
MAIN CASE

Reference No: 15/01478/FUL

Proposal: The demolition of an existing bungalow and replacement with two new single bedroom bungalows

Site Address: 32 The Holmes Littleport Cambridgeshire CB6 1NH

Applicant: The Littleport Town Lands Charity

Case Officer: Barbara Greengrass, Senior Planning Officer

Parish: Littleport

Ward: Littleport East
Ward Councillor/s: Councillor David Ambrose-Smith
Councillor Jo Webber

Date Received: 14 December 2015 **Expiry Date:** 15 April 2016

[Q241]

1.0 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 Members are requested to REFUSE the application for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development due to its bulk and width would amount to an overdevelopment of the site, which would be out of keeping and detrimental to the character of the streetscene. As such it is contrary to Policy ENV 2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposal does not incorporate adequate on-site vehicular parking and manoeuvring facilities to the standard required by the Local Planning Authority. The proposal, if permitted would therefore be likely to result in an undesirable increase in on street parking to the detriment of highway safety. As such it is contrary to Policy COM 8 of the East Cambridgeshire local Plan 2015 and paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. The proposal does not provide for adequate visibility each side of the vehicular access and will allow vehicles to reverse onto the highway which would likely lead to danger and inconvenience to users of the footway from egressing vehicles. As such it is contrary to Policy COM 7 of the east Cambridgeshire Local Plan and paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.0 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 2.1 The application seeks consent for the demolition of an existing bungalow and its replacement with a pair of semi-detached single bedroom bungalows each with a single parking space, to accessibility standard, at the front of the site. The proposed bungalows are designed to enable occupation by local disabled or elderly residents as arranged by the Charity. The dwellings will be a mirror image of each other with a front projection finished in buff facing brickwork and brown coloured pantiles. Each bungalow has a floor area of 59.5 sq metres. The pair occupy 35% of the plot which has an area of 382 sq metres. They have a standard eaves height of 2.5 metres and a ridge height of 5.5 metres.
- 2.2 Each property has a modest rear amenity space of 12 and 9 metres in depth. This is considered adequate, given the nature of the properties and the requirements of the Design Guide.
- 2.3 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.**
- 2.4 The application has been called to Planning Committee by Cllr Jo Webber.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 No relevant planning history.

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 The site lies within Littleport village in a predominantly residential environment. The streetscene in the vicinity of the site is characterised by low level bungalows. The site occupies a corner plot on The Holmes and therefore has quite a prominent position in the street. It is bounded by the road on one side, a bungalow to the other side and fields to the rear. The site comprises an existing bungalow.

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.

Local Highways Authority – recommend refusal for the following reasons;

1. The proposal does not incorporate adequate on-site vehicular parking and manoeuvring facilities to the standard required by the Local Planning Authority. The proposal, if permitted would therefore be likely to result in an undesirable increase in on-street parking to the detriment of highway safety.
2. Inadequate visibility is available each side of the vehicular access with the public highway which would likely lead to danger and inconvenience to users of the footway from egressing vehicles.

Highways Comments

If permitted this arrangement would require drivers to either reverse out on to the road on a corner with limited forward visibility or by completing a reversing manoeuvre on the highway on a corner with limited forward visibility. This would likely lead to the detriment of highways safety for the residences and all other road users.

CCC Growth & Development - No Comments Received

The Ely Group Of Internal Drainage Boards – provided soakaways provide suitable means of surface water disposal the Board will not object.

Parish – No concerns raised.

Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board – provided soakaways form an effective means of surface water disposal in this area the Board will not object.

Cllr Jo Webber – the bungalows are designed to be wheelchair friendly with the minimal amount of external space as this becomes a burden to residents. The dwellings are similar to new bungalows to the west and I don't consider this proposal to be overdevelopment. It will be built to a similar design as the existing Charity properties.

With regard to visibility, it is planned to remove the existing wall and shrubbery to create a more open frontage therefore visibility will be improved from existing.

With regard to parking on site the likelihood of the residents having their own car is unlikely. Of the 14 properties in The Holmes owned by the Towns Lands Charity only 5 residents have cars. The Charity own the parking area to the front of Number 5 – 15 plus additional parking for 3 -4 cars outside 15a. The bungalows are designed to help needy people from the Parish, aged over 60. The majority are in their 70s and 90s. The Trust looks to house those people on their waiting list who are most in need.

- 5.2 A site notice was posted and 4 neighbouring properties were notified and no responses have been received.

