

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

5 September 2007

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

S/1282/07/F – GREAT SHELFORD

Erection of Nine Age-Restricted Apartments following Demolition of Existing Dwelling, including Access, Car Parking, Cycle and Bin Storage at 6 Woollards Lane for Januarys Consultant Surveyors

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 11 October 2007

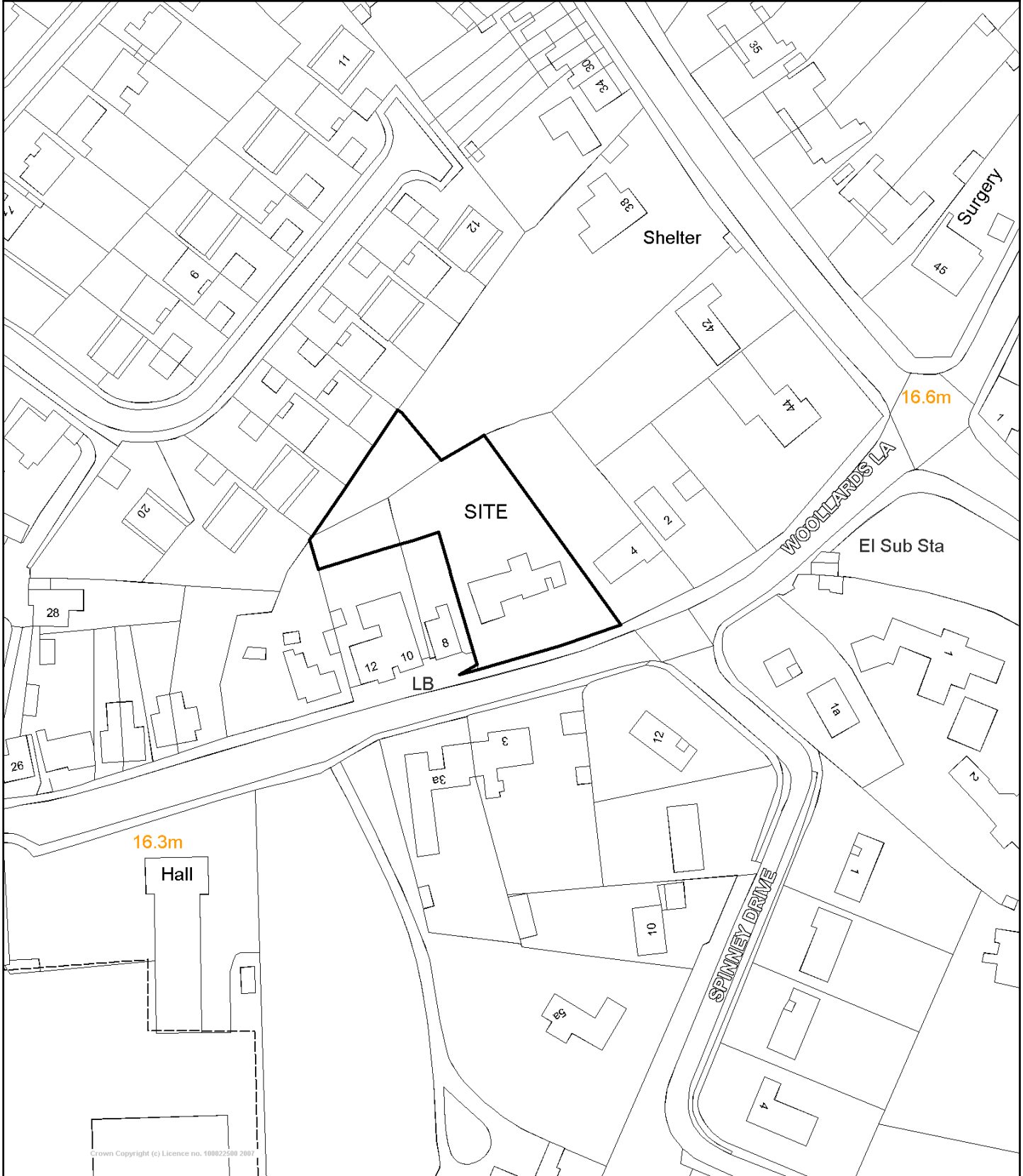
This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation of the Parish Council does not accord with the officer recommendation and because the application, if approved, would represent a departure from the development plan.

