



**Report to:**

South Cambridgeshire District  
Council Planning Committee

10 November 2021

**Lead Officer:**

Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

---

## **21/03068/FUL – Former Garage Site Meadowcroft Way Orwell SG8 5QU**

Proposal: Construction of 4 No. 1 Bedroom Flats with associated gardens, parking and bin/cycle/plant store

Applicant: South Cambridgeshire District Council

Key material considerations:

- Principle of Development
- Housing Provision
- Character / Visual Amenity
- Biodiversity
- Landscaping
- Trees
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Highway Safety and Parking Provision
- Residential Amenity
- Renewables / Climate Change
- Open Space Provision
- Contamination
- Other matters

Date of Member site visit: None

Is it a Departure Application?: No

Decision due by: 12 November 2021 (extension of time agreed)

Application brought to Committee because: The applicant is South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Officer Recommendation: Approval

Presenting Officer: Michael Sexton

## **Executive Summary**

1. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of four 1-bed flats with associated gardens, parking and bin/cycle/plant store. Each unit will be offered as affordable rental accommodation developed by South Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. The site is located within the development framework boundary of Orwell, which runs along the eastern boundary of the site beyond which is the open countryside. The site is located in flood zone 1 (low risk) with some areas of the site identified as being at risk from surface water flooding.
3. The site formerly comprised a range of garages, which have since been demolished, leaving an area of open hardstanding to the rear of an area of existing residential development.
4. The application proposes the erection of a two storey building with a simple pitched roof form with two rear subservient gable projections. The building would take on the general appearance of a pair of semi-detached properties, comparable to those in the existing area.
5. The proposed development is considered to be compatible with the character of the area and not to result in significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposal, subject to conditions requiring further technical detail including contaminated land investigation, carbon reduction and flood risk/drainage measures, is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policy and guidance.
6. The scheme has therefore been recommended for approval, subject to planning conditions.

## **Relevant planning history**

7. S/4095/17/OL – Outline planning application for the development of 2No. detached houses as part of the SCDC Right to Build Vanguard – Approved 06 June 2018.

## **Planning policies**

### **National Guidance**

8. National Planning Policy Framework 2021  
National Planning Practice Guidance  
National Design Guide 2019

### **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**

9. S/1 – Vision

S/2 – Objectives of the Local Plan  
S/3 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
S/5 – Provision of New Jobs and Homes  
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  
CC/9 – Managing Flood Risk  
HQ/1 – Design Principles  
NH/4 – Biodiversity  
H/8 – Housing Density  
H/9 – Housing Mix  
H/10 – Affordable Housing  
H/12 – Residential Space Standards  
SC/6 – Indoor Community Facilities  
SC/7 – Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments  
SC/9 – Lighting Proposals  
SC/10 – Noise Pollution  
SC/11 – Contaminated Land  
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):**

10. Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020  
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016  
District Design Guide SPD – Adopted March 2010  
Landscape in New Developments SPD – Adopted March 2010  
Biodiversity SPD – Adopted July 2009  
Open Space in New Developments SPD – Adopted January 2009  
Trees & Development Sites SPD – Adopted January 2009

### **Consultation**

11. **Orwell Parish Council** – Objection.

Comments:

- The Parish Council does not object in principle to the development of residential dwellings for rent but believes that the details of this proposal are unsatisfactory and the proposal is potentially over development of the site.
- There is no provision for visitor parking. Also, if the residents of the flats have more than 4 cars, additional vehicles will have to find somewhere to

park when there is already a shortage of parking spaces in Meadowcroft Way. The other concern is that cars may park on the access road. This road provides the only vehicular access to the sewerage pumping station and it is essential that the road is kept clear because there have been occasions when the foul water system has overflowed into roads and Anglian Water have needed to urgently carry out work at the pumping station. If the decision is to grant consent, a condition should be attached requiring additional parking spaces to be constructed on other land nearby owned by the applicant.

- If the decision is to grant consent there should be a condition included that a fuel interceptor must be included in the drainage from the hardstanding.
- If the decision is to grant consent, there should be a condition requiring hedgerows to be planted on the boundaries to improve biodiversity. Although the tree shown as existing on the planning application drawing no 1837-SBA-XX-XX-DR-A-502 is in the wrong place, the location shown would be appropriate for a suitable replacement tree as the Arboricultural Impact Assessment recommends the removal of the existing tree.
- If the decision is to grant consent, there should be a condition requiring soil investigations to be carried out prior to any construction to determine whether there is any contamination in the land as recommended in the Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study.
- If the decision is to grant consent, there should be a condition controlling the disposal of site and building waste.

