



12 August 2020

Report to: South Cambridgeshire District
Council Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
Jane Rodens

S/4451/19/FL – Cottenham / Rampton (Land At The Rear Of 5 High Street Rampton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB24 8QE)

Proposal: Demolition of the existing structures and the erection of 4 dwellings with associated infrastructure and works

Applicant: Highcliffe Properties Ltd

Key material considerations: Principle of Development
Heritage Assets
Character and Appearance of the Area
Residential Amenity

Date of Member site visit: None

Is it a Departure Application: No

Decision due by: 31st July 2020 (further Extension of time requested)

Application brought to Committee because: Ward Member requests the application is determined by Planning Committee

Officer Recommendation: Refusal

Presenting officer: Jane Rodens, Senior Planning Officer

Executive Summary

1. This application seeks full planning permission for the development of four dwellings with associated infrastructure and works following the demolition of the existing structures that are on the site.
2. Objections have been received from the Urban Design Officer, the Conservation officer, The Parish Council and there is a Principle Objection to the application.

3. The application is being recommend for refusal by Planning Officers.

Relevant planning history

4. S/0994/18/FL - Erection of six dwellings and associated infrastructure and works following demolition of existing structures – Withdrawn

S/1911/01/O - Residential Development (8 Dwellings) – Refused

S/1596/00/O - Residential Development (7 Dwellings) – Refused

Planning policies

National Guidance

5. National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
National Design Guide (NDG)

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018

6. S/1 Vision
S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/7 Development Frameworks
S/10 Group Villages
CC/1 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments
CC/4 Water Efficiency
CC/6 Construction Methods
CC/7 Water Quality
CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
HQ/1 Design Principles
NH/4 Biodiversity
NH/14 Heritage Assets
H/8 Housing Density
H/9 Housing Mix
H/12 Residential Space Standards
SC/7 Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments
TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
TI/3 Parking Provision
TI/8 Infrastructure and New Developments
TI/10 Broadband

South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

7. Open Space in New Developments SPD - Adopted January 2009
Biodiversity SPD - Adopted July 2009
Trees & Development Sites SPD - Adopted January 2009
Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted March 2010
Affordable Housing SPD - Adopted March 2010
District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010
Public Art SPD- Adopted 2009
Health Impact Assessment SPD – March 2011
Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document- Adopted January 2020
Conservation Area Appraisal – Rampton 2005

Consultation

8. **Parish Council:** “Rampton Parish Council objects to this planning for the following reasons in relation to the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: Rampton is designated an infill village in Policy S/11 and as such residential schemes are stated as being limited to schemes of not more than 2 dwellings. The proposed development is for 4 dwellings. The proposal is not considered to be "brownfield" and therefore does not meet the "exceptional circumstances" conditions laid out in paragraph 3 of S/11 that indicates slightly larger developments may be permitted.”
9. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Contamination Officer:** No objection to the application subject to conditions.
10. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Health and Environmental Services:**
Support the application subject to the following conditions:
 - The repositioning of the stables should be agreed by Environmental Health due to the risk of rodent infestation and odour nuisance to the neighbouring property.
 - Hours of Work
 - Hours of Delivery
 - No burning of Waste
11. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Tress Officer:** Tree and hedgerow information has been provided. A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Implications Assessment (dated Feb 2018, April 18 and Sep 19) has been submitted. This is sufficient for this proposal, trees and site. Please list it as an approved document.
12. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Urban Design:** recommend refusal as this is a poor-quality public realm which mainly dominated by cars and lacks any meaningful landscaping. Such arrangement would result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the visual amenity and the character of the Conservation Area.

Therefore, it is considered in contrary to Policy HQ/1 and Para 127 and 130 of the NPPF.

13. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Landscape Officer:** More information is recommended for the soft landscape works. There are conditions that are to be applied to the application which are for the full details of the soft landscape works and all hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
14. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Ecology Officer:** No objection to the application, subject to conditions for the measures to be carried out in accordance with the submitted information, and there shall be enhancements to the site.
15. **Cambridgeshire County Council Highways:** there is no objection to the application subject to the following conditions:
 - pedestrian visibility splays
 - the fall of the proposed driveway
 - The construction of the access in bounded material
 - Traffic management plan is to be submitted
16. **Sustainable Drainage Engineer:** This application is acceptable subject to the following condition for a scheme of the disposal of surface water and foul water.
17. **Archaeology Officer:** Our records indicate that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential, situated in the village core, reflected by the series of listed buildings in the vicinity of the application area (for example, Historic Environment Record references DCB5701, DCB6022, DCB5279, DCB5277, DCB4462). To the east is Grade II* listed Church of All Saints (DCB4460), which has fabric from 12th century and grave covers and a cross shaft (05457a) found in the churchyard have been identified as Saxon in date. In addition, Giant's Hill, a designated motte castle and adjoining earlier medieval settlement with associated field system (DCB154) is situated 400m to the east. Also in the vicinity is artefact evidence of Prehistoric (05183), Roman (MCB23751), Saxon (MCB23427) and medieval (MCB20158, MCB235759, MCB20155, MCB20156 etc.) occupation.
18. We do not object to development from proceeding in this location but consider that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the inclusion of a negative condition, such as the updated example condition approved by DCLG.
19. **South Cambridgeshire District Council Conservation Officer:** The proposal will fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Rampton conservation area and will not comply with Local Plan policies NH/14
20. With reference to the NPPF and the effect on the significance of the heritage asset, paragraphs 193, 194 and 196 would apply. The proposals would cause significant less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Representations from members of the public

21. There have been a number of letters of objection and support received on this application. All comments can be found on the Councils website in full, a summary of the comments are below:

22. **Objections** – seven letters

- This would not be a sustainable development, there is a need for a car to travel to and from the site therefore it is not sustainable, there are not enough facilities in the village to support the development.
- There is no need for this housing, where there is a large amount of housing within the district.
- The proposal is not in conformity with Policy S/11 of the adopted Local Plan.
- The proposal site is not a brownfield site, this is an agricultural site and therefore does not conform to the definition of the meaning.
- There would be no benefit to the village from this application.
- The application states that this would remove a use that is not neighbourly, this is not considered to be the case.
- The number of dwellings has been reduced but the foot print of the properties has not changed.
- The solid form of the development is not acceptable
- There will be overlooking and overbearing to the amenity areas of the neighbouring sites.
- The location of the bin store will harm the neighbouring properties.
- There is no need for a large cycle store to a property that is for a wheel chair user.
- There will be an impact on the traffic within the village.
- The access to the site is not two cars wide.
- There is not enough car parking on the site as there is no visitor parking.
- There are limited options for public transport within the village.
- The gravel drive will create noise.
- The nearby drain is blocked and this will create additional flooding where there has been before.
- This will impact on the Conservation Area and is not reflective of the area, this is confirmed in the submitted information as part of the application.
- This will harm the village Green.
- There is a history of refusals on the site and this should follow suite, this includes a dismissal by a Planning Inspectorate. There has been no improvement to the scheme that would change the recommendation of this application to an approval. This application should not be compared to the other developments that have taken place in the village as they are not reflective of each other and cannot be compared.
- There are developments that are in the villages that still have not sold, there is no need for these properties and therefore are not required.
- The NPPF requires development to be socially, economic and environmentally beneficial for the community and the local area. This development would not be.
- This application would not create sustainable travel as required by Policy TI/2 of the Local Plan.

- There will be harm to the adjacent Listed buildings to the site as well as the Conservation Area.
- The documents that have been submitted do not reflect the protected species that are on the sites. There is a lot more wildlife than the document shows.
- The application shows that one of the dwellings is for a disabled person, the access and the main road through the site would not be acceptable for them. There is no foot path through the site.
- The materials that are being proposed are not considered to be acceptable and will not be reflective of the rest of the conservation area.

23. Supports – five letters

- This is a smaller scheme for four dwellings, than previously applied for.
- This includes a bungalow
- Well designed scheme that is in keeping with the rest of the village
- Will ensure that the current site cannot be used for uncertain uses in the future.
- This is within the village envelope and an infill site
- There is a lack of housing in the village

The site and its surroundings

24. The proposal is located within the Development Framework of Rampton and the Conservation Area of Rampton.

25. The proposal site contains detached barns and out buildings associated with a current agricultural use. The buildings are used for storage. The access to the site is to the north from High Street, between no.11 High Street and no.5 High Street. Within the site there are mature trees and other vegetation.

