woodditton
Ward: Cheveley
Ward Councillor/s: Councillor Tom Kerby
Councillor Sue Willows

Date Received: 7 December 2012 Expiry Date: 1 February 2013

[M230]

1.0 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing detached bungalow and the erection of three detached bungalows with associated parking and amenity space. The matters being considered at this outline planning stage are the means of access and the scale of development. Two off-street parking spaces are proposed to the front of each dwelling, resulting in a total of six off-street parking spaces.
- 1.2 The main considerations in the determination of this application are the impact of development upon the character and appearance of the area and highway issues, including vehicular parking and turning. The proposals would remove a large, detached bungalow in a central position within the plot and replace it with three detached bungalows built up to the side boundaries of the site. The erection of three dwellings on the site would significantly reduce the openness that exists between existing dwellings along Malvern Close, thereby resulting in a contrived and cramped form of development, to the detriment of the visual appearance of the street scene.
- 1.3 Whilst the provision of two off-street parking spaces to serve each dwelling complies with the Council's maximum parking standards, there is no provision made within the site for the turning of vehicles. This lack of turning provision, together with the proposed tandem parking layout from a single access point will likely result in the

reversing of vehicles onto the public highway, across the footpath to the potential detriment of pedestrian and highway safety.

1.4 This application is therefore recommended for REFUSAL.

1.5 This application has been called-in to Committee by Councillor Tom Kerby.

1.6 A site visit has been arranged for 11.30am.

2.0 **THE APPLICATION**

2.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing detached bungalow and the erection of three detached bungalows with associated parking and amenity space. The matters being considered at this outline planning stage are the means of access and the scale of development. Two off-street parking spaces are proposed to the front of each dwelling, resulting in a total of six off-street parking spaces. These parking spaces will be arranged in a tandem layout and accessed off a single vehicular access point. To the rear of each dwelling a garden space in excess of 50m² is proposed.

3.0 **THE APPLICANT'S CASE**

3.1 A design and access statement has been submitted with the planning application, this sets out the case for the proposed development. This document states that the bungalows will each provide 2-3 bedrooms and the scale of the dwellings will be similar to other bungalows in the street. Indicative dimensions of the proposed bungalows are given as 10.6m x 7m with a maximum ridge height of 6m. In conclusion the document states that there may be marginal loss of amenity to the two adjoining houses.

4.0 **THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT**

4.1 The site comprises a corner plot located at the end of a residential cul-de-sac on the Newmarket Fringe, within the Woodditton parish. A detached bungalow is sited centrally within the site within a spacious plot and off-street parking is available for a minimum of three vehicles. The land to the front and side of the dwelling is laid to grass and a single garage is attached to the northern elevation. The dwelling is located on an elevated position at the top of Malvern Close which rises steadily in a south west to north east direction. The area is residential in nature and comprises detached bungalows, occasionally broken up by a pair of semi-detached bungalows set back from the highway within spacious plots. The bungalow on the site is constructed from red brick with a dark plain tiled roof. A secondary access is available to the rear of the site, taken from an unmade track known as The Drift.

5.0 **PLANNING HISTORY**

5.1 No relevant planning history.

6.0 **REPLIES TO CONSULTATIONS**

6.1 3 neighbouring properties notified and a site notice was displayed. 9 letters of objection were received raising the following issues:

- Insufficient parking provision;
- Visitors to the site will have to park their vehicles in the turning head;
- Parking will infringe on the ability for vehicles to turn around in the highway;
- Building contractors should not use the lane to the rear of the site due to its poor condition;
- Construction vehicles using Malvern Close which is a narrow road;
- Development is out of keeping;
- Cramped, overdevelopment of the site;
- Capacity of drains;
- Increase in traffic;
- Lane to the rear is unsuitable for vehicles;
- 40% increase in built development;
- Existing issue with vehicles parked in the turning head which will affect access to the site;
- Loss of open character to street scene;
- Loss of light to rear bedroom window of 15 Malvern Close;
- Increase in noise disruption;
- Precedent for future development;
- Increase in traffic congestion;
- Impact on character and openness of the area;
- Development will not respect the spacing between existing dwellings.

