

GREAT CORNARD – LAND OFF STEVENSON’S APPROACH, BROOM STREET

Erection of 2 no. detached single storey dwellings, 1 no. detached two-storey dwelling and 1 no. pair of semi-detached dwellings and garages. Improvement of existing vehicular access.

Applicant: Mr. M. A. Stevens

Case Officer: Gemma Pannell

BACKGROUND

A similar application was considered by Members on 28th February 2007 whereby it was resolved to refuse planning permission, contrary to the officers recommendation. This application has been submitted to address the concerns previously raised by members.

SITE

1. The application site measures 0.24 hectares and has an access onto Stevenson’s Approach and comprises the rear gardens of 3, 5 & 7 Broom Street and the former orchard adjacent to the development known as Vicarage Fields.
2. The site is within the built up area boundary of Great Cornard and there are no other constraints affecting the site.

PROPOSAL

3. The application seeks the erection of one detached chalet style property, two detached bungalows and two semi-detached bungalows. The materials proposed include a mixture of facing brickwork and painted render. The development of this site with 5 units represents a density of 21 dwellings per hectare (dph), which although below the minimum requirement of 30 dph is comparable to the context and character of the existing properties and general character of the area.
4. The access is via the existing driveway from Stevenson’s Approach, which will be widened. The access will be shared private driveway with the plots loosely arranged around it. Plot 1 is designed to front Stevenson’s Approach with its own garage and driveway. The remaining four plots use the shared driveway with garaging provided in two blocks each containing two garages.
5. The proposals have been amended to include additional surface water drainage provisions, being an overflow soakaway within the Recreation Ground opposite the site entrance. This has been agreed with Great Cornard Parish Council who own that land and it will also include some subterranean drains to improve their surface water drainage in Stevensons Approach.

6. Richard Jackson Plc has been instructed by the applicants and has submitted the following information: A perforated drain style soakaway has been added to the recreational area. This drain will have much greater capacity than a single soakaway formed by a traditional soakaway chamber. We have also added connection pipes between the soakaway serving the development. We suggest that these are laid in perforated pipe work where they are more than 5m away from structures and 2.5m away from paved highways. This will allow for further soakage from the drainage system as a whole.
7. The applicant's agent has submitted a Design and Access Statement and the salient points of which are summarised below:
 - The development objectives are to make more efficient use of an under-utilised site within the village envelope.
 - The properties are of an individual design and appearance so as to avoid a regimented character.
 - The proposal represents an economic use of under-used and vacant land, contributing to the required housing provision and of a layout and density, which respects the amenities of adjoining property and character of the area.
 - The properties are of traditional design, reflecting local distinctiveness and of a scale and appearance in keeping with their surroundings.
 - The proposals have been amended to include additional surface water drainage provisions, being an overflow soakaway within the Recreation Ground opposite the site entrance. This has been agreed with Great Cornard Parish Council who own that land and it will also include some subterranean drains to improve their surface water drainage in Stevensons Approach.

SITE HISTORY

8. 2007 – Planning permission refused (B/06/01842/FUL) for the erection of 3 no. detached and 1 no. pair of semi-detached dwellings and garages. Alterations to existing vehicular access for the following reasons:

The proposed development, being the erection of 5 no. dwellings, would be contrary to policy EN11 of the Babergh Local Plan - Alteration no. 2 - 2006 and policy ENV14 of the Suffolk Structure Plan 2001. Both of these policies, which are underpinned by annex F of PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk) require developments in areas identified as being at risk of flooding to be refused permission unless both the development itself and other affected areas are adequately protected from flooding. Surface water from the development is proposed to be drained by the use of soakaways, which have a history of failing in this locality. As a result the proposed development would exacerbate the existing flooding in this locality.

The proposed development would be detrimental to road safety as a result of the additional traffic generated by this development at the junction of Stevenson's Approach with Broom Street, exacerbating existing problems of road safety due to the inadequacy of this junction and also further increasing the level of traffic in Broom Street which is already oversubscribed by existing development in the area.

9. 2000 – Planning permission granted for the erection of single-storey dwelling and garage with construction of vehicular access (B/99/01738/FUL refers).