26. The following properties surround this proposal site:

- No. Croft Cottage, 3 High Street
- No. 5 High Street
- No. 11 High Street– Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal
- No. 15 High Street
- No.17 The Green (Grade II Listed Building)
- No.19 The Green– Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal
- No.20 The Green– Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal
- No.12 King Street
- No.14 King Street
- No.16 King Street
- No.18 King Street
- No.1 Home Farm Close
- No.2 Home Farm Close
- No.3 Home Farm Close
- Farm Building located within the site – Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal

The proposal

27. The proposal is for the development of four dwellings, that are accessed off of The High Street.
28. The bin area is located at the front of the site, which leads to the rest of the site including eight parking spaces, two for each properties. The buildings are located in a U shape and they are to the south of the site. They are in two block where units no.1 and no.2 are joined and the same for units no.3 and no.4. There are 3 no two storey dwellings and a bungalow within the site.
29. The amenity spaces are to the rear of the properties which back onto the dwellings to the rear of the site.

Planning assessment

30. The key considerations in this application are:
- Principle of Development
 - Heritage Assets
 - Character and Appearance of the Area
 - Residential Amenity

Planning balance and conclusion

Principle of Development

31. Policy S/7 of the Local Plan identifies the areas of sustainable development within the district, these are the Development Frameworks. The proposal site lies within the development Framework of Rampton, which is designated as an Infill Village under Policy S/11. The Policy states that developments within Infill Villages are acceptable where it meets the criteria of the policy.
32. Part two of the policy states that residential developments or redevelopments within Rampton will be restricted to a scheme of not more than two dwellings. Where it is either a gap in an otherwise built up frontage to an existing road, redevelopment or subdivision of an existing residential curtilage, the subdivision or redevelopment of a non-residential building.
33. Part three of the policy states that in very exceptional circumstances a slightly larger development, no more than 8 dwellings may be permitted, where this would lead to a sustainable recycling of a brownfield site bringing an overall benefit to the village.
34. This application is for four dwellings within the development framework of Rampton. Therefore there is a principle objection to this application as the proposal is not in conformity with Policy S/11 of the adopted Local Plan.

35. Part three of the policy will be explored to determine if this is an exceptional circumstance for this development.

Heritage Assets

36. The proposal site is located in the Rampton Conservation Area and to the rear of the following dwellings.

- No. Croft Cottage, 3 High Street
- No. 5 High Street
- No. 11 High Street – Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal
- No. 13 High Street
- No.17 The Green - Grade II Listed Building
- No.19 The Green – Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal
- No.20 The Green – Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal
- No.12 King Street
- No.14 King Street
- No.16 King Street
- No.18 King Street
- No.1 Home Farm Close
- No.2 Home Farm Close
- No.3 Home Farm Close
- Farm Building located within the site – Building of Local Significance as defined in the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal

37. The access to the site is between No 5 High Street and No 11 High Street. The use of the site is a former farmyard which is now disused. According to the historical maps this piece of land has remained undeveloped with only small scale farm buildings added to the site the 20th century. The southern edge of the land has been developed with houses along King Street but the land has not changed significantly as the village developed.

38. This proposal site is a significant site as it lies in the centre of the conservation area and in the heart of the historic core of the village. It is a link with the agricultural past of the village and is surrounded by a number of heritage assets including listed buildings and the nearby village green.

39. The buildings that are located on the site are small scale farm buildings are not considered to be attractive and disused. The site is open and very visible between no.5 and no.11 and in views across from The Green and between houses along King Street. Any development here will need to respect the context of the land, the high visibility of any potential development and the potential for the alteration of the character of the conservation area.

40. This application has been altered from the previously submitted scheme and there appears to be a more organic layout with the four houses grouped around a

courtyard reminiscent of a farmyard group even including a farmhouse in the design of Unit 1. All the houses have taken their materiality cues from traditional agricultural buildings with timber weatherboarding, pantiles and clay tiled roofs and buff brick.