6.2 Environmental Health- No objection subject to the imposition of conditions for hours of construction and a contaminated land survey to be undertaken.

6.3 Highways- No provision has been made within the site for the turning of vehicles. The indicative site layout is not considered acceptable as it would generate conflict in the use of the access at the highway boundary, and because of the lack of on-site turning and tandem parking layout the development would result in excessive manoeuvring in the turning head on Malvern Close. Therefore recommend a revision of the scheme to incorporate an on-site turning area.

6.4 Councillor Tom Kerby- the application has been called in as it is in the wider public interest.

6.5 Woodditton Parish Council- Object on the following grounds:

- Overdevelopment;
- Precedent for further development;
- Inadequate vehicular access, insufficient width;
- Existing foul drainage issues.

7.0 **THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

7.1 East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009

- CS1 Spatial Strategy
- CS2 Housing
- H1 Housing Mix and Type
- S4 Developer contribution
- S6 Transport Impact
- S7 Parking provision
- EN1 Landscape and settlement character
- EN2 Design

7.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations
Design Guide

7.3 National Planning Policy Framework 2012

- 6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- 7 Requiring good design

8.0 **PLANNING COMMENTS**

8.1 The main issues in the determination of this planning application are the principle of development, impact on the character and appearance of the street scene, highway issues and residential amenity.

Principle

8.2 The application site is located within the parish of Woodditton, on the Newmarket Fringe; this is within the defined settlement boundary, on land defined as a Key Service Centre. Core Strategy Policy CS2 states that on non-allocated housing sites in Key Service Centres any scale of housing is appropriate, provided that all other material planning considerations are satisfied. Therefore residential development on this site is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Impact on street scene

8.3 This part of the Newmarket Fringe has a clearly defined character, that being equally spaced detached bungalows, occasionally broken up by a pair of semi-detached bungalows, set back from the highway within spacious plots. Where the highway culminates at its turning head, there are three larger detached bungalows that have a greater degree of spacing between them, thereby giving a sense of openness to this section of the street scene. The existing bungalow, in terms of its siting, spacing and height relates sympathetically to the plot parameters and contributes to the open character of the street. It forms part of the original layout of the estate.

It is the spacing between and around the dwellings and the general uniformity of built development that gives this area of the Newmarket Fringe its particular character.

The removal of the dwelling and its subsequent replacement with three detached bungalows would appear entirely at odds with the existing pattern of development, resulting in a cramped and contrived form of development. Whilst the layout plan is indicative, it provides an accurate representation of the scale of dwellings proposed on the site, this shows that the proposed bungalows will be sited in close proximity to one another and to the site boundaries. The siting of the dwellings in close proximity to one another and the site boundaries significantly reduces the openness of the street scene, thereby resulting in residential development that fails to respect the rhythm and spacing of the area, to the detriment of its character and appearance.

An important point of note is that the geometric layout of a residential cul-de-sac always results in larger plots arranged around the turning head. However just because these plots are larger than those on the remainder of the street does not set a presumption that these plots should be developed for further residential units.

In terms of establishing a precedent for further residential development of this nature and number it should be noted that a planning application would be required, such an application would be considered on its own merits. However any previous subdivision of existing curtilage would be a material consideration for future applications (i.e. if this application was approved).

Highways

- 8.4 The proposed parking layout consists of two off-street parking spaces to serve each plot arranged in tandem, taken from a single point of access. No provision has been made within the site for the turning of vehicular traffic, in order to allow them to leave the site in a forward gear. The County Council Highways Officer has recommended that the site layout be revised to incorporate a turning area, in order to prevent a situation whereby the vehicles accessing the site will continuously reverse out of the site, to the potential detriment of pedestrian and highway safety.