**12. Contaminated Land Officer – No objection.**

Recommends conditions requiring a scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation objectives, a remediation method statement, a verification report and additional or unexpected contamination being identified.

**13. Ecology Officer – No objection.**

Following submission of a Tree Inspection report and second water vole survey, recommends conditions requiring compliance with the submitted Ecological Appraisal, a lighting design strategy for biodiversity and a scheme of ecological enhancement.

**14. Environment Agency – No comments to offer.**

**15. Environmental Health Officer – No objection.**

Recommends conditions requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan and controlling construction hours and informatives relating to air source heat pumps, minimising potential disturbance to neighbouring residents and statutory nuisance.

**16. Local Highways Authority – No objection.**

**17. Sustainable Drainage Engineer – No objection.**

Recommends conditions requiring a scheme for the disposal of surface water and foul water drainage, finished floor levels and a scheme for flood resilient/resistant construction.

18. **Trees Officer** – No objection.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (dated April 2021) has been submitted. This is sufficient for this proposal, trees and site.

## **Representations from members of the public**

19. Seven representations have been received raising objection to the proposed development. Full redacted versions of these comments can be found on the Council's website. In summary the following concerns have been raised:
- Concern that 4 dwellings increases density over the capacity of the area.
  - Concerns over planting / boundary treatment details.
  - Development would impede access to garage.
  - Development would inhibit access of emergency vehicles.
  - Drainage and flood risk concerns.
  - Existing access issues as lane is tight.
  - Insufficient parking, already note enough parking on Meadowcroft Way
  - Lack of demolition notice (2017 outline consent requirement).
  - Loss of light.
  - Loss of privacy.
  - Not in keeping, bungalows would fit in much better.
  - Overbearing impact.
  - Supporting documents referring to 2017 outline application.
  - Trees already removed from site.

## **The site and its surroundings**

20. The site is located within the development framework boundary of Orwell, which runs along the eastern boundary of the site beyond which is the open countryside. The site is located in flood zone 1 (low risk) with some areas of the site identified as being at risk from surface water flooding.
21. The site formerly comprised a range of garages, which have since been demolished, leaving an area of open hardstanding to the rear of an area of existing residential development.

## **The proposal**

22. This application seeks full planning permission for the construction of four 1-bed flats with associated gardens, parking and bin/cycle/plant store. Each unit will be offered as affordable rental accommodation developed by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

## **Planning Assessment**

23. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are the principle of development, housing provision, character / visual amenity, biodiversity, landscaping, trees, flood risk and drainage, highway safety and parking provision, residential amenity, renewables / climate change, contamination and other matters.

## **Principle of Development**

24. The site is located within the development framework boundary of Orwell.
25. Policy S/7 of the Local Plan states that development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks will be permitted provided that: a) development is of a scale, density and character appropriate to the location, and is consistent with other policies in the Local Plan; and b) retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character, and development would protect and enhance local features of green space, landscape, ecological or historic importance; and c) there is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development.
26. Orwell is identified as a Group Village under Policy S/10 of the Local Plan, which states that residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the development frameworks of Group Villages.
27. The supporting text to Policy S/10 details that Group Villages are generally less sustainable locations for new development than Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, having fewer services and facilities allowing only some of the basic day-to-day requirements of their residents to be met without the need to travel outside the village. All Group Villages have at least a primary school and limited development will help maintain remaining services and facilities and provide for affordable housing to meet local needs.
28. There is no in-principle objection to the erection of four 1-bed flats on the site, which would accord with the principles of Policies S/7 and S/10 of the Local Plan.

## **Housing Provision**

29. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of four 1-bed flats which would be offered as affordable rental accommodation by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

### Housing Density

30. Policy H/8 of the Local Plan details that housing developments will achieve an average net density of 30 dwellings per hectare in Group Villages but that the net density on a site may vary from where justified by the character of the

locality, the scale of the development, or other local circumstances.

