

# Forest Heath District Council

**DEVELOPMENT  
CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**7 DECEMBER 2016**

**DEV/FH/16/039**

**Report of the Head of Planning and Growth**

**PLANNING APPLICATION DC/16/1233/FUL - 37 ERISWELL ROAD,  
LAKENHEATH**

## **Synopsis:**

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and associated matters.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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# Committee Report

**Date** **Expiry Date:** 10.08.2016  
**Registered:** 15.06.2016 EOT agreed 08.12.2016

**Case Officer:** Britta Heidecke **Recommendation:** Approve  
**Parish:** Lakenheath **Ward:** Lakenheath

**Proposal:** Planning Application DC/16/1233/FUL - 1no. dwelling with detached garage and associated vehicular access

**Site:** 37 Eriswell Road, Lakenheath

**Applicant:** Town Planning Intelligence - Cecil Elliston Ball

## **Background:**

**This application is referred to committee because it has been called in by Ward Member Councillor Colin Noble.**

**The Parish Council object to the removal of four trees to enable the development and the Case Officer recommendation is for APPROVAL.**

## **Proposal:**

1. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey four bedroom dwelling, 2.5m to the eaves and 4.7m to the highest point. The proposed dwelling would measure approximately 17.3m in length with a staggered width of approximately 8.2m and 9.8m respectively. The dwelling is to be located to the rear of no. 37, a two storey detached dwelling which is to be retained. The existing access serving no. 37 is to be widened to allow access to the new dwelling and detached double garage, which will measure 2.3m to the eaves and 4.2m to the ridge.
2. The application has been amended since submission to move the dwelling and garage forward by approx. 4m.
3. A further amendment has been received following concerns raised by the Councils Ecology & Landscape Officer about the feasibility to retain a row of 5 young Scots Pine Trees immediately adjacent to the proposed dwelling, which form part of a historic pine line along the northern boundary. Four of these young specimens are proposed to be removed and replanted along the same boundary.

### **Application Supporting Material:**

4. Information submitted with the application as follows:

- Location Plan
- Existing Block Plan
- Proposed Block Plan
- Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations
- Proposed Garage floor Plan and Elevation
- Enviroscreen Report
- Land Contamination Questionnaire
- Planning Statement
- Tree Survey

### **Site Details:**

5. The site is on the southern side of Lakenheath within a residential area of varied character and age. To the south are largely bungalows accessed off Eriswell Drive. To the north is a newer development of two storey dwellings, accessed off Windmill Close. The northern boundary of the site features a number of protected Scots pine trees.

### **Planning History:**

6.

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>
DC/15/0831/FUL	Planning Application - Detached 4 bedroom bungalow and detached double garage (Resubmission of DC/15/0487/FUL)	Application Refused (Appeal dismissed)	18.06.2015
DC/14/0487/FUL	Erection of detached bungalow with detached double garage as amended by plans received 25th March 2014 removing garage to serve existing dwelling	Application Refused	19.05.2014
F/2009/0043/FUL	Erection of 4 bungalows	Refuse	28.04.2009
F/2009/0488/FUL	Resubmission of F/2009/0043/FUL - erection of 3 bungalows	Refuse	22.10.2009
F/2009/0616/TPO	Fell 10 Scots Pine trees and 1 Leyland Cypress	Split Decision	04.12.2009

### **Consultations:**

7. Highway Authority - No objection subject to conditions
8. Environment Team - No objections subject to informative

9. Ministry Of Defence – No objection
10. Suffolk Fire And Rescue Service - No objections, advice offered to applicant
11. Tree And Landscape Officer – See below within Officer Comment.
12. Public Health And Housing – No objection subject to conditions

**Representations:**

13. Parish Council: objected to the originally submitted plans. Following amendments to the site layout, which moved the proposed bungalow forward by 4m, the parish council no longer objected to the scheme subject to conditions regarding the driveway surface, drainage improvements and a slow growing hedge. The parish council then objected to the latest amendment which proposes the removal and replanting of four young scots pines and made the following comments:

*'Lakenheath Parish Council's Planning Sub-Committee object, as it is losing historic lines already prevalent throughout the village.'*

*'The outlook will be lost for the occupants of Eriswell Drive, who will be able to see across to Windmill Close.'*

