

12 DCSE2004/1769/F - ERECTION OF SEVEN DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED GARAGES. DEMOLITION OF EXISTING PAIR OF COTTAGES. ALTERATION AND IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CONSTRUCTION OF PRIVATE DRIVEWAY, LAND ADJOINING AND INCLUDING 1 & 2 LOWER GREYTREE COTTAGES, SIXTH AVENUE, GREYTREE, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 7HW

For: K.W. Bell & Sons Ltd., Steam Mills Road, Cinderford, Gloucester, GL14 3JA

Date Received: 13th May, 2004 Ward: Ross-on-Wye West Grid Ref: 59499, 25087
Expiry Date: 8th July, 2004

Local Member: Councillor M.R. Cunningham
 Councillor G. Lucas

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Planning permission was granted in March 2002 for the erection of 4 houses on land to the rear of Lower Greytree and houses in Willowbrook, and in August 2002 for 5 houses on this site. For both schemes access would be along the former railway embankment which leads off Greytree Road. The fifth house was sited on the embankment which was considered to be outside the town boundary and hence in open countryside. In addition, planning permission was granted for a single dwelling to replace 1 and 2 Greytree. The latter would be accessed via an existing private drive leading off Sixth Avenue.
- 1.2 The current application relates to both these application sites and includes a revised scheme for the 5 houses but two rather than a single house on the smaller site. The siting of the 5 houses would be very similar to the approved scheme, but the design and sizes of the houses would vary. The house types of the earlier scheme would be replaced by 3 different designs, with a Victorian style. The siting of these houses is intended to ensure that the large willows along the brook which forms the northern boundary of the site could be kept and also some of the larger trees within the site.
- 1.3 As submitted the two houses would be accessed via the private drive off Sixth Avenue but following concerns raised by the Head of Engineering and Transportation regarding the poor junction with Sixth Avenue the scheme has been reconsidered and a sixth dwelling would now be accessed via the former railway embankment. Revised drawings are awaited at the time of writing this report. This house would have 3 bedrooms with the other 6 houses having 4. They would be of brick construction with fibre cement slate roofs.

2. Policies**2.1 Planning Policy Guidance**

- PPG.3 - Housing
- PPG.13 - Transport

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

- Policy CTC.1 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Policy CTC.2 - Area of Great Landscape Value
- Policy CTC.9 - Development Requirements
- Policy H.18 - Housing in Rural Areas
- Policy H.16A - Housing in Rural Areas
- Policy LR.10 - Cycling Routes

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

- Policy GD.1 - General Development Criteria
- Policy C.1 - Open Countryside
- Policy C.2 - Settlement Boundaries
- Policy C.5 - Development within Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Policy C.8 - Development within Area of Great Landscape Value
- Policy SH.5 - Housing Land in Ross-on-Wye
- Policy SH.11 - Housing in the Open Countryside
- Policy T.3 - Highway Safety
- Policy T.9 - Cycle Routes

Ross Chapter 37

- Policy 2 - New Housing Developments
- Policy 3 - Infill Sites for Housing

3. Planning History

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|--|---|-------------------|
| 3.1 | SE2001/3206/F | Replacement dwelling together with garage (demolition of existing pair of cottages) | - | Approved 23.01.02 |
| | SE2001/3207/F | Redevelopment of previously developed land; erection of 4 dwellings and associated garages. Alterations and improvements to existing vehicular access and construction of private driveway | - | Approved 27.03.02 |
| | SE2002/1695/F | Redevelopment of previously developed land; erection of 5 dwellings and associated garages. Alterations and improvements to existing vehicular access and construction of private driveway | - | Approved 28.08.02 |

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency has no objections in principle but recommends that floor levels be set above the local flood level (32.9m AOD) and to protect the watercourse.
- 4.2 Welsh Water request that conditions be imposed to ensure that surface water discharges do not enter the public sewerage system.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.3 Head of Engineering and Transportation recommends that conditions be included regarding the access and parking provision.
- 4.4 Chief Conservation Officer accepts the selection of trees to be retained and that the remedial works to the willows are appropriate but requires further information regarding service runs and tree protection zones.
- 4.5 Head of Environmental Health recommends a condition requiring a risk assessment and appropriate mitigation to ascertain whether the former railway land is contaminated.

5. Representations

- 5.1 Parish Council "objects strongly on the grounds of over development and restriction of access. Happy for original application to go ahead."
- 5.2 Five letters of objection have been received. The following grounds are cited:
 1. Too many houses - too close together, over-development.
 2. Cause major traffic hazard along both Greytree and Sixth Avenue:
 - (a) new access drive would meet Greytree at dangerous corner, already very busy with parked cars, not constructed to take all this traffic, vehicles speed down hill towards corner, HGVs use frequently and minor accidents have already occurred - this would be exacerbated by this proposal
 - (b) corner is particularly difficult for pedestrians especially elderly and small children; vehicles often forced to mount pavement as road not sufficiently wide and no footway on opposite side of road
 - (c) Sixth Avenue already congested and junction with private drive is at constricted point - 1 and 2 Greytree have been converted to one house so proposal would result in significant increase in traffic. Egress at this junction is often blind (parked vehicles). Parking along the drive could block access for existing residents
 - (d) suggested that one or preferably both houses be accessed off new drive rather than via Sixth Avenue
 - (e) queried whether all of drive is to be altered and improved or just section within application site.
 3. New access road would be 10' above adjoining gardens resulting in overlooking of properties, traffic noise especially at speedbumps, light from streetlamps - full screening including planting must be provided to fully mitigate these problems.

