

Parish:	Old Hunstanton	
Proposal:	Construction of one detached dwelling and a pair of semi-detached dwellings following demolition of existing dwelling	
Location:	Sonda-Del-Mar 7 Golf Course Road Old Hunstanton Norfolk	
Applicant:		
Case No:	18/01518/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Mrs K Lawty	Date for Determination: 12 October 2018 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 14 March 2019

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Parish Council’s observations at variance with Officer Recommendation

Neighbourhood Plan: No

THE SITE AND APPLICATION

Sonda-Del-Mar is a single storey dwelling set amongst other residential properties. It is constructed from buff bricks with some cladding on the front elevation, and has flat profile roof tiles and timber windows and doors. The site is well screened by a mixture of close boarded timber fences and hedging of 1.8 - 2 metres (approx.), this boundary treatment is further enhanced by garden planting. To the immediate west and north of the property are two storey dwellings, to the east is a 1.5 storey dwelling (with permission for a two storey dwelling), to the south-east is 1.5 storey and to the south-west a single storey dwelling. Other materials in the vicinity include red pantiles, red bricks and painted render.

This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of 3 new dwellings (one detached and a pair of semi-detached dwellings).

Key Issues

- Principle of Development
- Form and Character
- Neighbour Amenity
- Other Material Considerations

Recommendation

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of 3 new dwellings. One dwelling is shown to be detached and two are shown as a pair of semi-detached dwellings.

The detached property would have its own access and areas for parking and turning and the pair of semi-detached properties would have a shared access with parking and turning area in front of each of the proposed dwellings. Accordingly one additional dwelling is proposed along Golf Course Road.

SUPPORTING CASE

The applicant has submitted the following supporting statement:

- The development as approved under 15/01633/O and 17/00537/RM represents a valid fall-back position in this case. There is a very real prospect of that development taking place. A material start will shortly be made.
- It is necessary for the Committee to consider as part of this application what additional or different impacts will arise from the proposed development. If relative to the fall-back position the differences are not significant or material, then there are no reasonable grounds to withhold planning consent.
- In terms of the dwelling numbers, whilst the overall numbers of dwellings on the site is increased from 2 dwellings to 3, the particular design response ensures that the development will read as two detached buildings, with a similar siting and footprint as the two dwellings previously approved.
- The asymmetric design of the semi-detached units, with a forward projecting gabled element to the eastern Plot 3 unit, and the siting of the Plot 2 front door to the side elevation, ensures that the semi-detached unit will visually read as a single building.
- The density of a development is often expressed in terms of site coverage (building footprint as a percentage of site area) or plot ratio; the ratio of gross building floorspace to gross site area; the higher the ratio the more intense the development. By each of these measures the proposed development is actually less dense than approved development.

Comparison of approved and proposed schemes:

17/00537/RM:

Site area 1313 sqm Site coverage 22.05% Plot ratio 0.387

18/01518/F:

Site area 1313 sqm Site coverage 18.9% Plot ratio 0.371

- The footprint of the buildings – compared to the approved development is essentially the same.
- The siting of the dwellings is essentially similar. The one notable change is that the dwellings are actually set several metres further into the site. We consider that setting the units further into the site is actually beneficial in as much as it reinforces the relatively open characteristics of this part of the street.
- The spacing between the units is essentially the same as the approved development.
- The heights of the proposed dwellings in this case are actually lower than the heights of the approved dwellings.
- In the above respects, we consider that the proposed development will have no greater or more adverse impacts than the approved development. Indeed, the empirical evidence would suggest that the overall impacts of the development would actually be reduced when compared with the approved scheme.
- The only other difference of note (setting aside the issue of design, upon which we understand, no objections have been raised) is the location of the car parking at the front of the dwellings rather than at the rear. We would not regard such a change as a negative change.

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- In terms of design no new planning issues are raised by the development. Relationships with adjoining dwellings are generally maintained and no new issues arise, for example in terms of overlooking or privacy loss, or overbearing impacts.
- Based upon the above, it is considered that relative to the fall-back position of the extant consent the proposed development raises no new or substantive issues that would justify a refusal of planning permission. The development proposals demonstrably address the objections to application reference 18/00594/F

PLANNING HISTORY

19/00117/F: Undetermined: - Erection of dwelling (Plot 1)

18/00594/F: Application Refused: 13/06/18 - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 3 new dwellings

17/00537/RM: Application Permitted: 05/06/17 - Reserved Matters Application: Construction of two dwellings following demolition of existing dwelling

15/01633/O: Application Permitted: 04/12/15 - Outline Application: construction of two dwellings following demolition of existing dwelling

06/01788/O: Application Permitted: 28/09/06 - Outline Application: construction of two dwellings following demolition of existing dwelling

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Town/Parish Council: (Amended proposal) - **OBJECT** - Old Hunstanton Parish Council still consider this to be overdevelopment of the site.