Conservation Area

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. The site is occupied by a 5-bedroomed two-storey house to the north of Woollards Lane, in an area close to village shops, services and facilities. This is a family house dating from the 1970's which fills much of its plot width. The site includes an annexe extension, a detached garage, and parking within its front curtilage. The site has a substantial garden area, and has mature trees on the frontage which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. Vehicular access is by way of two private drives that link in an in-out arrangement. The frontage is marked by a low wall. On-street parking is available along the road frontage.
2. To the west, the site is adjoined by a two-storey building at 8, Woollards Lane, which is in use on the ground floor as a delicatessen, and a flat at first floor. To the east, the site adjoins a private two-storey dwelling at 4, Woollards Lane, which itself has a substantial rear garden area. The existing houses, shops and other buildings in the vicinity are from mixed periods and styles.
3. This full application, dated 25 June 2007, proposes the demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings. In its place, the proposal is to erect a two and a half storey block to provide nine apartments (5x1-bedroom, 4x2-bedroom, as amended by plans received 16 August 2007). It is proposed that the occupation of each apartment unit will be age-restricted so that at least one occupier of each unit is over the age of 55. The development will be provided with 10 on-site car parking spaces, a bike storage facility, bin stores. Three parking spaces, including the single visitor space, will be designed for people with disabilities.



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Scale 1/1250 Date 21/8/2007

Centre = 546312 E 251996 N

September 2007 Planning Committee

4. The building is designed to have its taller elements in the centre of the site, and its lower elements towards the side boundaries. The siting is similar to the existing dwelling, to be demolished. The height of the tallest part of the proposed development at 9.4m is 0.5m taller than the existing dwelling, and the main ridge is 0.3m taller. The majority of the building is lower than existing, including a reduction in site levels and finish floor levels. The design concept takes the form of a traditional farm house with a range of agricultural farm buildings surrounding the house. The external materials for the main house are natural slate and weathered buff bricks, with timber sliding sash windows. The 'outbuildings' are to be roofed in slate and black-painted weather-boarding, and timber casement windows. Fully working brick chimneys are to be provided.
5. The application has been amended since the previous application **S/0403/07/F**. The number of apartments has been reduced from ten to nine. The main ridge has been reduced in height 0.8m following concerns expressed by the Parish Council. The height of the rear wing adjacent to the eastern boundary with No.4 has been reduced to single storey only and the small studio flat that was previously proposed in that location served by an external staircase has been omitted from the application.
6. Amended plans received 16 August 2007 show the eastern gable facing the rear garden of No. 4 to be provided with a hipped end. This has the effect of reducing the gable wall in height from 7.1m to 4.6m, which includes setting the building into the site approximately 300mm. The apartment that is to occupy this part of the building, (Flat 7), has been reduced from 3-bed to 2-bed as a result of this change. The amended layout plan shows the visitor parking space to be designed for disabled use and to be repositioned closer to the entrance to the block. The two remaining disabled parking bays have been allocated to specified apartments.
7. The western visibility splay that includes land outside the site has been incorporated within the red-edged area in the amended plans, and notice served on the owner. The applicant has confirmed that he has control over the land affected by the visibility splay.
8. The site has an area of 0.2ha. The development represents a density of 45 dwellings per hectare.
9. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, Design Report, Transport Statement, Flood Risk Assessment and Arboricultural Report.

Planning History

10. Planning application **S/0403/07/F** proposed the erection of ten age-restricted apartments on the site, with ten car parking spaces. The application was withdrawn on 1 June 2007 following concerns raised by Great Shelford Parish Council about the scale of the replacement building and the potential for cars to park on Woollards Lane to the detriment of road safety.

Planning Policy

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (2007)

11. **ST/3 (Re-Using Previously Developed Land and Buildings)** – Between 1999 and 2016 at least 37% of new dwellings will either be located on previously developed land or utilise existing buildings.