4. Too close to existing property and would therefore reduce privacy and light.
5. During construction all traffic should access site off new drive not via Sixth Avenue, to avoid damage/subsidence to private drive, noise/disturbance to residents and damage to parked cars in Sixth Avenue. Site compound should be on land north of existing house (1 and 2 Lower Greytree).
6. Hard surfaces will increase run off therefore must be adequate drainage.

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Southern Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 The principle of development both on the garden of 1 and 2 Lower Greytree (which is within the settlement boundary for Ross-on-Wye) and on the former railway embankment (which is outside the boundary) together with the construction of an access drive along the latter has been accepted in 2002 (SE2002/1695/F). The issue raised by the current proposal are whether there would be significant harm to highway safety, the effect on the visual amenities of the area which is within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the effect on the amenities of neighbours.
- 6.2 On the first issue the proposed access onto the highway network would be as previously approved. Although on a sharp bend, visibility at the access would be above minimum standards for an urban road, particularly along Greytree. The Head of Engineering and Transportation recommends that visibility at the access be significantly greater than was required in the previous scheme, viz. 4.5m x 60m to right, 90m to left rather than 2m x 30m. The current proposal would increase the number of dwellings accessed off Greytree by 1 (6 rather than 5). It is not considered that this change would significantly alter the risks to highway safety, a view shared by the Head of Engineering and Transportation. The revised scheme overcomes the concerns raised regarding increased traffic along Sixth Avenue and the private drive.
- 6.3 The former railway embankment with its planting provides a soft edge to the built-up part of Greytree. A house on the embankment (Plot 1) would be very visible from the lower land to the west (River Wye floodplain). The proposal is to reduce the height of the embankment by a metre and a half or more. Nevertheless the finished floor level of this house would be about 1.5m above the adjoining playing field. The two houses adjoining Plot 1 (plots 2 and 3) would be raised above existing ground levels and would be about 0.8m above the finished floor levels necessary to ensure flood protection. The developer is looking at the practicability of reducing the levels of these houses.
- 6.4 Even so, thick planting along the western boundary will be important. The increase in the number of houses accessed off the new drive may mean that service strips have to be provided (a "shared surface" rather than "private drive" which is limited to 5 dwellings). However, the width of the embankment is considered to be sufficient to ensure adequate space for planting. The design and size of the proposed houses is considered to be acceptable. The increase in density above the approved schemes (7 rather than 6 houses) is not considered to make a significant difference to the visual impact of the scheme, although the siting of this extra house needs further consideration. On balance it is not considered that the harm to the visual amenities of the area are so serious as to justify refusal of planning permission.

- 6.5 The spacing of dwellings within the site and in relation to adjoining houses is considered to be acceptable and to meet generally accepted standards. There would be noise and disturbance from traffic along the access road. Most of the adjoining properties have long gardens but two properties at Greytree (The Willows and Hawthorne House) are much closer. Nevertheless an acoustic barrier could be erected with appropriate planting on its eastern side which should mitigate the problem. It is considered therefore that residential amenities would not be harmed significantly.

RECOMMENDATION

That subject to the receipt of satisfactory revised drawings of siting and of the access drive, the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue planning permission subject to the following conditions and any additional conditions considered necessary by officers:

- 1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission))**

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2. B01 (Samples of external materials)**

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.

- 3. G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))**

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

- 4. G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))**

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

- 5. G01 (Details of boundary treatments) (acoustic fence or wall)**

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.

- 6. Prior to development commencing, full drawings showing sections of the existing site profiles and sections of the proposed site including buildings, roads and embankment and specifying their proposed levels shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels and profiles.**

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the site and does not adversely affect the flood plain.

- 7. Notwithstanding the approved drawings, no development shall take place until details of any works to the embankment have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the area.

8. F20 (Scheme of surface water drainage)

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding by ensuring the provision of a satisfactory means of surface water disposal.

9. There must be no new buildings, structures (including gates, walls and fences) or raised ground levels within

- a) 5 metres of the top of any bank or watercourses, and/or**
- b) 3 metres of any side of an existing culverted watercourse,**

inside or along the boundary of the site, unless agreed otherwise in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To maintain access to the watercourse for maintenance or improvements and provide for overland flood flows.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no extension to the rear (north east) elevation of Plots 2 and 3 shall be erected.

Reason: To protect the amenities of occupiers of neighbours.

11. H03 (Visibility splays)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

12. H06 (Vehicular access construction)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

13. H11 (Parking - estate development (more than one house))

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.

14. H13 (Access, turning area and parking)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.

15. H21 (Wheel washing)

Reason: To ensure that the wheels of vehicles are cleaned before leaving the site in the interests of highway safety.

16. H27 (Parking for site operatives)

Reason: To prevent indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety.

17. F44 (Investigation of contaminated land)

Reason: To ensure that potential contamination of the site is satisfactorily assessed.

18. F45 (Contents of scheme to deal with contaminated land)

Reason: To ensure that potential contamination is removed or contained to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.

19. F46 (Implementation of measures to deal with contaminated land)

Reason: To ensure contamination of the site is removed or contained.

Informative(s):

1. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.