41. The changes that have been made from the previous application do not go far enough to be acceptable on this proposal site. To recreate a farmyard with farmhouse is not responding to the historical use of the site. This has never been more than a farmyard with land attached and a complete farm complex has not existed here. The existing barn on the site is separated from the development and there is no link of how this in then included back into the site.
42. This level of development in this special area of development is too intense for this site and whilst the houses have been reduced in number, they do not reflect the historic core of the Conservation Area, nor do they reflect the previous uses of the site as a farm yard. The visibility of the buildings from around the site will remove the current openness which is a unique feature of this yard to such an extent that will cause harm to the character of the conservation area. Development on this site needs to respond to its farmyard context and be no more impactful than the existing agricultural buildings on the site.
43. The Conservation Officer has commented on the application and have concluded that the proposal will create significant, less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
44. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) refers to harm in paragraph 193, it states that great weight will be given to the conservation of heritage assets, the heritage asset in this instance is the Conservation Area of Rampton. As detailed above there will be less than substantial harm which will be significant. Therefore paragraph 196 of the NPPF is to be applied to the application, this refers to any less than substantial harm to be out weighted by the Public Benefit of the scheme or where this is the optimal viable use of the development.
45. The heritage statement that has been provided as part of this application states that the public benefit of the scheme would be removing an eyesore from the Conservation Area and that it would reinforce the local distinctiveness of the development.
46. It is agreed that the buildings that are located on the site are not considered to be appropriate, however the design and the layout of the site does not provide a level of improvement that would be acceptable to allow for this development to proceed. The historic statement that has been provided does not provide justification that this would be the optimal viable use of the site and therefore overcome the lack of public benefits of the site.
47. The site is located within the Rampton Conservation Area. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

48. The proposal will fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Rampton conservation area and will not comply with Local Plan policies NH/14 and the NPPF.
49. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, Listed Buildings.
50. To the south east of the site are the Grade II listed buildings of no.15 and no.17 The Green. It is considered that this application will not have specific harm to the setting of these listed buildings. The closest building to the boundary of these listed buildings will be plot 4 which is a bungalow. The design of this building, only in regards of the setting of these listed building, is considered to be acceptable.
51. This application is recommended to be refused as there will be less than significant harm created to the Rampton Conservation Area, the adjacent listed buildings. The proposal is therefore not in conformity with Policy NH/14, the NPPF and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Character and Appearance of the Area

52. The Urban Design Officers have commented on the application, they are not supportive of the scheme, this is due to the poor quality of the public realm which mainly dominated by cars and lacks meaningful landscaping. Therefore this level of arrangement would result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the visual amenity and the character of the Conservation Area.
53. Policy HQ/1 part a) refers to the need to protect and enhance the character of the local urban area. Creating the large footprints will block the view termination into the site which usually is terminated by valuable existing trees. These trees are very important as they can be seen outside of the site and in the Conservation Area, therefore the proposal will substantially dilute the trees greenery presence on the High Street scene and therefore contrary to Policy HQ/1 a).
54. The four dwellings are to be joined in a way that will create two blocks of development, normally this would be considered acceptable, but in this instance it will jar with the Conservation Area as the U-shaped built form gives a formal feeling and further enhance the cul-de-sac which is not a character of the Conservation Area. Part b) of Policy HQ/1 requires development to be reflective of the character of the surrounding area, in this instance it is the Conservation Area, the Cul-de-sac like proposal is therefore not acceptable.
55. The public realm for this proposal site will be the main access into the site and the car parking that is provided on either side which heading south into the site and then the north eastern corner of the site. When the site is viewed from the main high street and into the site the cars will be dominant creating a low sense of arrival. The wider public realm within the conservation area contains front gardens, plots no2, no3 and no4 do not have any front gardens.

56. Policy HQ/1 part c) states that there is to be a legible and place-responsive design, that creates a sense of place and identity. It has been stated by the Design officer that the proposal does not achieve this as it will be dominated by parking with a lack of front gardens which is and not creative. Part h) of the policy states that parking should be integrated into the site and does not dominate the site, which the parking that is provided on this site will do.
57. As detailed above there will be harm to the wider Conservation Area from this development. It is considered by the Design Officers through their comments on this application that the rationale that has been put forward for this proposal is not acceptable. No justification has been given that would show that this proposal is acceptable when it can be viewed from the Conservation Area. This would be more specifically from Plots no2, no3 and no3 from the south west corner of the site to The Green. Effecting the Conservation Area in this way is therefore not in conformity with parts d) and e) of Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan.
58. In regards of the specific design of the buildings it is considered that they are not acceptable and there is no justification within the submitted information for the reason behind their design. There is a wide range of design within the village and the Conservation Area which has then not been reflected within this development.
59. The application is therefore not considered to be in accordance with Policy HQ/1 and the NPPF, both of which require a high standard of development that is reflective of the surrounding area.

