

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

4 March 2015

**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

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**Application Number:** S/2186/14/FL

**Parish:** Caldecote

**Proposal:** Change of use of existing annex to create independent 3 bedroom dwelling

**Site address:** Westwind, Highfields Road, Highfields Caldecote

**Applicant(s):** Mr D Baldwin

**Recommendation:** Delegated Approval

**Key material considerations:** Principle of Development  
Design  
Amenity  
Highway Safety

**Committee Site Visit:** No

**Departure Application:** No

**Presenting Officer:** John Koch

**Application brought to Committee because:** Parish Council recommendation of refusal conflicts with Officers recommendation

**Date by which decision due:** 28 November 2014

### Site and Proposal

1. The site comprises a 0.35 ha parcel of land to the north of Highfields Caldecote, approximately 150m beyond the Development Framework. The site consists of part of the garden land to Westwind, a large bungalow, and includes a single storey building currently used as a residential annex to the main dwelling.
2. The residential annex that is the subject of this application is to the north of the main dwelling with its own access via Highfields Road. The site is well screened from Highfields Road by established informal planting, including small trees and hedging.
3. The annex originally was used at only ground floor level for the applicant's mother and included a kitchen, bedsitting room and bathroom. The remainder of the space was used for garden storage. Since planning permission was granted alterations

have been made to the building, which include the insertion of roof lights and the conversion of the roof space to provide additional accommodation.

4. The annex has a ridge height of approximately 5m and height to the eaves of 2.2m. It comprises a footprint of 10m x 14m, including the space used as a logging area. It is constructed of brick and interlocking concrete tiles with timber boarding to the gable end. All external doors and windows are white UPVC.
5. The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the annex to a three bedroom independent dwelling.

### **Planning History**

6. S/1394/12/VC - Variation of condition (S/0593/07/F) to allow garden room and store to be used as an annex - Approved
7. S/0593/07/F - Garden room and store – Approved

### **Planning Policies**

8. **National Planning Policy Framework (Adopted March 2012).**
9. **Local Development Framework Development Core Strategy (Adopted January 2007)**  
ST/6 Group Villages (Highfields Caldecote)
10. **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (Adopted July 2007)**  
DP/1 Sustainable Development  
DP/2 Design of new Development  
DP/3 Development Criteria  
DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments  
DP/7 Development Frameworks  
SF/10 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space and New Developments  
TR/1 Planning for more Sustainable Travel
11. **Local Plan (Proposed Submission Version (July 2013))**  
S/3 Presumption in favour of sustainable development  
S/7 Development Frameworks  
S/10 Group Villages  
HQ/1 Design Principles  
SC/7 Outdoor play space, informal open space and new developments
12. **Supplementary Planning Documents**  
District Design Guide SPD (adopted March 2010)

### **Consultations**

13. **Caldecote Parish Council** recommends refusal (albeit no reasons given).
14. The **Local Highways Authority** (HA) requested that a plan is provided showing the visibility splays prior to determination of the application. It is considered by the HA that the proposal should have no significant impact on the public highway subject to the required visibility splays and incorporation of conditions.

15. The **Contaminated Land Officer** has considered the implications of the proposal and is satisfied that a condition relating to contaminated land investigation is not required.
16. **Environmental Health Officer** – No comments received.