(Original Proposal) – **OBJECT** - Golf Course Road consists of detached houses which are no more than two storeys high. Semi-detached, three storey houses would be out of place in the street scene.

Three properties on the site would constitute overcrowding and the balconies and windows would cause overlooking issues.

Local Highway Authority (NCC): **NO OBJECTION** - subject to condition

Environmental Quality Team: **NO OBJECTION** – but made comments re: contaminated land and air quality

Natural England: **NO OBJECTION** but made comments

REPRESENTATIONS

53 letters of **OBJECTION** received (Two rounds of public consultation and some objectors written in more than once):

- Not in keeping with surrounding development; out of character; character adversely affected
- Overcrowding/ Overdevelopment; 3 houses is too many on the site
- Three storeys is too high

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- Dwellings are out of proportion, high and narrow
- No semi-detached houses along the road
- Sets a precedent
- No other semi-detached properties in the road
- Scale/ three storey building is too much
- Loss of greenery and open space
- Parking at the front will impact on the street scene
- Will create another access point and create traffic issues
- Increase in traffic on the road
- Small and inadequate lane for a further 9 vehicles
- Traffic will cause congestion
- Parking at front of site will harm the streetscene
- Impact on poor junction at top end of lane, adjacent to the Hotel
- Risk to pedestrians from increased traffic
- Undermine quiet characteristics of the road
- Loss of amenity/ adverse impact
- Loss of view (general)
- Loss of view of and from the beach
- Negative impact on drainage; increase risk of flooding
- Interference with amenities
- Overlooking and loss of privacy from windows and balconies of proposed development
- Properties closer to our house- privacy and amenity issues
- Overbearing
- Overshadowing and loss of light
- No streetlights
- Pure greed by the owner of the site
- Condition that the developer/builder makes good Golf Course Road during and after the works
- Amendments do not address the previous reasons for refusal.

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS01 - Spatial Strategy

CS02 - The Settlement Hierarchy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

CS09 - Housing Distribution

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM2 – Development Boundaries

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main issues in the determination of this application are therefore:

- . Principle of Development
- . Form and Character and
- . Neighbour Amenity
- . Highways

Principle of Development

The site already benefits from extant planning permission for two residential units on the site (lpa refs: 15/01633/O & 17/00537/RM) and this is a material consideration.

Planning application ref: 18/00594/F for three detached dwellings was refused planning permission for the following reasons:-

1. The proposal would, by reason of its layout, erode valuable spacing across the site, resulting in a cramped form of development, which would have a harmful impact upon the character of the area contrary to the provisions of the NPPF, (paras 56 - 66), Core Strategy Policies CS06 and CS08 and Development Management Policy DM15 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan September 2016 (SADMP 2016).
2. The proposal would, through its height, scale and massing, result in a development which would be unduly prominent in the streetscene to the detriment of the character of the village. It fails to adequately respond to the context and character of the area, resulting in poor design, contrary to the objectives of the NPPF (paras 56 - 66), Core Strategy Policies CS06 and CS08 and Policy DM15 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan September 2016 (SADMP 2016).

The principle of two dwellings on the site has therefore already been approved, although the three, detached properties were found not to accord with policy.

Form and Character

This proposal is for one detached and two semi-detached, two storey dwellings set facing Golf Course Road. Two access points are proposed leading to allocated parking and turning facilities for both properties at the front of the site.

Golf Course Road is a narrow, private road containing residential properties of various ages, styles, building materials and heights. That said, Golf Course Road has distinctive characteristics dominated by an unadopted, narrow lane with a significant degree of openness and where soft landscaping prevails. The northern side of Golf Course Road in particular is characterised by relatively large dwellings, set back from the road, in good sized plots. The prevailing characteristics of the application site and its surroundings are therefore of dwellings that are typically detached properties on spacious plots set in an area dominated by planting and soft landscaping.

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In terms of building materials found within the locality there is a mix, including red brick, buff brick, white and coloured render, horizontal boarding, as well as a mixture of plain tiles and pantiles of various colours, textures and profiles. However, this mix of house types and material does not erode the prevailing characteristics and setting of the soft landscaping and dominant planting.

To the immediate south east of the application site is another detached property, but this is set much closer to the road than most other properties. To the north east is a single storey, detached property, to the south is a mixture of single and two storey detached properties and to the west is a two storey detached dwelling. To the north is a parking area serving the properties to the north, accessed from the track which passes immediately to the north east of the site.