31. The site measures approximately 0.058 hectares in area, excluding the access road. The development of 4 flats on the site would equate to a net density of approximately 68 dwellings per hectare.
32. The density of development is significantly higher than the average requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare. However, the development is for the provision of four 1-bed flats, which gives rise to a higher density (for example a pair of semi-detached dwellings would equate to a density of approximately 34 dwellings per hectare).
33. Notwithstanding the high-density calculation exacerbated by the nature of the development, the design and scale of the building would be in character of the local area and therefore the density is considered acceptable in this instance.
34. The proposal would accord with Policy H/8 of the Local Plan.

#### Affordable Housing

35. Policy H/9 of the Local Plan sets out that a wide choice, type and mix of housing will be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community including families with children, older people, those seeking starter homes, people wishing to build their own homes, people seeking private rented sector housing, and people with disabilities.
36. Policy H/10, which deals with affordable housing, sets out requirements for affordable housing on large scale schemes with a requirement of 40%. The supporting text sets out that the provision of affordable housing to meet housing need is a key issue for the Council.
37. The application seeks full planning permission for four 1-bed flats and would therefore provide 100% affordable housing, with Flats 1 and 3 being M4(2) compliant.
38. The proposal is considered to align with the aims and objectives of Policies H/9 and H/10 of the Local Plan.

#### Residential Space Standards

39. Policy H/12 of the Local Plan states that new residential units will be permitted where their gross internal floor areas meet or exceed the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or successor document.
40. The proposal would accord with Policy H/12 of the Local Plan.

## Character / Visual Amenity

41. Meadowcroft Way is characterised by a mix of two storey properties, typically semi-detached in form, and single storey properties in semi-detached or terraced forms. The properties are relatively uniform in appearance, with slight variations in porch styles, typically finished with facing brick and tile with some facing elevations of render. Several parking areas are located on either side of the public highway.
42. The application site, which formerly comprised a range of single storey garages, is located to the rear of nos.45 and 57 Meadowcroft Way, accessed by a single lane access road. The properties to the west of the site are two storeys in scale, comprising two sets of semi-detached properties, while the properties to the north, nos.17-23, comprise two pairs of semi-detached bungalows.
43. The application proposes the erection of a two storey building with a simple pitched roof form with two rear subservient gable projections. The building would take on the general appearance of a pair of semi-detached properties, comparable to those in the existing area. However, the building would provide for four flats, with an additional access on either side of the building. The proposed building is to be finished in red brick and red tile, which would be responsive to the material palette of the local area.
44. The application includes the provision of a detached single storey flat roofed store, comprising cycle storage, bins and air source heat pump. The store would be a subservient ancillary structure to the main building and would be of an acceptable scale, form and appearance within the context of the area.
45. The general scale, design and appearance of the building is considered acceptable and to be responsive to the general character of the area.
46. Officers note that representations have commented that a single storey development would be more appropriate for this location.
47. However, given the mix of two storey and single storey properties, notwithstanding the location of the building at the edge of the village framework boundary and adjacent to the countryside, a two storey building on the site is not considered to give rise to significant harm to the visual amenity or character of the area, sufficient to warrant a refusal of the application.
48. Officers note that the scale and form of the building is comparable to the illustrations of the 2017 permission, albeit that permission has now lapsed.
49. Overall, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan.

## **Biodiversity**

50. The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Applied Ecology, April 2021), a Tree Inspection for Bats Letter (greenwillows associates, June 2021) and response to an initial ecology objection.
51. The Appraisal sets out that the site is located within an Impact Risk Zone related to Eversden and Wimpole Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) but is not considered to result in significant adverse impacts given the 2.5km distance from the SAC, offering details of mitigation and impact avoidance. The Appraisal highlighted the need for a further tree inspection for bats, which was undertaken and reported no evidence of bats. A second water vole survey was also undertaken and confirmed no evidence of water voles.
52. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer who raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions.
53. The Council's Ecology Officer has recommended that three conditions be imposed as part of any consent; compliance with the submitted Ecological Appraisal, a lighting design strategy for biodiversity and a scheme of ecological enhancement.
54. Officers consider that the three recommended conditions would be reasonable and necessary and should be imposed as part of any consent to ensure appropriate arrangements for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity as part of the development.
55. Subject to the recommended conditions, officers consider that the proposal would accord with Policy NH/4 of the Local Plan and paragraph 174 of the NPPF, which require development to enhance, restore and add to biodiversity with opportunities should be taken to achieve a net gain in biodiversity through the form and design of development.