14. Ward Member (Councillor Colin Noble): *'Please can I request that the application comes before the Committee as Mrs. Miller (9 Eriswell Drive) wishes to speak to it at a future Committee meeting. I believe it should come before the Committee due to its recent history and Mrs. Miller's contention that it is too close to her property and will overlook her garden.'*
15. Neighbour objections have been received from 9 and 11 Eriswell Drive and 19 and 22 Windmill Close. The objections can be summarised as follows:
  - loss of privacy
  - loss of and pressure on trees
  - loss of outlook
  - cramped development
  - impact on trees
  - out of keeping with pattern of development
  - no road frontage

**Policy:** The following policies of the Joint Development Management Policies Document and the Forest Heath Core Strategy 2010 have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

16. Joint Development Management Policies Document:
  - DM1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
  - DM2 – Creating Places
  - DM7 – Sustainable Design and Construction

- DM13 - Landscape Features
- DM22 – Residential Design
- DM46 – Parking Standards

17. Forest Heath Core Strategy 2010

- CS1 – Spatial Strategy
- CS5 – Design Quality & Local Distinctiveness

**Other Planning Policy:**

18. National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

**Officer Comment:**

19. The issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Planning History
- Impact on character and appearance of the locality
- Impact on landscape features
- Impact on neighbour amenity, particularly outlook
- Access and Parking

20. As set out in the planning history above, the site has been the subject of previous applications for varying numbers of dwellings, all of which were refused planning permission. The most recent application for a single bungalow, submitted under reference DC/15/0831/FUL was refused for the following reasons:

1. *"The residential dwelling proposed represents an inappropriate and cramped form of backland development, which fails to respect the character and appearance of the locality where adjacent dwellings are sited within modest plots and benefit from a road frontage. The resulting dwelling would be out of keeping with the established pattern of development and appear contrived. As such, the erection of a new dwelling in this position conflicts with the provisions of Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy, DM22 of the Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Local Plan Joint Development Management Policies Document February (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework which seek to create a high quality environment.*
2. *By reason of the close proximity of the proposal to boundaries, it is considered that the dwelling would represent an intrusive and dominant development and would appear overbearing and result in a loss of residential amenities to adjacent dwellings, in particular those on Eriswell Drive which are served by gardens of a minimal width. The design of the proposed dwelling is considered to be of poor quality in terms of its detailing and proportions. This is in conflict with policy CS5 of the Forest Heath Core Strategy and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to provide development which contributes positively to making places better for people and provide a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and building."*

21. The applicant appealed the decision and the appeal was dismissed by letter dated 15 January 2016. The Inspectors decision is a material planning consideration and he concluded:

*"Whilst I have found no harm to the character and appearance of the area this does not outweigh the harmful impact on outlook I have found to the living conditions of the occupants of Nos 7 and 9 Eriswell Close and 19 and 20 Windmill Close. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed."*

Impact on character and appearance of the locality

22. Whilst the appeal was dismissed, the Inspector in his appeal decision concluded that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area and would thus adhere to the requirements of Policies DM2 and DM22 of the Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015 (DMP) as well as Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy. The Inspector did not consider that the dwelling would appear cramped given that it would retain landscaping, would be set back from the road and would have sufficient space for a rear garden and parking. The Inspector found that there is not a strong character of frontage development with open undeveloped space behind, which would render a 'backland' development out of character with the grain of development.
23. A row of trees of various age and species is located along the northern side boundary. The Council's Ecology and Landscape officer commented that the row of trees comprises a line of mainly scots pine trees, which historically formed a pine line landscape feature. These trees form a backdrop to the existing houses, particularly when viewed from Eriswell Drive. The pine line is one of many located in and around Lakenheath.
24. Some of the trees were removed following approval of TPO applications: DC/14/0010/TPO- 6 Scots pine trees (all either dead or in very poor condition); and F/2009/0616/TPO – 1 Horse chestnut tree. Replacement trees were required to maintain the landscape feature. These were planted and are the immature trees shown on the plan.
25. Concerns were raised by the Ecology, Tree and Landscape officer that the younger replacement pine trees are likely to be damaged by construction given their close position to the new dwelling and the practicalities of building a new dwelling so close. In addition they were unlikely to have enough room in the future to mature. A provisional TPO has been served on these young trees to protect the long-term preservation of the pine line and to be able to secure replacement trees. The scheme has subsequently been amended and now proposes to replace four of the five young Pine trees, which at present grow very close together, spread out along the northern boundary to retain the Pine line feature whilst still enabling the development. The Ecology, Tree and Landscape officer does not support the proposal stating that the pine line would at least be interrupted over the depth of the new dwelling (approx. 20m).

