

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

9 January 2013

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

S/2064/12/FL – WATERBEACH

Demolition of existing 35 no. shared amenity apartments for the homeless and the erection of 30 no. self-contained apartments for the homeless with associated parking and amenity space, at Robson Court for Sanctuary Housing Group

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 11 January 2013

Major Development

Notes:

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as it has been submitted on behalf of the District Council.

To be presented to the Committee by Kate Wood

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.39 hectare application site is located within the Waterbeach village framework on the west side of Waddelow Road. It comprises a range of two-storey buff brick and tile buildings that provide 35 units of accommodation for the homeless (34 no. one-bed apartments with shared facilities and 1 no. three-bed family house). The site lies within a residential area and is bounded by bungalows to the north and two-storey dwellings on the opposite side of Waddelow Road to the east. Beyond a mature tree screen defining the rear/western boundary are two-storey houses located within Winfold Road. To the south, the site is bounded by a road that provides access to a parking area in the south-western corner of the site as well as a shared parking area serving dwellings further to the south. There is a vehicular access, parking and turning area at the northern end of the site, accessed from Waddelow Road. In total, the site presently has parking for approximately 20 cars, with 14 spaces to rear and 6 within the front parking court.
2. The application proposes the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 30 no. self-contained apartments for the homeless with associated parking and amenity space. The apartments would consist of 24 no. 1-bed units and 6 no. 2-bed units. The proposed building would be a two-storey structure standing approximately 9.8 metres high and comprising buff brick walls under a concrete tiled roof. At the northern end of the site, the forwardmost part of the building reduces to single-storey height. To the front, it is proposed to provide 9 parking spaces (including 2 disabled spaces), each of which would be accessed directly off the highway, whilst the existing spaces in the south-western corner would be retained. To the rear, the building would wrap around a central shared amenity space, whilst the northern arm (currently occupied by the warden's house) would provide a children's play area.

Planning History

3. S/2139/00/F – Alterations to mono pitch roofs, reposition cycle shed and extension to paving – approved
4. S/0482/94/F – Residents car park - approved
5. S/1147/93/F – Garage for No.35 Robson Court – approved
6. S/0110/92/F – Extension to common room - approved
7. S/1200/83/F – Wardens house – approved
8. S/0112/83/F – Extension to wardens flat – approved
9. C/0054/73/F – Erection of single garage for use by warden – approved
10. C/1252/72/F – Erection of single garage for use by warden with access from private parking area - approved

Planning Policy

11. National Planning Policy Framework 2012
12. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Core Strategy 2007:
ST/5: Minor Rural Centres
13. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD, 2007:

DP/1: Sustainable Development

DP/2: Design of New Development

DP/3: Development Criteria

DP/4: Infrastructure and New Developments

HG/1: Housing Density

HG/2: Housing Mix

HG/3: Affordable Housing

NE/1: Energy Efficiency

NE/3: Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development

NE/6: Biodiversity

NE/10: Foul Drainage – Alternative Drainage Systems

NE/11: Flood Risk

NE/12: Water Conservation

NE/14: Lighting Proposals

NE/15: Noise Pollution

NE/16: Emissions

SF/6: Public Art

SF/10: Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space and New Developments

SF/11: Open Space Standards

TR/1: Planning for More Sustainable Travel

TR/2: Car and Cycle Parking Standards

14. South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):
 - Open Space in New Developments – Adopted January 2009
 - Trees and Development Sites – Adopted January 2009
 - Public Art – Adopted January 2009
 - Biodiversity – Adopted July 2009
 - Landscape in New Developments – Adopted March 2010
 - District Design Guide – Adopted March 2010
 - Affordable Housing – Adopted March 2010
 - Health Impact Assessment – Adopted March 2011
15. Circular 11/95 (The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions) - Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

Consultation by South Cambridgeshire District Council as Local Planning Authority

16. **Waterbeach Parish Council** – Recommends approval, stating:

“The Council regards the statement at the end of the paragraph on Vehicular Access in the Design and Access Statement (C1439DA1) that: “should the requirement arise there is scope for more spaces along Waddelow Road (subject to LA approval)” as both inaccurate and misleading, giving rise to concerns that they would like noted.”
17. **The Trees and Landscape Officer** – Raises no objections to the trees identified for removal, noting that the important trees within the site would be retained.
18. **The Landscape Design Officer** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.
19. **The S106 Officer** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.
20. **Affordable Homes** – Supports the application, stating that the proposal would allow the Council to meet its statutory homeless duties in a cost effective manner whilst providing a much better standard of accommodation for homeless households. The Council currently provides 20 units of temporary accommodation hostel units across the District, 16 of which are located on this site. Accommodation is typically in one room, regardless of family size, with access to shared amenities. The current provision is outdated and in need of refurbishment or replacement. In addition, homelessness and the associated demand for temporary accommodation is increasing. The proposed 30 purpose-built units would greatly improve the quality of the provision and enable the Council to meet the growing demand for such accommodation. At present, the increased demand is being met through utilising emergency bed and breakfast accommodation, but this is costly and often located outside the District.
21. **The Arts Officer** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.
22. **The Sustainability Officer** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.
23. **The Environmental Health Officer** – Expresses concern that problems could arise from noise during the construction period and from any external lighting. As such, any

consent should be subject to conditions to control the hours of construction and demolition and to require details of any lighting.

24. ***The Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Specialist)*** – Raises no objections, stating that the submitted Health Impact Assessment has been assessed as Grade B. This meets the required standard of the HIA SPD, which states that only grades A or B are acceptable. The only area of concern is that the HIA has not addressed possible health impact during demolition and construction due to noise and dust, and a condition should therefore be attached to any consent to mitigate any adverse affects for existing residential properties surrounding the site.
25. ***The Environmental Services Department (Waste Management)*** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.
26. ***The Local Highways Authority*** – Recommends refusal, stating that the applicant needs to provide justification for the over provision of parking, as the proposed design has the potential to impact on highway safety. The applicant should be required to confirm if the proposed spaces are intended for the development or for local residents.
27. ***The County Archaeologist*** – States that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. The site lies next to land investigated in 1996 that revealed Saxon industrial remains. It is likely that important remains survive on the site and that these would be damaged by development. As such, any permission should be subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological investigation to be undertaken before commencement of development.

Representations by members of the public

28. Letters of objection have been received from the owner/occupiers of Nos. 2 Jubilee Close and 61 Winfold Road. The main points raised are:
 - In order to protect the privacies and views of dwellings to the rear, trees along the rear boundary should be retained.
 - Existing residents often have cars (sometimes up to 2 cars), and the use therefore generates a demand for parking spaces. Residents often park on the road, rather than in designated spaces, thereby resulting in parking difficulties for surrounding residents. Adequate parking should be provided for the dwellings.

Material Planning Considerations

Housing density, mix and affordable housing

29. Waterbeach is designated within Policy ST/5 of the Core Strategy as a Minor Rural Centre. In such settlements, development and redevelopment, up to a maximum indicative size of 30 dwellings, is acceptable in principle on sites within village frameworks, subject to other material considerations. The application proposes the demolition of the existing buildings, comprising 35 no. units, and the erection of 30 apartments in their place. The proposed level of development is therefore in accordance with the requirements of Policy ST/5.
30. Whilst the proposal could result in concerns that the proposed development would provide fewer units than the existing, the supporting Design and Access Statement

makes it clear that the site is presently under-occupied. In addition, the Housing Team has stressed that the existing accommodation provides sub-standard accommodation, with occupants (whether they be single people or families) being accommodated in one room. The proposed development would provide completely self-contained apartments, including a small number of two-bedroom units, and would therefore be much better suited to meet the nature and level of the demand for such housing.

31. The site extends to 0.385 hectares. The erection of 30 dwellings on the site equates to a density of approximately 77 dwellings per hectare. Policy HG/1 requires new development schemes to achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare, unless material planning considerations indicate a different density of development would be more appropriate.
32. LDF Policy HG/3 requires a minimum of 40% affordable housing on sites proposing two or more dwellings. The scheme would provide 100% affordable housing (which will be owned and managed by Sanctuary Housing) and is therefore in compliance with the requirements of this policy.