## **Landscaping**

56. The existing site comprises an area of hardstanding which formerly contained a range of garages, with limited soft landscaping around the eastern edge of site.
57. The proposed development would introduce soft landscaping to the site in the form of four private garden areas alongside some soft landscaping to the front of the site. A green roof is also incorporated onto the proposed store. Areas of hard landscaping would be formalised to provide car parking spaces and more formalised footpath access in and around the site, as well as patio areas within each private garden. Formal boundary treatments would also be introduced to divide the site into its respective areas.
58. To ensure that the development is compatible with its location, in particular landscaping and boundary treatments to the rear of the site, officers consider it

reasonable and necessary to attach a hard and soft landscape condition as part of any consent.

59. Subject to the recommended condition, officers consider that the proposal would accord with Policies HQ/1 and NH/4 of the Local Plan.

### **Trees**

60. The application is supported by an Arboricultural Implications Assessment (Argenta Tree Surveys, April 2021).
61. Officers note that the Assessment concludes that the only tree on the site is planned for removal due to its poor and deteriorating condition and that as no trees on or adjoining could be affected tree protection measures are not required.
62. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Trees Officer who raises no objection to the proposed development, stating that the submitted information is sufficient for the proposal, trees and site.
63. The proposal would accord with Policy NH/4 of the Local Plan.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

64. The application site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered as having low probability of flooding. Parts of the site are identified as being at risk from surface water flooding.
65. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (MTC Engineering, April 2021).
66. The Assessment confirms that the site is at low risk of flooding but recommends that the finished floor level of the new units should be set a minimum of 300mm above the 1 in 1000 year event (at 23 metres above ordnance datum). Flood resilient construction is also recommended for a further 600mm above finished ground levels, with both measures ensuring the new development is adequately protected against any potential risk of flooding.
67. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Sustainable Drainage Engineers, who raise no objection subject to conditions.
68. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose conditions for a scheme for the disposal of surface water and foul water drainage, finished floor levels and a scheme for flood resilient/resistant construction.
69. Subject to the recommended conditions, officers are satisfied that the proposal would accord with Policies CC/7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the Local Plan which requires developments to have an appropriate sustainable foul and surface water drainage systems and minimise flood risk.

## **Highway Safety and Parking Provision**

70. The site would be accessed from an existing road which links to Meadowcroft Way and provides access to the former garage site and the rear of existing residential properties. The proposal does not include any alteration to the existing access arrangements.
71. The proposed development is not considered to impede existing access arrangements to the rear of properties along Meadowcroft Way, with development contained entirely within the application site.
72. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Local Highways Authority who raise no objection to the proposed development.
73. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development would not result in significant harm to highway safety.
74. In terms of parking provision, the proposed layout incorporates one parking space per flat, set within the confines of the site and away from the access road. The level of parking provided is considered acceptable given that the four flats are 1-bed units and to accord with Policy TI/3 of the Local Plan.
75. Cycle parking is provided in a detached single storey bin/bike/plant store and would provide sufficient space for four bicycles, in line with the requirements of Policy TI/3 of the Local Plan.
76. In terms of existing parking pressures on Meadowcroft Way, concerns are noted, but the proposed development provides sufficient off-road on-site parking to meet the requirements of adopted policy.
77. The proposal would provide parking provision for both car and bicycles, in accordance with Policy TI/3 of the Local Plan

## **Residential Amenity**

### Neighbouring Properties

78. The properties with the greatest potential for impact from the proposed development are the existing properties to the west of the site, nos.45 and 47 Meadowcroft Way, and nos.17, 19 and 21 Meadowcroft Way to the north.
79. 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 15 metres 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, which should be increased to 30 metres, for 3 storey residential properties.