PLANNING HISTORY (11a Broom Street)

10. 1993 – Outline planning permission granted for erection of single storey dwelling in rear garden and erection of detached garage (B/93/00894/OUT refers)
11. 1994 – Planning permission granted for erection of detached bungalow and garage (B/94/00103/FUL refers)
12. 1998 – Planning permission granted for erection of detached garage and conversion of integral garage to residential accommodation (B/98/00124/FUL refers)

PLANNING HISTORY (Land adj. 13 Broom Street)

13. 1972 – Planning permission refused for erection of a bungalow (S/72/424/M refers) for the following reasons: *“The proposal represents undesirable sporadic development, unrelated to the existing pattern of development.”* There were no highway objections.

PLANNING HISTORY (Land rear of 7-9 Broom Street)

14. 1996 – Planning permission refused for erection of detached bungalow and garage. (B/96/0071/FUL refers) *The application was refused following a highways objection because of inadequate parking and manoeuvring on site.*
15. 1997 – Planning permission refused for erection of detached bungalow and garage. (B/97/00324/FUL refers) *The Western Area Development Control Committee refused the application on 5th June 1997 contrary to officer’s recommendation on grounds of the inadequacy of the junction of Vicarage Field with Broom Street. However, CHA did not raise an objection to the proposal.*

PLANNING HISTORY (Land rear of 1 –3 Vicarage Fields)

16. 1998 – Outline planning permission refused for the erection of a single storey dwelling (B/98/01286/OUT refers). *The Western Area Development Control Committee refused the application on 10th December 1998 contrary to officer’s recommendation on grounds of inadequate means of vehicular access and impact on nearby trees. However, CHA did not raise an objection to the proposal.*
17. 1999 – Outline planning permission granted for erection of a single storey dwelling and construction of vehicular access. (B/99/00677/OUT refers) *Development Committee approved the application on 7th July 1999.*
18. 2003 – Planning permission granted for the erection of detached bungalow and garage. (B/03/01036/FUL refers)

POLICY

PPS25 Development and Flood Risk (Annex F: Managing Surface Water)

To satisfactorily manage flood risk in new development, appropriate surface water drainage arrangements are required, to manage surface water and the impact of the natural water cycle on people and property.

Surface water arising from a developed site should, as far as is practicable, be managed in a sustainable manner to mimic the surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development, while reducing the flood risk to the site itself and elsewhere, taking climate change into account. This should be demonstrated as part of the flood risk assessment.

Suffolk Structure Plan 2001

- CS1 & CS3 (Location of new development)
- ENV3 (Design standards)

Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 2 (2006)

- HS01 (Towns)
- HS27 (Housing Density)
- HS30 Design of new houses)
- HS32 (Public Open Space)
- CN01 (Design Standards)
- CN04 (Secure by design)
- LP01 (Planning obligations)

OBSERVATIONS

19. PC – To be reported, if received.
20. CHA – To be reported, if received.
21. SCC (Archaeology) – No significant impact on know archaeological sites or areas with archaeological potential. I have no objection to the development and do not believe any archaeological mitigation is required.
22. Natural England – No impact on SSSI
23. SWT – To be reported, if received.
24. Engineers – The drawings from Richard Jackson Assoc. show that the development will have sewers discharging into soakaways and their ability to deal with the water is proven in the previous application.
25. SCC (Highways) – There is concerns regarding ground water levels in this area, particularly seasonally. Anything that adds to the speed of surface water run off into ground in this low swale through Great Cornard can add to a flooding issue in Broom Street only a few hundred metres from this site. The location for an extra soakaway will only add to ground water and speed of run off.
26. Environment Agency – No objection to the proposal as submitted but would like to provide advice to ensure the development will not cause pollution of the water environment. Where the intention is to drain to soakaways these should be shown to work through an appropriate assessment carried out under BRE Digest 365.
27. Third party representations: Two letters received objecting to the development for the following précised reasons. In summary:
 - The private road will suffer damage from heavy traffic
 - Overdevelopment

- Houses in area mostly bungalows
- Drainage problems caused by too much concrete over land.
- Traffic (permission refused for extension to Stevensons Centre for this reason)
- Flooding
- Impact on residents in Vicarage Field

ASSESSMENT

28. The issues considered central to the outcome of the application are therefore:-

- Planning Policies
- Layout, Design and Landscaping
- Highways
- Public Open Space
- Surface Water Drainage

Planning Policies

29. Policy HS01 provides that in towns housing developments will be granted planning permission, provided that they no material adverse effects on residential amenity, the environment or traffic generation and Policy HS27 states that residential development will not be granted permission where the density is below 30 dwellings per hectare (dph).
30. The proposal represents a density of 21 dph, which is lower than the levels stated in both policy HS27 and PPS3. However, PPS3 states that the density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of existing style or form. If done well, imaginative design and layout of a new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment.
31. The density of the proposed development is acceptable, despite being less than the recommended 30 dph because the site is being developed with bungalows, which often results in lower densities. The use of bungalows is appropriate in this location for two reasons, firstly the nature of the adjoining development of Vicarage Fields being bungalows and secondly the need to reduce the likelihood of overlooking from the new development.