6.0 The Planning Policy Context

6.1 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

GROWTH 2	Locational strategy
GROWTH 3	Infrastructure requirements
GROWTH 5	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
ENV 1	Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2	Design
COM 7	Transport impact
COM 8	Parking provision
GROWTH 6	Community-led development

6.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

Design Guide
Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations

6.3 National Planning Policy Framework 2012

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

7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

The main issues to be considered in determination of this application are;

- principle of development
- the impact on the streetscene and the character of the area,
- the impact on residential amenity
- highway safety

7.1 Principle of development

The Local Planning Authority is not currently able to demonstrate that it has an adequate five year supply of land for housing. Therefore, Local Plan policy GROWTH 2 relating to the supply of housing must be considered out of date and housing applications assessed in terms of the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. This means that development proposals should be approved unless any adverse effects of the development significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The benefits of this application are considered to be: the provision of an additional and replacement dwelling built to modern, sustainable building standards and the positive contribution to the local and wider economy in the short term through construction work.

The site is located within the development boundary of Littleport and is therefore in a sustainable location. The principle of development is therefore acceptable subject to compliance with other local plan policies and all other material planning considerations and form part of the planning balance for this application.

7.2 Visual impact

The application site is currently occupied by a single bungalow surrounded by bungalows within spacious plots. The existing bungalow is modest and set back from the site frontage. The proposal for a matching pair of semi-detached bungalows will be set further forward and double the width of built form on the plot so that it virtually fills the plot from one side to the other. The visual impact and dominance of the built form is exacerbated by the fact that it will extend to the edge of the plot on a prominent corner in the streetscene.

The provision of two accessibility parking spaces on the frontage backing onto the highway, further exacerbates the overdeveloped and cramped nature of the development. It is considered that the impact of the development due to its bulk and scale would have a significantly and demonstrably harmful impact on the streetscene and the character of the area, such that it should be refused

7.3 Highway safety

As set out above the Highway Authority have recommended refusal because the parking arrangement would result in vehicles reversing onto the highway on a corner which is likely to lead to the detriment of highway safety for residents and other road users. Whilst it is appreciated that vehicles already reverse onto the highway from the existing property and that visibility can be improved by removing the wall, it must be accepted that the wall of the new construction will obscure visibility from cars approaching the site from the north, around the bend and that the provision of two dwellings on this site will intensify the level of vehicular movements on the site.

In addition the highway authority object as the proposal does not incorporate adequate on-site parking provision to meet the Councils standard of two spaces per dwelling as stated in Policy COM 8. The proposal, if permitted would therefore be likely to result in an undesirable increase in on street parking to the detriment of highway safety. The parking standards can be relaxed in order to reflect accessibility of non car modes of transport or in sensitive locations for reasons of visual amenity. However this is not justified in this instance. Neither could a reduction be entertained on the basis that the dwellings are proposed to be occupied by the elderly as there is no guarantee that they will not own a car but in fact they are more likely to have visitors and carers to the property on a regular basis. It is therefore considered that both these objections are valid and cannot be overcome due to the specific nature of the use of the property. Notwithstanding this fact, there would be no control on the occupation of the property to ensure occupation solely by the elderly. As such the properties could be occupied by young people or families. Whilst the dwelling is owned by the Littleport Town Lands Charity, there is no means of ensuring that the new bungalows would remain in their ownership in perpetuity.

Given the above the proposal does not comply with Policies Com 7 and 8 of the Local Plan.

7.4 Impact on residential amenity

Sufficient amenity space is provided within the curtilage of each dwelling to provide for the future occupiers and the space allowed accords with the Councils Design Guide. In addition there will be no loss of amenity to the residential amenity of the adjoining residents, as the properties are bungalows and windows have been sensitively sited.

8.0 Planning balance

The proposal provides for one additional dwelling and two dwellings with accessibility standards suitable for the elderly although this cannot be guaranteed in perpetuity. There is also considered to be no demonstrable harm to residential amenity.

However this must be weighed against the harm to the character of the streetscene and the area generally by providing for a building which is too large and results in overdevelopment of the plot and is, out of keeping in the area. In addition the harm to highway safety by the lack of sufficient parking spaces, which would result in parking on the highway, and the provision of spaces on site which will intensify the level of vehicle movements reversing onto the highway where visibility is limited, would both be to the detriment of highway safety.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
15/01478/FUL	Barbara Greengrass Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Barbara Greengrass Senior Planning Officer 01353 616240 barbara.greengrass @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>