

Department of the Environment

Room

Tollgate House Houlton Street Bristol BS2 9DJ

Telex 449321

 Direct line 0272-218 858
 Switchboard 0272-218811

 05/05/236
 J. D. D.

 Messrs Cruickshanks
 Chartered Surveyors
 Rye House
 London Road
 HIGH WYCOMBE
 Buckinghamshire HP11 1BZ

 Your reference
 55/76/RP/JMC
 Our reference
 T/APP/5252/A/77/5482/G8
 Date

21 FEB 1978

Gentlemen

 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971, SECTION 36 AND SCHEDULE 9
 APPEAL BY GARDINER AND PAYNE DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED
 APPLICATION NO:- 4/0403/77

1. I refer to your clients' appeal, which I have been appointed to determine, against the decision of the Dacorum District Council to refuse planning permission for the erection of 4 houses, 6 garages, forecourt and access on land fronting Grove Road, Grove Farm, Tring.
2. From my inspection of the site and surroundings on 16 January 1978, and from my consideration of the written representations made by you, the council and interested persons, I am of the opinion that the decision in this appeal rests primarily on whether the proposed development would be in keeping with the character of its surroundings, bearing in mind that the adjacent property is listed as a Grade II Building of Architectural or Historic Interest.
3. The appeal site is of an unusual shape having one frontage to Grove Road, on which it is proposed to erect 2 detached and 2 semi-detached, or linked, houses without vehicular access, and another frontage (at present part of the garden of Grove Farm House) to Marshcroft Lane, where there would be an access drive to 6 garages, forecourt and 3 parking spaces to serve the 4 proposed dwellings, and Unit I of Grove Farm House, as well as providing the sole means of entry to the existing double garage at Grove Farm Cottage after the present access to Grove Road had been closed off by the erection of the 4 dwellings.
4. The Grove Road frontage is about 110 ft, decreasing to about 94 ft towards the rear boundary, and this part of the site is about 100 ft deep. There is thus clearly sufficient space for the erection of 4 modestly sized dwellings, and as the area is now intended primarily for residential purposes in the new Tring Town Map there is no land use objection to the proposal. However in their written representations the council state that "... the appeal site should be developed with detached houses, in such a way that the design, layout and external materials are in character with the surrounding area.", but they have not explained their reasons for refusal in any further detail although it is clear, at least by implication, from their reference to the adjoining property, Grove Farm Cottage, being a Grade II Listed Building that this was a factor in their considerations.
5. It seems to me that, except for the effects of the proposed development, as at present planned, on the Listed Building, the councils' reasons for refusal are not strong enough to justify refusing permission, but bearing in mind that the application

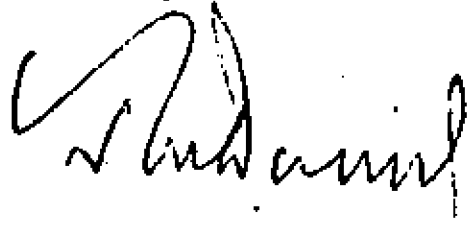
subject of the appeal is for full planning permission, this aspect, in my view, becomes the most important issue, and I have 2 criticisms of the proposal on this score. First, while I appreciate the reason for siting the houses as proposed and near the front of the site, it would be a most prominent form of development, of considerable total mass, poorly related to properties on either side and having a dominating effect on Grove Farm Cottage which is worthy of being the key feature in the 'street scene' in this part of Grove Road when viewed from both directions. Second the creation of the access road immediately at the rear of Grove Farm Cottage would involve the felling of trees which form a backdrop between it and Grove Farm House. It would also involve the removal of a large portion of the mature, tall hedge on the Marshcroft Lane flank boundary to provide a visibility splay, and the access road coupled with a new block of 6 garages would give Grove Farm Cottage an isolated open appearance largely surrounded by modern development which would be detrimental to its setting.

6. Lastly, and as a separate secondary matter, I am inclined to share the view of a number of interested persons that taking the access to the proposed garages and visitors parking spaces from Marshcroft Lane rather than from Grove Road (adjacent to the eastern flank boundary of the site to retain the frontage wall), which would be impossible if 4 houses were erected, would be likely to cause additional casual parking on the carriageway which is only 16 ft wide in front of the site. As the road now appears to be a fairly busy local distributor, and will also have to serve the additional new development on Hollyfield Close, this would be undesirable, even though it might not have justified refusing permission in the absence of any other objections.

7. I have thus reached the conclusion that although your proposal would make the maximum use of the appeal site for residential purposes in accordance with the most recent government statements on housing needs, the erection of 4 houses and 6 garages in the positions proposed would not be a satisfactory form of development for this particular site. I have examined all the other matters raised in the written representations, but although there is no objection in principle to the residential development of the site, there is nothing of the substance needed to affect my decision that the objections I have outlined to the present detailed proposal are sufficient to necessitate refusing permission.

8. For the above reasons, and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I hereby dismiss this appeal.

I am Gentlemen
Your obedient Servant


J M DANIEL DFC MBIM
Inspector