Residential Amenity

60. In regards of residential amenity both of the future residents of the site and the neighbouring residents of the site each of the plots are to be assessed below. This will be in regards of Policy HQ/1, H/12 and the District Design Guide.
61. Policy HQ/1 states in part n) that the proposal would not create overlooking to the neighbouring properties, nor would it create a dominating effect. It also requires the development not to have a harmful effect on the amenity of the future residents of the site.
62. Policy H/12 indicated the internal space standards for the development, which includes the space for bedrooms and the whole property.
63. Paragraph 6.68 of the Council's District Design Guide details that to prevent the overlooking of habitable rooms to the rear of residential properties and rear private gardens, it is preferable that a minimum distance of 15m is provided between the windows and the property boundary. For two storey residential properties, a minimum distance of 25 metres should be provided between rear or side building faces containing habitable rooms. Where blank walls are proposed opposite the windows to habitable rooms, this distance can be reduced further, with a minimum of 12 metres between the wall and any neighbouring windows that are directly opposite.

Plot 1

64. There are to be four bedrooms, three of the bedrooms appear to be double bedrooms and the fourth is a single bedroom. All of them meet the requirements of the Policy.
65. In regards of the whole floor space for the property this is above the required 124m² at 165m². Which is acceptable and in compliance with Policy.
66. In regards of overlooking to the neighbouring properties it is considered that there would be minimal overlooking and dominating effect to the nearest neighbouring properties, which are:
67. No.11 High Street – North – 13m away from the northern single storey element (obscured windows) and the two storey element which is 19m away and there is one obscurely glazed window.
68. No.1 Home Farm Close. The proposal is 25m away at the two storey element, which is acceptable. The single storey element is between 13m and 17m from the neighbouring property. It is between 9.6m (north west boundary) and 18.2m (south west boundary) this is considered to be acceptable as the majority of the rear amenity space is to the south of the property.
69. No 2. Home Close. This is 23m away from the two storey element of the plot, as this is the closest point and the angle between the properties it is considered that there would be no direct overlooking between the properties.
70. It is between 9.6m (north west boundary) and 18.2m (south west boundary) this is considered to be acceptable as the majority of the rear amenity space is to the south of the property. Therefore, this meets the 15m requirements in the District Design Guide.

Plot 2

71. There are to be four bedrooms, three of which are to be double rooms and the fourth is to be a single bedroom. All of which are compliant with the adopted policies in regards of the space standards.
72. In regards of the whole floor space for the property this is above the required 115m² at 150m². Which is acceptable and in compliance with Policy.
73. In regards of overlooking to the neighbouring properties it is considered that there would be minimal overlooking and dominating effect to the nearest neighbouring property, which is:
74. No.3. Home Farm Close, There is a distance of 25m between the neighbouring property and the two storey element and 21m between the single storey element. This is acceptable.

75. The District Design Guide, states that there should be a minimum of 15m between the rear elevation and the boundary of the site. This is achieved on the site.

Plot 3

76. This is a two bedroom property and both of the rooms are in compliance with the space standards. The floor space of the whole property is also above the required standard at 79m² which is 108m².

77. In regards of overlooking to the neighbouring properties it is considered that there would be minimal overlooking and dominating effect to the nearest neighbouring properties, which are:

78. No.16 King Street, there is 26m between the properties. There would be no direct overlooking as there is one roof light on the rear of the property which is located further away from this nearest dwelling.

79. No.14 King Street, this property is 22m at the closest point at two storey, there would be no overlooking as there are no windows at this closest point. There is a distance of 24m at the nearest window, which is the roof light detailed above. Due to the angle it is considered that there would be no direct overlooking, but some overlooking.

80. The District Design Guide, states that there should be a minimum of 15m between the rear elevation and the boundary of the site. Due to the awkward angle of the site this is between 13m and 7m which is less than the requirement and therefore not acceptable.

Plot 4

81. This bungalow is a two bedroom dwelling, both of the bedrooms are more than the required space standards in the adopted Policy. The floor space of the whole building is also more than the requires in the adopted policy at 70m², this is 119m².

82. In regards of overlooking to the neighbouring properties it is considered that there would be minimal overlooking and dominating effect to the nearest neighbouring properties, which are:

83. No.14 King Street, there is a distance of 17.5m between the bungalow and the single storey element of the proposal, which is considered to be acceptable.

84. No.12 King Street, there is a distance of 13m which is less than the 15m, between the proposed bungalow and the two storey element of the neighbouring property. Due to the angle between the properties there would be no direct overlooking.

85. No.19 The Green, there is a distance of 23m from the single storey element of the neighbouring property.

86. There is a distance of 6m and 12m between the rear elevation and the rear boundary of the site. This is less than the 15m required by the district design guide and therefore not acceptable.