80. The front elevation of the proposed development is set approximately 30 metres from the two storey rear elevations of nos.45 and 47 Meadowcroft Way and approximately 12 metres from the rear garden boundaries of the adjacent properties. The front elevation of the proposed building would feature first floor windows serving habitable rooms and therefore provide views towards the rear amenity space and rear elevations of the existing properties. Officers acknowledge that the existing boundary treatments to the rear gardens are low level and afford views into the garden areas from the public realm.
81. Nonetheless, the degree of separation between the proposed development and existing properties to the west would exceed the recommendations of the Council's District Design Guide in terms of 'back to back' distances.
82. Given the siting of the proposed development relative to the existing properties to the west, the proposal is not considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of these properties in terms of a significant loss of light, overbearing impact or loss of privacy.
83. No.19 Meadowcroft Way is located to the north of the site and shares a common boundary with the site. The proposed building would be located at an oblique angle to the rear elevation of no.19 and set approximately 3 metres from the shared boundary at its closest point. The closest point between the two buildings is approximately 10 metres, taken from the southern corner of no.19. As a result, the proposed building would be more than 10 metres from the key amenity space and rear facing doors/windows to the rear of no.19.
84. Given the relative siting of the proposed building to no.19 Meadowcroft Way and the oblique relationship between the two, the proposal is not considered to result in a significant overbearing impact, sufficient to warrant a refusal of the application.
85. In terms of potential loss of privacy to nos.17 and 19 Meadowcroft Way to the north, the proposed building would feature two first floor windows in its northern elevation, one serving a bathroom and the other a secondary kitchen window for flat 4. These windows have been annotated to be obscured glazing on the proposed floor plan. To ensure the amenities of properties to the north are adequately protected, officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring these two windows to be fixed shut and obscure glazed and retained as such in perpetuity.
86. Subject to the recommended condition, the proposed development is not considered to result in a significant loss of privacy to no.17 and 19 Meadowcroft Way to the north of the site.
87. Given the siting of the proposed development relative to properties to the north, the proposal is not considered to result in a significant loss of light.
88. To the north west of the site is no.21 Meadowcroft Way. The front elevation of the proposed building is approximately 15 metres from the shared boundary with no.21. The first floor window nearest to this shared boundary would provide

oblique views towards the rear amenity area of no.21 and, given the degree of separation, is not considered to result in a significant loss of privacy. The siting of the proposed building relative to no.21 is such that the proposal is not considered to result in a significant overbearing impact or loss of light to this existing property.

89. The application includes the provision of a detached single storey store in the north west corner of the site, adjacent to the boundaries of nos.19 and 21 Meadowcroft Way. The proposed store has a flat roof with a maximum height of approximately 2.9 metres. Although the height of the store would exceed the height of the existing boundary treatments, given the scale and siting of the store relative to nos.19 and 21, the structure is not considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of the adjacent properties.
90. Subject to the recommended condition, the proposal is not considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of the properties to the north of the site in terms of a significant loss of light, overbearing impact or loss of privacy, sufficient to warrant a refusal of the application.
91. Overall, the proposed development has been assessed in terms of loss of privacy, loss of light and overbearing impact and is not, on balance, considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of existing neighbouring properties.

#### Future Occupiers

92. Consideration is also given to the amenities of the future occupiers of the site.
93. The layout of the site is such that it is not considered to significantly compromise the quality of amenity afforded to each property.
94. In terms of existing development impacting on the proposed dwellings, given the arrangements of the site and scale and siting of nearby development, officers do not consider that any existing development would result in significant harm to the amenities afforded to each of the proposed flats.
95. Paragraph 6.75 of the Council's District Design Guide details that ideally ground floor apartments should have a minimum of 10sqm private amenity space immediately outside their living accommodation, or use of a communal garden, where 25sqm is allowed for each apartment. Upper floor apartments should have use of a private balcony, of a minimum of 3sqm, plus use of a communal garden, where 25sqm is allowed for each apartment.
96. Each flat would benefit from a private garden area which would comply with the recommendations of the Council's District Design Guide. The upper floor units are not provided with a private balcony but given the provision of a private amenity area as opposed to a communal garden this is considered acceptable.

#### Conclusion

97. The proposal is considered to accord with Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan which requires development to protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses from development that is overlooking, overbearing or results in a loss of daylight.

### **Renewables / Climate Change**

98. Policy CC/3 of the Local Plan states that proposals for new dwellings and new non-residential buildings will be required to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% (to be calculated by reference to a baseline for the anticipated carbon emissions for the property as defined by Building Regulations) through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies.
99. Policy CC/4 of the Local Plan states that all new residential developments must achieve as a minimum water efficiency equivalent to 110 litres per person per day.
100. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose conditions requiring a scheme to demonstrate a minimum reduction of 10% of carbon emissions and that the dwellings achieve a minimum water efficiency consumption of 110 litres use per person per day, in accordance with Part G of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended 2016).
101. Subject to the recommended conditions the proposal would accord with policies CC/4 and CC/5 of the Local Plan.