It is considered that the proposed parking layout, consisting of one space in tandem with another, taken from a single point of access, without on-site turning provision would result in cars reversing out onto the public highway, and would pose a hazard to public and highway safety.

The provision of 2 off-street parking spaces per dwelling complies with the maximum parking standards set out in Appendix 3 of the adopted Core Strategy. Whilst there would be an increase in traffic as a result of additional dwellings being constructed on the site, the maximum parking standards have been met in this case. The parking of vehicles within the highway and within the turning head is an ongoing issue and it would be the responsibility of those vehicle users to ensure that they do not park in an irresponsible or unsafe manner. Inevitably the development would generate vehicular traffic from visitors to the proposed bungalows; there is sufficient space within the highway to accommodate this additional traffic.

The use of the lane (The Drift) to the rear of the site by construction traffic would have to be considered by the site operator in terms of its width, capacity, condition and ability to accommodate heavier/bulkier vehicles and deliveries. The existing carriageway along Malvern Close is wide enough to allow one vehicle to safely pass another (side by side) and to accommodate construction vehicles which may be of a

bulkier nature. The turning head would provide an adequate turning space for construction traffic to turn within the carriageway and exit from the site in a forward gear.

Residential amenity

- 8.5 The development proposes three detached bungalows and the scale parameters have been provided with the planning application. It should be noted that this is an outline planning application with layout, landscaping and appearance reserved for a subsequent reserved matters application. Therefore the loss of residential amenity to the rear bedroom window of 15 Malvern Close, through the effects of loss of light cannot be accurately assessed at this time as detailed aspects such as the siting of the dwellings and the height of boundary treatments are not known at the outline planning stage.

It is noted that some disruption will be inevitable to neighbouring properties during the construction period. Neighbours may suffer some disturbance and inconvenience during the construction period but these works would only take place for a temporary period with no long-term harm to the residential amenities of the locality.

The planning application form states that the dwellings will be connected to the existing mains sewer for foul drainage disposal. The capacity or adequacy of the existing mains sewer is a matter that would be addressed by the sewerage undertaker and the physical connection to the sewer would be dealt with under the building regulations procedure.

Summary

In conclusion it is considered that the removal of a single detached dwelling and its replacement with three bungalows results in a contrived and cramped form of development that is at odds with the character of development in this part of the Newmarket Fringe, characterised by equally spaced detached and semi-detached bungalows arranged in a uniform layout. Furthermore the lack of turning provision for vehicles, together with the proposed tandem parking layout and a single point of access will necessitate the reversing of vehicles onto the public highway, to the detriment of highway and pedestrian safety. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION- REFUSAL

- 1 The form and character of the immediate surroundings of the site largely consists of detached bungalows, set back from the highway with large gardens to the rear and regular spacing between each dwelling, thereby providing a sense of openness to the street scene. This proposal, for three dwellings between two existing detached bungalows, does not respect that pattern; consequently the proposed dwellings would appear squeezed into the site, resulting in a cramped and contrived form of development, at odds with the general context of the immediate area, where the gaps between properties contribute significantly to the rhythm and character of the street scene. The proposal therefore fails to comply with policy EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009, which seeks to ensure development respects

the character of the area and is of a scale and form which relates sympathetically to the surrounding area.

- 2 The layout does not make provision for vehicular turning within the site. Furthermore the proposed tandem parking layout will result in the use of a single access and vehicles being parked one directly behind another. The proposed development would be likely to result in the manoeuvring of vehicles on the adjoining public highway, thereby obstructing the highway footpath. In addition the layout of the parking for the proposed dwelling would be likely to result in vehicles reversing onto the public highway. The proposed development, if permitted would therefore be detrimental to pedestrian and highway safety and is considered contrary to policies S6 and S7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location(s)</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
The Case File- 12/01063/OUT	Scott Jackson Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Scott Jackson Planning Officer 01353 665555 scott.jackson@eastcambs.gov.uk