Highway Safety and Parking Provision

87. This application is to provide no.8 external parking space, two spaces for each of plots. The access to the site is from the north of the proposal site off of High Street.

88. The County Council Highways Authority Officers have been consulted on the application. they have requested that the following conditions are applied to the application if the proposal is to be recommended for approval:

- Visibility
- The fall of the driveways for the drain of water from the site
- The construction of the access in bounded material
- The submission of the traffic management plan

89. The application is therefore considered to be in conformity with the adopted Policies.

Drainage

90. There has been no objection raised by the Sustainable Drainage Engineer, they have recommended conditions on this application for the submission of a scheme for the disposal of surface water and foul water that can be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Ecology

91. As part of the application a Protected Species Survey (C. Vine, November 2019) has been submitted. The application site consists of an area of improved short cut grassland, with hardstanding and outbuildings, and a part wooded boundary. The site does sit with the Impact risk Zone of a nearby statutory protected site but does not meet the criteria that would require a consultation from Natural England. There are not any non-statutory site within the vicinity that are likely to be impacted by this application that the Local Planning Authority are aware of. The data from the area states that there are amphibians (including great crested newts), bar owls and other raptors, farmland birds, bats and water vole have all been recorded locally.

92. There has been no evidence of roosting bats within either the buildings to be demolished or the vegetation within the redline boundary. There are some old bird nests within the buildings, however none were active at the time of survey.

No evidence was found of other protected species on site. Therefore, there is no need for further information to be submitted as part of this application.

93. The NPPF paragraph 170, 174, and 175, and the Adopted South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan Policy NH/4 require applicants to enhance, restore and add to biodiversity. Opportunities should be taken to achieve a net gain in biodiversity through the form and design of development. This should include the incorporation of bat and bird nesting boxes in 50% of dwellings within the development, use of native planting mixes and wild grasses, the inclusion of green and brown roofs, the inclusion of green walls, or the inclusion of features such as log piles, insect hotels and hedgehog connectivity. Using tools such as the DEFRA Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator can help to clearly show that the development is creating a positive gain in biodiversity. Therefore, a condition is recommended on that basis.

Landscaping and Trees

94. A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Implications Assessment (dated Feb 2018, April 18 and Sep 19) has been submitted as part of this application, this has been reviewed by the South Cambridgeshire Tree Officer who has agreed that the information that has been submitted is acceptable.
95. Information has also been provided in regards of the landscaping of the site, this has been commented on by the Landscape Officer. They have stated that the soft landscaping works are not acceptable, further planting is needed when accessing the site and there should be a mixture of native hedgerow. Further details are to be conditioned on the site including the sedum roof.

Archaeology

96. The County Council Archaeology Officer has commented on the application, they have indicated that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential, situated in the village core, reflected by the series of listed buildings in the vicinity of the application area.
97. To the east is Grade II* listed Church of All Saints, which has fabric from 12th century and grave covers and a cross shaft found in the churchyard have been identified as Saxon in date. In addition, Giant's Hill, a designated motte castle and adjoining earlier medieval settlement with associated field system is situated 400m to the east. Also in the vicinity is artefact evidence of Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval occupation.
98. There is no objection to the development subject to the following condition, which has been recommended by the County Council Archaeology Officer:
- Submit a programme of archaeological work (historic building recording) which has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI)

Contamination

99. The South Cambridgeshire District Council Contamination Officers have commented on the application and the submitted information, in particular the Environmental Desk Study by Prior Associates dated February 2018, and have considered the implications of the proposals.

100. There may be potential for contamination to be present on the site, this is due to the previous use of the site (agricultural) and the new sensitive end use of the site (residential). During the previous use of the site there was a substantial spill of diesel. Though remediated was undertaken at the time, this was with a commercial land use in mind and not the more sensitive residential use currently being proposed. The Environmental Desk Study has highlighted the need for intrusive investigation. Which is considered to be acceptable by the South Cambridgeshire District Council Contamination Officer.

101. The submitted Environmental Desk Study includes outline recommendations for the intrusive investigation (Section 15). Overall these appear reasonable, targeting the former spill area as well as some general site coverage. However, the leak of hydraulic fluid from machinery noted in the walkover should also be specifically targeted. This section also recommends the sampling is carried out following site clearance and demolition of any existing structures so that a further walkover survey can be carried out. This is a sensible approach that will allow the conceptual model to be updated accordingly to further inform the scope of investigation.