### **Representations**

17. None have been received.

### **Planning Comments**

#### *Principle of Development*

18. The proposed development seeks approval for a new dwelling outside of any defined Settlement Boundary. The proposal would conflict with Policy DP/7 of the Local Development Framework which seeks to focus new housing within defined boundaries. However, as the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land, this policy cannot be considered to be up-to-date as far as it relates to the supply of housing land (Paragraph 49 of the NPPF).
19. In this situation, the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) means that permission for development should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole, or where specific policies indicate development should be restricted.. The NPPF identifies three dimensions of sustainable development: economic; social; and environmental, and indicates that gains should be sought for each in unison.
20. Although outside the Development Framework, the proposed development comprises the change of use of an existing building situated between the host dwelling and a mobile home park.
21. The site is located approximately 160m from the development framework of Highfields Caldecote, which is identified as a Group Village where residential development of up to 8 dwellings is supported allowing some of the basic day-to-day requirements of their residents to be met without the need to travel outside the village.
22. Whilst not adjacent to the application site, these facilities are accessible from the development on foot via lit footpaths and by cycle. The nearest bus stop is approximately 200m from the site with a regular service to Cambridge town centre. The Committee will also recall planning permission being granted for four dwellings on the site next to Casa-de-Foseta on St Neots Road and further away from the village back in November 2013 when it was considered the site was in a sustainable location.
23. The proposal is therefore not considered to amount to a wholly isolated development in the countryside, and would be consistent with the NPPF principle that rural housing should be located where it will maintain or enhance the vitality of rural communities.
24. The proposal would also add to the range of housing available in the locality, make a modest but positive contribution to the overall supply of housing, and provide some short-term economic benefits through its construction.

25. Taking these matters into account it is considered that the proposal would constitute a sustainable form of development as defined in paragraph 7 of the NPPF.
26. A draft heads of terms that covers the required contributions towards community facilities, public open space and waste receptacles for the proposed three bedroom dwelling has been agreed with the applicant.

#### *Design*

27. The application site comprises a spacious plot with the existing annex building set back from Highfields Road. The annex is well screened in this direction through established planting. To the north of the site is an established mobile home park and to the south the host dwelling known as Westwind.
28. The proposal would comprise the change in use of a single storey annex building to provide a three bed independent dwelling. No external changes are proposed as part of the application and it is considered that the scheme is acceptable in terms of design and would not unduly impact upon the character of the surrounding area.
29. The proposal also provides sufficient private amenity space for the sizes of both the existing and proposed dwelling.

#### *Amenity*

30. The site has adjacent neighbours to the north (mobile home park) and the host dwelling to the south. The annex is positioned in the centre of a spacious plot and would have no impact upon light for the host dwelling at Westwind or the mobile home park. The proposal is unlikely to impact upon privacy for the neighbouring properties as the proposal is limited to single storey construction with only roof lights proposed to first floor accommodation.
31. There have been no neighbour objections in response to the application. The application site is bounded to the north by established planting and the annex building is sufficiently distanced from the host dwelling to ensure no detrimental impact on amenity would occur as a result of the proposed development.

#### *Highway Safety*

32. The Local Highway Authority requested that the applicant provide a drawing showing the required visibility splays which should have the dimensions of 2.4m by 43m as measured from along the nearside edge of the carriageway provided on both sides of the access.
33. The applicants have provided a drawing to illustrate visibility splays on drawing no. PAS/BAL/04 Rev. A. The plan shows the required splays can be provided without the loss of the established planting to the front of the site, although the existing hedgerow would be trimmed back as necessary to achieve the visibility as proposed.
34. It is therefore considered the proposal would provide a suitable access whereby drivers could pull onto and out of the drive safely.

#### *Other Matters*

35. The parish council has not provided any reason for its objection. The case officer has asked for a reason, but no response has been received.

### *Conclusion*

36. Any adverse impacts of the development are not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the material considerations set out in this report, and the proposed development remains acceptable.
37. As such it is recommended that permission be granted for officers to approve the scheme subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement securing contributions towards open space, community facilities, waste receptacles and monitoring and legal fees, and the conditions outlined below.

### **Recommendation**

38. Approval subject to prior completion of S106 agreement.

### **S106 requirements**

A scheme for contributions towards community facilities, open space and waste receptacles will need to be agreed prior to issuing a decision notice.

### **Conditions**

- (a) Timescale
- (b) Approved Plans
- (c) Highways – retention of visibility splays

### **Background Papers**

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (adopted July 2007)
- Planning Reference File: S/2186/14/FL.

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