Highway safety

33. The Local Highways Authority (LHA) has raised concerns that there would be an overprovision of parking given the intended use of the building, and that the layout has the potential to give rise to highway safety problems. The LHA has clarified that its concerns relate to the spaces that would be accessed directly off Waddelow Road. It has no objections to the disabled spaces, as these are appropriately located adjacent to the entrance to the building, but it is concerned that the remaining 7 spaces along this frontage would result in cars backing out into Waddelow Road in an area where there is a significant amount of on-street parking and, hence, be detrimental to highway safety. To resolve this issue, it has advised that the 7 spaces at the front of the site should be removed from the scheme (which would provide the opportunity to enhance the appearance of the development with landscaping), and that any additional parking could be accommodated in front of the southern elevation of the building. 4-5 spaces could be provided in this area. Whilst cars would still need to reverse out from these spaces, this would be onto a cul-de-sac, where vehicle speeds would be slower and the number of movements less frequent, rather than onto a relatively busy narrow residential through-road. The LHA has advised that, if the scheme is amended along these lines, it would resolve its concerns regarding the highway safety implications of the development.
34. There are presently 20 parking spaces on the site, 14 within the parking area in the south-western corner and 6 spaces to the front of the building. The application would decrease the number of units from 35 to 30. At present, the scheme proposes to increase the level of parking provision from 20 to 23 spaces, but the changes requested by the LHA would result in the total parking provision being 20 or 21 spaces. The number of spaces would be below the 1.5 spaces per dwelling average set out within the LDF. However, the nature of the accommodation (which would be restricted by way of a legal agreement) would be expected to result in a lower level of car ownership than would usually be the case. In addition, the site is in a sustainable location, within easy walking distance of the nearest bus stop and services and facilities in the centre of Waterbeach. As such, the location is one where it would not be necessary to own a car. The level of parking provision is therefore considered to be appropriate for the proposed use.

Design and visual impact

35. The application has been submitted following extensive pre-application discussions with Officers, and following a public consultation exercise in Waterbeach. The site lies within an area characterised by brick and tile two-storey dwellings and bungalows. The proposed development seeks to adopt a similar palette of materials to surrounding dwellings (namely buff brick under a concrete dark tiled roof), but also picks up on features characteristic of the more traditional properties in Waterbeach (such as red brick banding and quoins and vertically proportioned windows). The development is considered to relate well to its surroundings, and to represent an enhancement to the character of the area when compared to the existing buildings.
36. The existing site has a scattered layout with three separate blocks of buildings separated by grassed areas and pathways between the buildings. There is no single definable amenity space. As the existing structures are being demolished, the applicants were encouraged in pre-application discussions to bring the main part of the new building closer to the road. This results in a stronger presence to the street frontage, and enables the provision of a communal amenity space for residents' enjoyment to the rear and a children's play area at the northern end of the site.

Impact on trees

37. There are a number of trees within the curtilage of the site, and the application has been accompanied by a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment. The Council's Trees Officer has advised that the most significant trees on the site, including the field maples to the rear, would be retained and protected during the course of development. No objections have been raised to the loss of the poorer quality trees identified on the drawings.

Residential amenity

38. In order to protect the amenities of surrounding residents, the Council's Adopted District Design Guide recommends a distance of 25 metres be achieved between opposing first floor windows. The proposed layout achieves this relationship. During pre-application discussions, Officers have raised particular concerns regarding the impact of any development upon the amenities of occupiers of the adjacent bungalow to the north, No.1 Jubilee Close. Previous iterations of the design proposed that the two-storey development would extend close to the common boundary with the bungalow and also included first floor windows to habitable rooms that directly overlooked this property's garden area. The scheme has been amended prior to formal submission to address these issues by setting the nearest part of the development to the bungalow down to single-storey height only. In addition, two of the first floor windows in the two-storey element that is set behind the single-storey part of the building would be obscure glazed.

Sustainability issues

39. The application proposes that the 10% renewable energy requirements would be achieved through the use of solar panels.

Developer contributions/S106 Agreement

40. A Section 106 Agreement would be required to regulate the provision and occupation of affordable housing in accordance with Policy HG/3 and the Affordable Housing SPD.