12. **ST/4** (Rural Centres) Development and redevelopment without any limit on individual scheme size will be permitted within the village frameworks of Rural Centres, provided that adequate services, facilities and infrastructure are available or can be made available as a result of the development.

South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007)

13. **DP/1** (Sustainable Development): Development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form.
14. **DP/2** (Design of New Development): All new development must be of high quality design and, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, should, among other requirements, preserve or enhance the character of the local area.
15. **DP/3** (Development Criteria): All development proposals should provide, as appropriate to the nature, scale and economic viability:
- a. Affordable housing (in housing schemes);
 - b. Appropriate access from the highway network that does not compromise safety, enhanced public and community transport and cycling and pedestrian infrastructure;
 - c. Car parking, with provision kept to a minimum;
 - d. Safe and secure cycle parking;

Planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact:

- a. On residential amenity;
 - b. From traffic generated;
 - c. On village character;
16. **DP/4** (Infrastructure and New Developments): Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. The nature, scale and phasing of any planning obligations sought will be related to the form of the development and its potential impact upon the surrounding area. Contributions may also be required towards the future maintenance and upkeep of facilities either in the form of initial support or in perpetuity in accordance with Government guidance.
- DP/7** (Development Frameworks)
17. Development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks will be permitted provided that:
- a. Retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character; and

- b. Development would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historic importance, and the amenities of neighbours; and
 - c. There is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development;
- 18. **HG/1** (Housing Density): Residential developments will make best use of the site by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment. Higher average net densities of at least 40 dwellings per hectare should be achieved in more sustainable locations close to a good range of existing or potential services and facilities and where there is, or there is potential for, good local public transport services.
- 19. **HG/2** (Housing Mix): Residential developments will contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes and affordability, to meet local needs. In developments of up to 10 dwellings, market properties should provide:
 - a. At least 40% of homes with 1 or 2 bedrooms; and
 - b. Approximately 25% of homes with 3 bedrooms; and
 - c. Approximately 25% of homes with 4 or more bedrooms;
 unless it can be demonstrated that the local circumstances of the particular settlement or location suggest a different mix would better meet local needs.
- 20. **HG/3** (Affordable Housing)
 - 1. Proposals for housing developments will only be permitted if they provide an agreed mix of affordable housing, as defined in PPS3, to meet local needs.
 - 2. The amount of affordable housing sought will be 40% or more of the dwellings for which planning permission may be given on all sites of two or more dwellings. The occupation of such housing will be limited to people in housing need. It must be available over the long-term.
 - 3. Within individual developments, the proportion and type of affordable housing will be the subject of negotiation with applicants. Account will be taken of any particular costs associated with the development (e.g. site remediation, infrastructure provision) and other viability considerations, whether there are other planning objectives which need to be given priority, and the need to ensure balanced and sustainable communities.
 - 4. The appropriate mix in terms of housing tenures and house sizes of affordable housing within a development will be determined by local circumstances at the time of planning permission, including housing need, development costs, the availability of subsidy, and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities.
- 21. **CH/5** (Conservation Areas): Planning applications for development proposals (including applications for Conservation Area Consent for demolitions) in or affecting Conservation Areas will be determined in accordance with legislative provisions and national policy (currently in PPG15) and guidance contained in specific Conservation Area Appraisals (where they exist) and the District Design Guide.

22. **TR/1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel): Planning permission will not be granted for developments likely to give rise to a material increase in travel demands unless the site has (or will attain) a sufficient standard of accessibility to offer an appropriate choice of travel by public transport or other non-car travel mode(s).
23. **TR/2** (Car and Cycle Parking Standards): Car parking should be provided in accordance with the maximum standards set out in Appendix 1, to reduce over-reliance on the car and to promote more sustainable forms of transport. In some locations, such as those with good accessibility to facilities and services, and served by High Quality Public Transport, the Council will seek to reduce the amount of car parking provided. Cycle parking should be provided in accordance with the minimum standards set out in Appendix 2 to ensure the provision of adequate secure parking.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