Layout, Design and Landscaping

32. Policies ENV3 of the Structure Plan and HS14 and CN01 of the Local Plan Alteration No.2 seek to resist development that would have a materially adverse impact on residential amenity and seek well designed layouts that provide an appropriate scale, density, form, parking and garden provision. Further policy T9 of the Structure Plan seeks parking for new development to be provided in accordance with the Suffolk Advisory Parking Standards.
33. Each of the houses has a reasonable private amenity area and the provision of amenity space is commensurate with the size of the dwelling it relates to and is considered to be acceptable.
34. Parking provision complies with the Suffolk Advisory Parking Standards and provides parking at a level of 200% with a mixture of garaging and parking spaces.

35. The siting of the dwellings ensures minimal impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring properties by virtue of orientation, siting, position of rooms and location. The proposed development would not therefore result in any significant loss of residential amenity to existing or proposed dwellings.

Highways

36. The concerns of the objectors are noted with regard to the increased use of Stevenson's Approach, however the highway authority did not object to the previous application and agreed that the increase use of the road by five additional dwellings will not cause undue harm nor a highway safety issue. The formal views of the Highway Authority are awaited in relation to the current application.
37. With regard to the comments regarding an alleged refusal of planning permission for an extension to the Stevenson Centre, it is advised that there is no record of any such refusal. The planning history for the Stevenson Centre indicates that planning permission was granted under delegated authority in 2003 and for two applications in 2004 for extensions to the Stevenson Centre. The files also indicate that the Highway Authority did not object to these applications.
38. An application for an extension to the Stevensons Centre, made in 1999 (B/99/00359/FUL) was granted planning permission by the Development Committee (following a recommendation of approval from officers); However, the Local Highway Authority on grounds of substandard access onto Broom Street lodged an objection. Members therefore took advice from an independent highway consultant and subsequently resolved to grant planning permission.
39. In connection with the application Richard Jackson Plc (instructed by the applicants) have stated that this proposal only marginally increases the number of units served by Stevenson Approach and is not likely to make a material difference to the performance of the Stevenson Approach/Broom Street junction. The location of the development is over the previously existing access to nos. 5 and 6 Broom Street and therefore the number of additional units served is extremely low with a very low impact on the existing highway network.

Public Open Space

40. Policy HS32 requires the applicant/developer to either provide 10% of the application site as public open space (where agreed in advance with the Local Planning Authority) or financial contributions towards the upgrade/expansion of existing Local Authority maintained areas of public open space away from the site. In this case, it is considered that the provision of 10% of the application site area is not a suitable option given the small size of the site (which will not provide a usable area of open space). The applicants have confirmed that they are willing to provide a financial contribution towards the off-site provision of new, or upgrade of existing public open space.

Surface Water Drainage

41. References have been made to concerns over surface water drainage and this issue has been explored further following the refusal of the previous application.

42. Soakaway testing has been carried out on the site and this has indicated that infiltration is possible in this area. Measures to avoid overloading of the existing drainage network and drainage has been designed and the surface water from the roofs of the buildings will be directed via gutters and downpipes to an infiltration system and this will comprise of 4 trench soakaways. An additional soakaway has also been proposed on the playing field opposite the site.
43. It is considered that this matter has now been adequately addressed and as such should overcome the previous ground of refusal.

REASON FOR APPROVAL

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies HS01, HS27 and HS30 which are aimed at ensuring that this site is developed satisfactorily for residential development and at an appropriate density whilst respecting the quality of the environment and safeguarding interests of road safety and residential amenity.

RECOMMENDATION

A – The Solicitor to the Council be authorised to secure a Planning Obligation under Section 106 of the 1990 Act to ensure:

- i) The payment of contributions towards public open space provision.

B – Upon securing the above obligation, the Chief Planning Control Officer be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions –

- Materials
- Levels
- As recommended by CHA
- Landscaping
- Archaeology
- Maintenance of soakaways

Otherwise,

RECOMMENDATION B

Refuse planning permission.

- Inadequate provision of public open space and play equipment

DECISION