41. LDF Policy SF/6 (Public Art) and the Public Art SPD 2009 encourages the provision of public art for all residential developments comprising 10 or more dwellings. During pre-application discussions, the Council's Arts Officer advised that the development would provide the opportunity for an arts intervention that would enhance the site. Normally, a contribution equating to approximately £500 per dwelling is required.
42. The application has been accompanied by a Heads of Terms that confirms agreement towards the provision of 100% affordable housing and a contribution (as per the above ratio) towards public art.
43. As the development would provide fewer units than exists on site at present, the proposal would not give rise to the need for contributions towards public open space, community facilities or household waste receptacles.

Recommendation

44. Delegated powers are sought to approve the application subject to the receipt of amended plans to address the Highways Authority's concerns:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1:500 site location plan, [amended drawings numbers to be inserted]
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
 3. The development, hereby permitted, shall not commence until details of all materials to be used for the buildings and hard surfaced areas have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.
(Reason – To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory, in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007.)
 4. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed in accordance with the approved details before the commencement of and shall be retained in accordance with the approved details thereafter.
(Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
 5. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall also include

specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.

(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

6. 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 of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting, or replacement planting, any tree or plant is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
7. No site clearance or building operations shall commence until tree protection has been erected on site in accordance with the details shown within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Reference JF/675046/R5. Such fencing shall be maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority during the course of development operations. Any tree(s) or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased during the period of development operations shall be replaced in the next planting season with tree(s) of such size and species as shall have been previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To protect trees and hedges which are to be retained in order to enhance the development, biodiversity and the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
8. Apart from any top hung vent (which must be positioned at least 1.7 metres above the internal finished floor level), the proposed first floor kitchen and bathroom windows in the north elevation of the development shall be fixed shut and fitted and permanently glazed with obscure glass.
(Reason – To prevent overlooking of the adjoining properties in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
9. No windows, doors or openings of any kind, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be constructed in the north side elevation of the northern element of the building at and above first floor level unless:
 - (i) permanently fitted with obscure glazing and fixed in place; or
 - (ii) installed with a sill height of not less than 1.7m above the finished internal floor level; or
 - (iii) otherwise expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.
(Reason - To protect the amenities of adjoining residents in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
10. No development shall take place until details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - i) Contractors' access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel;
 - ii) Contractors' site storage area(s) and compounds(s);

iii) Parking for contractors' vehicles and contactors' personnel vehicles; Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details.
(Reason - In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

11. During the period of construction and demolition, no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site before 0800 hours and after 1800 hours on weekdays and 1300 hours on Saturdays, nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason – To minimise noise disturbance to adjoining residents in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)
12. No external lighting shall be provided or installed within the site other than in accordance with a scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason -To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area and upon the amenities of adjacent residents in accordance with Policies DP/3 and NE/14 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
13. No development shall take place on the application site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To secure the provision of archaeological excavation and the subsequent recording of the remains in accordance with Policy CH/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
14. The development shall not begin until a scheme for the provision of affordable housing as part of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The affordable housing shall be provided in accordance with the approved scheme. The scheme shall include:
 - i. The numbers, type and location on the site of the affordable housing provision to be made;
 - ii. The timing of the construction of the affordable housing;
 - iii. The arrangements to ensure that such provision is affordable for both initial and subsequent occupiers of the affordable housing; and
 - iv. The occupancy criteria to be used for determining the identity of prospective and successive occupiers of the affordable housing, and the means by which such occupancy shall be enforced.
(Reason - To ensure the provision of an agreed mix of affordable housing in accordance with Policy HG/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
15. No development shall begin until details of a scheme for the provision of public art, to meet the needs of the development in accordance with adopted Local Development Framework Policy SF/6, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include a timetable for

the provision to be made and shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - To ensure a contribution is made towards public art in accordance with Policy SF/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007)

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- Supplementary Planning Documents: Open Space in New Developments, Trees and Development Sites, Public Art, Biodiversity, Landscape in New Developments, District Design Guide, Affordable Housing, Health Impact Assessment
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Circular 11/95
- Planning File References: S/2064/12/FL, S/2139/00/F, S/0482/94/F, S/1147/93/F, S/0110/92/F, S/1200/83/F, S/0112/83/F, C/0054/73/F, C/1252/72/F.

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