102. The following conditions have been recommended by the South Cambridgeshire District Council Contamination Officer if the application is going to be recommended for approval:

- No development shall take place until a detail desk study has been provided, detailed scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation, a submitted Remediation method statement.
- the works specified in any remediation method statement detailed in the above Condition must be completed and a Verification report.

Other matters

103. Policies CC/3 requires that a scheme for renewable energy is submitted, Policy CC/4 required that water efficiency measures are imposed, and Policy TI/10 requires that infrastructure be imposed to create access to broadband internet respectively; the application does not provide details of any of the above. It is therefore considered reasonable and necessary to impose conditions to require that the above policies are satisfied, if the application is to be recommended for approval.

104. It has been brought to the attention of the Local Planning Authority that there is building rubble and other material dumped on the site, this was confirmed at the time of the Planning Officers Site visit. Further research is being carried out on the matter at the time of writing this report.

Conclusion

105. Policy S/2 of the adopted Local Plan states that development in the district will protect the built and natural heritage of the area, and new developments should enhance the area (b). The amount of dwellings will meet the need for the local area (c). Developments also need to be of high quality that reflect their locations character (d).

106. This application will create less than substantial harm which is significant to the Rampton Conservation Area. Which is not acceptable and not policy compliant.

107. The design of the scheme will overall create a development that is poor and will not enhance the area that it is located in, more specifically the Rampton conservation Area.

108. There will be a level of harm to the amenity of the existing neighbouring properties of the site, also some harm to the future residents of the site.

109. The amount of dwellings that are being proposed are greater than the requirement in Policy S/11 which is for the Rampton Development Framework. There are no affordable dwellings on the site and due to the harm that would be caused the Conservation Area and the Design of the site this would not create a site of very exceptional circumstance and therefore is not acceptable.

Recommendation

110. Officers recommend that the Committee refuses the application, for the below reasons:

Refusal Reason 1 – Principle of Development

The full planning application is located within the Development Framework of Rampton which is identified by Policy S/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 as an Infill Village within the adopted Local Plan. The Policy states that residential development will be permitted in the village where there are two dwellings. If there are to be more than two dwellings then they must be of very exceptional circumstance.

This development by virtue of its poor design, will create harm to the Rampton Conservation Area where it is situated, have a poor relationship with the neighbouring properties and harm their amenity.

Therefore, this is not a development of very exceptional circumstance and not in conformity with Policy S/11, S/7 and S/2 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

Refusal Reason 2 – Impact on heritage assets

This application is to be refused due to the less than significant harm that would be caused to the Rampton Conservation Area. The dwellings are not reflective of the character of the Conservation Area, the level of development is too intense for this site and there design does not reflect the historic core of the Conservation Area, nor do they reflect the previous uses of the site as a farm yard. The visibility of the buildings from around the site will remove the current openness which is a unique feature of this yard to such an extent that will cause harm to the character of the conservation area.

The public benefits that have been stated by the supporting information is not acceptable it does not provide sufficient justification of the within the Conservation Area. The proposal is not in conformity with Policy NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, the NPPF, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Rampton Conservation Area Appraisal.

Refusal Reason 3 – Character and Design of the Development

Policy HQ/1 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 states that development within the district must be reflective of the character of the area that it is located in, create a legible and place-responsive design, that creates a sense of place and identity. Ensure that parking within the development is well integrated.

This application will harm the Conservation Area as it is not reflective of the character of its surroundings. It will be visible from important views into the site and mainly The Green. Within the site the U-shaped development will create a cul-de-sac which is not a character of the conservation area.

When entering the site parking that is being proposed will be dominant, which will be viewed from outside of the site.

The application is not in accordance with Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and the NPPF, both of which require a high standard of development that is reflective of the surrounding area.

Refusal Reason 4 – Residential Amenity

Within Plot 1 bedroom four is smaller than the requirement in Policy H/12 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018. Plots 3 and 4 do not meet the

requirement of creating a residential garden that is 15m from the rear elevation of the development to the rear common boundary, as stated in the district design guide.

The proposal will therefore cause harm to the future residents of the site and the amenity of the neighbouring properties. This application is not in conformity with Policies HQ/1, H/12 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, the District Design Guide and the NPPF.

Background Papers

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 Plan 2018
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)

Report Author:

Jane Rodens - Senior Planning Officer
Telephone Number - 07704 018 433