This current application proposes a total of three residential units on the site, with two of the units being semi-detached, forming one building block. The two building blocks are set in a staggered layout, sited towards the northern part of the site with parking and turning facilities in front. During the course of the application, following concerns of the local planning authority to the original proposal, amended plans have been submitted which have made changes to the appearance of Plot 1 with a modest reduction in floor area, and some more significant changes to the design of Plots 2 and 3. This pair of semi-detached properties is no longer symmetrical and now has the appearance of one dwelling.

The amendments to the scheme are such that the amount of built form on the site is now very similar to the size and scale of the two detached dwellings approved under refs: 15/01633/O & 17/00537/RM. The design of the dwellings is different to the previous scheme but will not be at odds with surrounding development.

The applicant has demonstrated on the site layout that three detached dwellings could physically fit on the site with some spacing between them. The dimension of the built form is similar to that of the two dwellings approved on the site under Ipa ref: 17/00537/RM, and the applicant has taken great effort to demonstrate the similarities between the heights, widths and depths of this current proposal and the previous approval.

The applicant has submitted plans and a supporting statement showing how the current proposal compares in both height and floor area with the previously approved scheme. Additionally the applicant points out that the footprint is essentially the same, the siting is similar and the spacing between buildings is essentially the same.

These plans show that not only is the proposed detached dwelling (as amended) of similar dimension to the previously approved house on this part of the site, it is also a similar distance from the western boundary. The dwelling has been re-sited further north within the plot so is further from the road.

The comparisons also show that the semi-detached properties are of a marginally lower height to ridge but are a metre wider than the single detached property approved under ref: 17/00537/RM on this part of the site. Accordingly, given that the scale of the built form now proposed is very similar to that previously approved, it is considered the concerns regarding height, scale and mass set out in the reason for refusal 2 of planning permission ref: 18/00594/F have largely been overcome by these amendments.

The key differences would be the need for the additional level of associated facilities, including parking and turning requirements, and bin storage facilities, associated with the extra dwelling.

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In contrast to the previously approved scheme where the parking and turning areas were to the rear of the dwellings, these are to the front of the properties. However, a significant degree of planting would remain along the front of the site.

This proposal would result in a higher density of development in the road. However given that the mass and scale of the buildings would be very similar to the scheme already approved, it is not considered that the additional parking and domestic facilities required for the third dwelling would have such a significant impact on the level of openness and landscaping that it would fail to maintain the local character and high quality environment sought by Policy CS06, or be at odds with the requirements of Policy CS08 or DM15.

Nationally the NPPF states that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land after taking into account issues including the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting. In this case it is considered that the proposed layout shows that much of the landscaping can be retained at the front of the site which will soften the impact of the proposed parking areas and the character and setting will be retained.

Through the submission of amended plans it is considered that the applicant has overcome the previous reasons for refusal and that the current scheme can be supported.

It is recommended, however, that if the proposal is supported, details of landscaping and boundary treatment are secured by way of planning condition to ensure that the prevailing characteristics of the area are maintained.

Neighbour Amenity

The relationship between the dwellings proposed and neighbouring properties has been examined and the impact upon the amenity of the occupants of these properties has been assessed. Consideration has been given to overlooking, overshadowing and the proposals being overbearing.

Third party concern has been raised regarding loss of privacy from overlooking and loss of daylight/sunshine from the increased amount of development on the site.

Plot 1 is shown to be closest to the boundary with the property known as Lindisfarne to the north west of the site. This property has a first floor side window approximately half way along the depth of its north east elevation, which the occupant confirms is a secondary window serving a habitable room.

Plot 1 is shown to be sited 3m off the boundary with this property and set in front of it. An enclosed balcony area is shown to the first floor of the unit on Plot 1 with a Velux Cabrio rooflight balcony system above serving the proposed accommodation in the attic space. It is considered that these could be installed to the roof of any dwelling on this site under permitted development rights which is a material consideration.

The impact of the proposal upon the amenity of the occupants of this existing neighbouring property has been considered in terms of overlooking, overshadowing and being overbearing. Whilst the position of the property is closer than the house previously approved on this site, there would be no opportunity for the occupants of the proposed new dwelling to look directly into the windows of this neighbouring property given the distances between the properties and the angles of the position of windows. The distances also meant there would be no significant overshadowing and could not be considered overbearing.

Overlooking from ground floor windows can be mitigated by boundary treatment. First floor windows generally look out towards neighbouring garden areas or over their own garden areas. There are no west facing first floor windows to Plot 1.

One bedroom first floor window and two obscure glazed first floor windows face east on Unit 3. This bedroom window would face out over the garden area of the property to the east but this is separated by an access drive. It is considered this would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupants of this neighbouring property.