### **Contamination**

102. The application is supported by a Phase I Geo-Environmental Desk Study (eps, 2021).
103. The study identified that a number of plausible contaminant linkages have the potential to become active as a result of the historic use of the site for lock-up garages and that further investigation is required by means of a targeted intrusive investigation and the formation of several shallow boreholes to assess soil quality across the site.
104. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Contaminated Land Officer who raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions.
105. Given the sensitive end use (residential), officers consider it is reasonable and necessary to impose conditions relating to a scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation objectives, a remediation method statement, a verification report and additional or unexpected contamination being identified.
106. Subject to conditions, the proposal would accord with Policy SC/11 of the Local Plan.

## Other Matters

### Broadband

107. Policy TI/10 requires that infrastructure be imposed to create access to broadband internet respectively. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition to require that the requirements of Policy TI/10 are satisfied.

### Noise

108. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition restricting the hours of works on site to protect the amenities of neighbouring residents in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and CC/6 of the Local Plan, as opposed to a Construction Environmental Management Plan which is not considered reasonable for the scale of development proposed. Informatives relating to air source heat pumps and minimising the potential for disturbance to neighbouring residents, are also considered appropriate.

### Pre-Commencement Conditions

109. All pre-commencement conditions have been agreed in writing with the agent in advance of issuing a decision.

### Third Party Comments

110. The comments made in third-party representations are noted, with many points already considered in the report. The remaining matters raised are considered below.
111. Officers acknowledge that the site was formally occupied by a range of garages which have now been demolished and that the 2017 outline consent included an informative setting out the requirements for a demolition notice from Building Control. The absence of that information does not impact on the assessment and determination of this planning application.
112. Concern has been raised in respect of trees already removed from the site, with some comments setting out that they had the potential to be covered by Tree Preservation Orders. The trees removed were not protected trees, nor were they considered to warrant statutory protection, and do not impact on the assessment and determination of this planning application.
113. Officers acknowledge that some supporting documents refer to the 2017 outline application, which is relevant planning history for the site, although the consent has lapsed. In consultation with the relevant technical consultees, the supporting documentation is considered acceptable to support the current application.

## **Planning balance and conclusion**

114. The application would provide four 1-bed flats to be offered as affordable rental accommodation by South Cambridgeshire District Council with associated gardens, parking and bin/cycle/plant store.
115. The site is a brownfield site located within the development framework boundary of Orwell and is considered to provide a suitable location for the type of residential development proposed.
116. For the reasons set out in this report, officers consider the proposal to be acceptable in accordance with the relevant policies in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

## **Recommendation**

117. Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approves the application subject to conditions.

## **Conditions**

- a) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Plans to be listed:

1837-SBA-XX-XX-DR-A-501A (Location and Block Plan)  
1837-SBA-XX-XX-DR-A-502A (Proposed Site Plan)  
1837-SBA-XX-XX-DR-A-010 (Ground Floor and First Floor Plans)  
1837-SBA-XX-XX-DR-A-011 (Roof Plan)  
1837-SBA-XX-XX-DR-A-201 (Proposed Elevations)

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- c) No development shall take place until:
- a. The application site has been subject to a detailed scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation objectives have been determined through risk assessment and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

b. Detailed proposals for the removal, containment or otherwise rendering harmless any contamination (the Remediation method statement) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified and appropriate remediation measures agreed in the interest of environmental and public safety in accordance with Policy SC/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- d) No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme of ecological enhancement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the features to be enhanced, recreated and managed for species of local importance both in the course of development and in the future. The scheme 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.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- e) No development above ground level shall take place until a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” features or areas to be lit shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:
- a) Identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
  - b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specification) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area and to protect biodiversity interests in accordance with Policies SC/9 and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- f) No development above ground level shall proceed until an Energy Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Statement shall demonstrate that a minimum of 10% carbon emissions (to be calculated by reference to a baseline for the anticipated carbon emissions for the property as defined by Building Regulations) can be reduced through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies. The approved scheme shall be fully installed and operational prior to the occupation of the

development and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Where grid capacity issues subsequently arise, written evidence from the District Network Operator confirming the detail of grid capacity and a revised Energy Statement to take account of this shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The revised Energy Statement shall be implemented and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure an energy efficient and sustainable development in accordance with Policy CC/3 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