24. **P1/1** (Approach to Development) – development sites involving the use of previously developed land and buildings within existing settlements should be afforded the highest priority.
25. **P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development) requires compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities that responds to the local character of the built environment.
26. **P5/4** (Meeting Locally Identified Housing Needs) Local Plans should make provision for locally assessed need for affordable housing, one and two bedroom homes, housing suitable for the elderly and those with mobility problems, and other specific groups including Travellers and Gypsies.
27. **P5/5** (Homes in Rural Areas) – small scale housing developments will be permitted in villages only where appropriate, taking into account the need for affordable rural housing, the character of the village and its setting, and the level of jobs, services, infrastructure and passenger transport provision in the immediate area.
28. **P7/6** (Historic Built Environment) LPA's will protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
29. **P8/5** (Provision of Parking) – parking standards for all new development will be expressed as maximum standards. Lower levels may be required where means of travel other than the private car are available.
30. The **Great Shelford Village Design Statement** (VDS) was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2004. In the Design Statement, the site lies within Area 6 Woollards Lane, where 'commercial and residential premises intermix, with the small front gardens of the latter modifying the commercial environment.' The VDS states, 'Buildings in Great Shelford are predominantly domestic in scale, and diverse in style, ground plan, ownership, setting and alignment. Future development should mirror that scale and diversity'. Development should 'avoid monotonous, standardised mass housing and inauthentic design'.

Consultations

31. **Great Shelford Parish Council** – remains concerned about the height, bulk and design of the proposal, which is out of character with the housing in this part of

Woollards Lane, and will have an adverse effect on residential amenities of 4 and 8 Woollards Lane.

32. The Parish Council notes that the Transport Statement is based on atypical data taken on 4th January this year. It refers to parking at the Memorial Hall which is not available overnight. Parking congestion and road safety remain deep concerns to the Parish Council, particularly with the proposed development of the library nearby. There is insufficient provision made for parking. The Parish Council supports all the comments made by nearby residents.
33. **Conservation Manager** – Comments that the existing house is a substantial dwelling that dates from the mid-20th Century. It is therefore of no historic interest but provides a degree of architectural enclosure to the street. The most important part of the existing streetscape is the positive contribution made by the one very significant and two lesser mature trees. The replacement structure has a large, 2 1/2 storey central element with a lower, 1 1/2 storey elements either side. The central element is now of similar height to the existing dwelling, while the lower side elements help break up the overall bulk of the proposal and reduce the scale of the proposed development where it abuts the site boundary.
34. In the opinion of the Conservation Manager, so long as the existing trees along Woollards Lane can be protected and retained, the architectural impact of the proposal will be broadly similar to the existing house. It will, therefore, have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area, and in PPG 15 terms will preserve (though not necessarily enhance) the Conservation Area. He has no objection to the proposal.
35. In the event that Members approve the development it will be necessary to invite a Conservation Area Consent application for the demolition of the existing building, and if Members are supportive of the replacement scheme then it is assumed that they will be also signaling their support for this demolition. In the event that the planning application is to be supported he would wish to see conditions requiring agreement of all materials to be used (including timber windows), large scale details (min 1:20 scale) details of the dormer windows and brickwork detailing to the chimneys. In addition, all rooflights are to be conservation type with sizes and manufacturers details to be agreed before works commence on site. Finally, details of the protection of the existing trees during the course of construction are to be agreed and instigated before works commence.
36. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – considers that the submitted tree report is comprehensive and takes account of all issues on the site. The siting of parking bay 1 should be adjusted to take account of the need for tree root protection.
37. **Landscape Design Officer** – the landscaping proposals are acceptable.
38. **Corporate Manager (Affordable Housing)** – A housing need in the village can be identified from information on the housing register, and an affordable housing contribution would be expected as part of this development, amounting to four apartments.
39. **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** – recommends a condition restricting hours of operation of power-operated machinery during the construction period, and informatives.
40. **Building Control Manager** – Access for fire fighting appliances is adequate.

41. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue** – reference to Building Control Section recommended for assessment.
42. **Local Highway Authority** – Initially concerns expressed about vehicular visibility to the west across adjoining land. The amended plans have addressed this concern. The LHA recommends conditions to restrict the vehicular and pedestrian splays from obstruction, and for the siting of cycle parking to be reconsidered, details to be agreed. The LHA raises no objection to the amount of parking provision but has requested a minor resiting of bay 1 to take account of the adjacent tree. Manoeuvring area should be reserved by condition.

Representations

43. In response to the previous withdrawn application S/0403/07/F, 12 letters of objection and 2 letters in support were received, together with a petition against the scheme with 43 signatories. In response to the current application, 8 letters of objection have been received from Nos 3, 3A, 5,5A and 14 Woollards Lane, 16 Elms Avenue, 16A and 45 Tunwells Lane.
44. The following comments were received from the adjoining neighbours:
4 Woollards Lane - The development will be blot on the landscape, with too many cars on the forecourt.

8 Woollards Lane (owner) - The scheme would enhance the area significantly, particularly with the future development of the library. The village is in desperate need for such age-restricted schemes.
45. Other writers have raised the following matters:

Objections

Traffic and car parking

47. Traffic congestion on Woollards Lane, where on-street parking restricts traffic in effect to a single lane.
48. Traffic Statement is based on information taken at a quiet time of year ie. on 4th January.
49. The intended library redevelopment will add to the traffic congestion.
50. There will be congestion during the construction period.
51. There is insufficient car parking provision. The two bedroomed apartments are likely to have two cars each.
52. Adjacent parking at the Village Hall is not available to the general public, and parking to the rear of the newsagents will be relinquished by the District Council in 2009/10.

Design and Appearance

53. The development is out of scale and character with other properties in the area. Rather palatial building. This will be a historical pastiche devaluing the cultural heritage, which would be contrary to the VDS. The VDS states that 'encouraging near replication of traditional models does not produce a creative culture for the built environment'.
54. This would be an unnecessary demolition of a pleasant family house.

55. Visual harm – cars parked in the forecourt. Additional garaging should be placed at the rear of the block, to take cars off the frontage.

Other issues

56. Noise disturbance from cars manoeuvring on the forecourt.
57. Need – the centre of the village needs more family housing rather than more apartments in order not to have a disproportionate number of older people.
58. Extra demand on a near-capacity electricity supply. The development should incorporate solar heating.

Support

59. The scheme is of high architectural merit and would be an enhancement for the Conservation Area.
60. The location is entirely appropriate to accommodate an age-restricted scheme close to the village amenities, which could be reached on foot.

Planning Comments

Conservation Area and street scene

61. The existing dwelling has been assessed by the Conservation Manager as making little contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area except as a form of enclosure. The proposed building will also provide this function, and so will be neutral in its impact on the conservation area and street scene. The maximum height of the proposed building is similar to the existing, and the siting of the front elevation is no further forward than existing.
62. The forecourt of the proposed dwelling shows an increased area of hard surfacing, laid to shingle, but will retain existing trees and is shown to be provided with a low privet hedge framing the hardened areas along the frontage and in front of the building. I do not consider that these changes will result to harm the conservation area or street scene. The proposal complies with policies P5/5, P7/6, DP/2, CH/5 and the Village Design Statement, in my opinion.

Residential amenity

63. The proposal will result in gable ends facing towards the rear garden areas of Nos 4 and 8 Woollards Lane. In the case of No.8, where the ground floor use is retail, the gable will replace an existing longer flank wall in a similar position, and so will not result in undue overbearing impact or overshadowing. In the case of no.4, the gable will replace an existing single storey annexe. The proposal has been amended to introduce a hipped roof to this end, which would then result in a gable wall with a length of 9.5m at front eaves level and 5.5m at side eaves level, which would have a height of 4.6m. This gable is shown to be sited 3.0m from the side boundary of No.4, and south west of it. The gable is sited 4.2m behind the rear elevation of No.4. I consider that there will be some overbearing impact on the rear garden amenity of No.4, but by virtue of the reduced height of the gable end wall, and its distance from the boundary and the rear elevation of No.4, I do not consider that a serious loss of amenity will be caused to the occupiers of this property.