Full height glazed windows are shown to the rear elevations of each of these semi-detached properties at both ground and first floors. However, there are no open balconies so views would be out to the north (seaward). Whilst the occupants of these properties could look out towards the private garden areas of surrounding properties they would not look directly into the windows of neighbouring properties. It is considered there would not be significant overlooking of neighbouring properties from this element.

To summarise, subject to conditions, it is not considered there will be a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of the occupants of nearby properties in terms of overlooking, being overshadowed or the dwellings being over bearing, as a result of this proposal.

Highways

Whilst the Highways Authority is aware of the shortcomings of the unadopted Golf Course Road, given the existing level of development, they consider it is very difficult to consider that another additional dwelling on this site would create any highway safety concerns sufficient to warrant objection. Despite third party concerns relating to the increase in traffic on the road, increased demand for parking, risk to pedestrians from increased traffic and the impact on the junction at top end of lane, adjacent to the Hotel, the Highways Authority raise no highway safety concerns.

Other Material Considerations

In relation to third party issues not covered above:

- Objection has been raised regarding the height of the proposed dwellings with reference to three storey properties. However, the proposed dwellings are all of two storey height; Plot 1 utilises the roof space for additional accommodation.
- Loss of view: this is not a material planning consideration.
- Sewage system cannot cope: this element was considered at outline stage where no evidence was found to suggest that the proposal would not be acceptable in terms of foul or surface water drainage matters.
- Increase in traffic on privately maintained road: the principle of two new dwellings has already been established on this site. No objection has been raised by the Highways Authority.
- Danger to pedestrians using beach footpath from additional traffic: As stated above, the Local Highway Authority does not consider that the proposal would create highway safety concerns sufficient to warrant objection.
- The loss of greenery: soft landscaping is part of the loss of character referred to above. Although there would be some areas available for planting, the need for parking areas at the front of the site would erode a significant amount of the existing planting to the front garden to the detriment of the character of the area.
- No semi-detached houses along the road: this would introduce a new characteristic into the street and is part of the concerns raised by the lpa.

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- No streetlights: the road does not have streetlights but this is not a reason for refusal of the development
- Pure greed by the owner of the site; only the planning merits of the proposal can be considered as part of this application
- Condition that the developer/builder makes good Golf Course Road during and after the works; this is a private matter and not one able to be controlled through the planning process.

CONCLUSION

The principle of two dwellings on the site has already been established through the outline planning permission and subsequent reserved matters approval. This current proposal would result in a pair of semi-detached dwellings in place of one of the previously approved detached units.

The proposal would result in a higher density of development in the road. However given that the mass and scale of the buildings would be very similar to the scheme already approved, it is not considered that the additional parking and domestic facilities required for the third dwelling would have such a significant impact on the local character that it would be at odds with the requirements of Policy CS06, CS08 or DM15 or the NPPF.

Further, where proposals maintain an area's prevailing character and setting, the NPPF supports development that makes efficient use of land.

The proposal raises no significant neighbour amenity issues and is acceptable in terms of highway safety. In order to maintain the characteristics of the area it is recommended that conditions be imposed relating to landscaping and boundary treatment.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan drawing nos:
 - * Drawing No BSA PP001 Rev B, Overlay Site Plan
 - * Drawing No SA PP002 Rev D, Site Plan and Landscaping
 - * Drawing No SA PP003 Rev A, Streetscene
 - * Drawing No SA PP004 Rev D, Proposed Floor Plans
 - * Drawing No SA PP005 Rev D, Proposed Elevations
 - * Drawing No BR/06 Rev C, Proposed Floor Plans
 - * Drawing No BR/07 Rev B, Proposed Floor Plans
- 2 Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 Condition: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access / on-site car parking and turning area shall be laid out, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use.
- 3 Reason: To ensure the permanent availability of the parking / manoeuvring area, in the interests of highway safety.
- 4 Condition: Prior to first occupation/use of the development hereby permitted, a plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority indicating the positions, heights, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed before the occupation/use hereby permitted is commenced or before the building(s) are occupied or in accordance with a timetable to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4 Reason: To ensure that the development is compatible with the amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.
- 5 Condition: Prior to the first use or occupation of the development hereby approved, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include finished levels or contours, hard surface materials, refuse or other storage units, street furniture, structures and other minor artefacts. Soft landscape works shall include planting plans, written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers and densities where appropriate.
- 5 Reason: To ensure that the development is properly landscaped in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.
- 6 Condition: All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation or use of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species as those originally planted, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written approval to any variation.
- 6 Reason: To ensure that the work is carried out within a reasonable period in accordance with the NPPF.