- g) No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme for the disposals of surface water and foul water that can be maintained for the lifetime of the development shall be provided to and agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the dwelling.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water and foul drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with Policies CC/7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- h) No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme for flood resilient /resistant construction has been submitted to and approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with Flood Risk Assessment, reference 2671 – FRA, dated April 2021. Development shall take place in accordance with the approved details

Reason: To protect future occupants from the potential risk of flooding in accordance with Policy CC/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- i) Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, the works specified in any remediation method statement detailed in Condition 3 must be completed and a Verification report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified and appropriate remediation measures agreed in the interest of environmental and public safety in accordance with Policy SC/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- j) No development above ground level shall commence until details of a hard and soft landscaping scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include planting plans with schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate and an implementation programme, full

details of hard landscaping and boundary treatments indicating the type, positions, design, and materials of boundary treatments to be erected.

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- k) No flat shall be occupied until a water efficiency specification for each flat, based on the Water Efficiency Calculator Methodology or the Fitting Approach set out in Part G of the Building Regulations 2010 (2015 edition) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This shall demonstrate that all flats are able to achieve a design standard of water use of no more than 110 litres/person/day. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that the development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction in accordance with Policy CC/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

- l) Prior to the first occupation of any flat, infrastructure to enable the delivery of broadband services, to industry standards, shall be provided for that flat.

Reason: To contribute towards the provision of infrastructure suitable to enable the delivery of high speed broadband across the district, in accordance with policy TI/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- m) The development, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied until the proposed first floor windows in the north elevation of the development have been fitted with obscured glazing (meeting as a minimum Pilkington Standard level 3 or equivalent in obscurity) and fixed shut. The glazing shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To prevent overlooking of the adjoining properties in accordance with Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- n) If, during remediation or construction works, any additional or unexpected contamination is identified, then remediation proposals for this material should be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any works proceed and shall be fully implemented prior to first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified and appropriate remediation measures agreed in the interest of environmental and public safety in accordance with Policy SC/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- o) All ecological measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Applied Ecology, April 2021).

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- p) All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out and maintained 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 as soon as is reasonably practicable, 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 HQ/1 and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- q) Finished ground floor levels shall be set no lower than 23.0 metres AOD, in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, reference 2671 – FRA, dated April 2021.

Reason: To protect future occupants from the potential risk of flooding in accordance with Policy CC/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- r) No construction or demolition work shall be carried out and no plant or power operated machinery operated other than between the following hours: 0800 hours and 1800 hours on Monday to Friday, 0800 hours and 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CC/6 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

## **Informatives**

- a) The granting of permission and or any permitted development rights for any Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) does not indemnify any action that may be required under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 for statutory noise nuisance. Should substantiated noise complaints be received in the future regarding the operation and running of an air source heat pump and it is considered a statutory noise nuisance at neighbouring premises a noise abatement notice will be served. It is likely that noise insulation/attenuation measures such as an acoustic enclosure and/or barrier would need to be installed to the unit in order to reduce noise emissions to an acceptable level. To avoid noise complaints it is recommended that operating sound from the ASHP does not increase the existing background noise levels by more than 3dB (BS 4142 Rating Level - to effectively match the existing background noise level) at the boundary of the development site and should be free from tonal or other noticeable acoustic features.

In addition equipment such as air source heat pumps utilising fans and compressors are liable to emit more noise as the units suffer from natural aging, wear and tear. It is therefore important that the equipment is maintained/serviced satisfactory and any defects remedied to ensure that the noise levels do not increase over time.

- b) The applicant should take all relevant precautions to minimise the potential for disturbance to neighbouring residents in terms of noise and dust during the construction phases of development. This should include the use of water suppression for any stone or brick cutting and advising neighbours in advance of any particularly noisy works.
- c) The granting of this planning permission does not indemnify against statutory nuisance action being taken should substantiated noise or dust complaints be received. For further information please contact the Environment Planning Team.

## **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 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)
- Planning File References: 21/03068/FUL and S/4095/17/OL.

## **Report Author:**

Michael Sexton – Principal Planner  
Telephone: 07704 018467