26. Policy DM13 states (inter alia) that development will be permitted where it will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character of the landscape, landscape features, wildlife, or amenity value. This application proposes to remove four of five young Scots Pine trees (approx. 5 years old). These young specimens as such have a marginal public amenity value and grow very close to each other. However, they form part of a larger historic pine line, which stretches from the front of Eriswell Road to the rear of the application site over a length of approx. 127m. They are proposed to be replaced along the same side boundary, filling in existing gaps within this historic pine line, thus enabling the long-term preservation of the historic Pine line. It is therefore not considered that the proposal would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape feature to justify refusal.

Impact on neighbour amenity, particularly outlook

27. The Inspector noted that *'...the appellant has attempted to design the dwelling in a sympathetic way by hipping the roof back from the boundaries and positioning the ridge in the middle of the appeal site. The eaves would also be low so that boundary fencing would obscure the windows and much of the building below eaves height.'* However, he concluded that, *the overall massing, in particular the extent of unarticulated roof scape, would still be harmfully apparent to the occupants of Nos 7 and 9 Eriswell Close and 19 and 20 Windmill Close.'*
28. This current application is a revision of the previously refused scheme. Firstly, it reduces the overall footprint of the building by 10%, which leaves a wider gap; 3.6m to the side boundary with properties on Eriswell Drive and 3m to the side boundary with properties on Windmill Close. Secondly, the design has been amended to reduce the overall roof massing to minimise potential impact on outlook. The original design had a single rectangular roof with hips at both ends. The revised design breaks up the roof massing and now consists of two articulated, hipped structures. The revised design has two main ridges which are 4.7m and 4.5m high respectively, as opposed to one 5.6m high ridge. The higher of these two ridge lines is quite short in length; 2.5m as opposed to 5.5m for the lower ridge. Thirdly, the site layout has been amended to move the proposed dwelling and garage forward by 4m, siting the dwelling centrally between the adjacent four dwellings. This minimises the length the dwelling will span along each of the adjacent respective rear boundaries.
29. The concerns raised by the neighbours are material planning considerations and these matters have also been assessed at the time the previous planning applications were considered (as detailed in the planning history above). The rear gardens of properties in Eriswell Drive are very small; 3.4m at the narrowest point. The distance between the proposed dwelling and existing dwellings is 7m at the nearest point. However, apart from potential loss of outlook, all other concerns have been dismissed by the Inspector.
30. In summary, to address the reason that the appeal was dismissed, the revised design breaks up the roof massing and reduces the height by

1.1m and 0.9m respectively to a ridge height of 4.5m and 4.7m. Furthermore, due to the re-siting of the dwelling 4m forward, the highest part of the roof with the proposed solar panel will be central between the adjacent properties and not directly behind any one of them. Overall, the revised scheme is not considered to have a significant impact on outlook nor will it be overbearing. A refusal reason on these grounds could therefore not be justified.

#### Access

31. The application proposes a 3.6m wide shared drive way with a double garage and parking spaces in front for the new dwelling. No. 37 benefits from parking and turning space to the front of the existing house. SCC Highways have raised no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. The proposals in this respect are therefore considered acceptable.

#### Sustainable construction

32. DM7 states (inter alia) proposals for new residential development will be required to demonstrate that appropriate water efficiency measures will be employed. No specific reference has been made in regards to water consumption. Therefore a condition will be included to ensure that either water consumption is no more than 110 litres per day (including external water use), or no water fittings exceeds the values set out in table 1 of policy DM7.

#### **Conclusion:**

33. The revised scheme addresses the previous reasons for the Inspector to dismiss the appeal. In conclusion, based on the above, the principle and detail of the development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies and guidance contained within National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **Recommendation:**

- 34 It is recommended that planning permission be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. 01A Time Limit Detailed
2. 14FP Approved Plans
3. Construction works
4. External lights
5. Construction waste
6. AL2 bound access onto highway
7. Bin storage
8. Discharge of surface water
9. Submission of tree protection plan
10. Water consumption
11. Tree replanting
12. Details of boundary hedge to be planted and maintained at no more than 1.8m in height



**Documents:**

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online:

<https://planning.westsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=O8JR75PDHLL00>