Traffic and car parking

64. The provision of car parking proposed is below the maximum standard which could apply to such development, which in accordance with policy TR/2 and DCP Appendix 1, would amount to 13 spaces and one disabled parking space. There would be no requirement for visitor parking. The proposal shows 9 spaces (including 2 disabled spaces), and 1 visitor space, also to disabled standard. The Landscape and Design Officer and Local Highway Authority have required an amendment to the siting of bay 1 to take account the adjacent tree, which I consider can be achieved. The site is in a sustainable location close to bus services and a railway station and, taking this into account, I consider that sufficient provision for car parking has been made.
65. The submitted transport assessment estimates that the development will generate 15-18 traffic movements a day. I acknowledge that Woollards Lane is a busy road, particularly at peak times, but I do not consider that this level of traffic generation could reasonably be assessed as so serious to highway safety as to warrant a refusal of planning permission. The application is also supported by the Local Highway Authority, subject to conditions.

Housing need

66. The application does not include provision for affordable housing. The Corporate Manager (Affordable Housing) has advised that a specific need exists for persons with local connections in this age group from the village. The applicant has put forward a case that the development would not be viable if affordable housing was to be required. Members will note that this is a second application on this site, by the same applicant, and that discussions with the Local Planning Authority have been taking place throughout these periods. At the time of the first application, no provision for affordable housing was necessary, as the development fell below the threshold for such provision in the former Local Plan Policy HG7. The provisions of new DPD Policy HG/3 have come into force only since the current application has been submitted. I consider the Local Planning Authority would be acting unreasonably to require an affordable housing provision in these circumstances, and I recommend that, as an exception to Policy HG/3, this requirement be set aside, and that for this reason the application be considered as a departure from the development plan.

Other

67. Some residents have drawn attention to the possible redevelopment of the nearby library in Woollards lane, but as this proposal has yet to be considered as a planning application, I recommend that the current application be considered on its individual merits.

Recommendation

68. Approval of the application dated 25 June 2007, as amended by drawings received 16 July 2007, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. Standard time limit (Reason A).
2. SC5 - Samples of external materials to be submitted.
 - large scale details (min 1:20 scale)
 - details of the dormer windows
 - brickwork detailing to the chimneys.

- all rooflights
 - scheme for the accommodation of vehicles and machinery during the demolition and construction period.
3. SC51 – Landscaping (RC51).
 4. SC52 – implementation of landscaping (RC52).
 5. Tree protection to accord with submitted Arboricultural Assessment dated 1 February 2007.
 6. Details of siting of car parking bays and cycle parking stands to be submitted.
 7. Occupation to be limited to ensure that a minimum of one person in each apartment is aged over 55 years. – (RC - In the interests of highway safety and car parking provision on the site.)
 8. Hours of operation of power driven machinery during the demolition and construction period.
 9. As recommended by the Local Highway Authority. Reason – In the interests of highway safety.)

Informatives

As recommended by the Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services).

Reasons for Approval

1. Although the proposal is not in accordance with Policy HG/3 (Affordable Housing) and DP/4 (Infrastructure and New Developments) of the South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007), it is considered that the proposal can be excepted from the requirement to provide affordable housing because the application was submitted prior to the adoption of this policy requirement. In other respects the development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, (2007)**
 - ST/3** (Re-Using Previously Developed Land and Buildings)
 - ST/4** (Rural Centres)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007)**
 - DP/1** (Sustainable Development)
 - DP/2** (Design of New Development)
 - DP/3** (Development Criteria)
 - DP/7** (Development Frameworks)
 - HG/1** (Housing Density)
 - HG/2** (Housing Mix)
 - CH/5** (Conservation Areas)
 - TR/1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)
 - TR/2** (Car and Cycle Parking Standards)
 - P1/1** (Approach to Development)

- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**
 - P1/1** (Approach to Development)
 - P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development)
 - P5/5** (Homes in Rural Areas)
 - P7/6** (Historic Built Environment)
 - P8/5** (Provision of Parking)
2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise: **impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area; design and appearance; neighbouring amenity; highway safety.**

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File refs S/0403/07/F, S/0403/07/F .

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