

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th March 2009

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

S/2101/08/F - BASSINGBOURN

Conversion of The Cedar into Two Semi-Detached Dwellings, Conversion and Extension of Outbuilding into Single Dwelling and Erection of 17 Affordable Houses, Landscaping and Associated Car Parking Following Demolition of Existing Outbuildings at The Cedars and The Orchard, 26 South End, for Braxted Homes (Bassingbourn) Ltd

Recommendation: Refusal

Date for Determination: 13th March 2009 (Major Application)

S/2104/08/CAC – BASSINGBOURN

Total Demolition of Outbuildings, 26 South End for Braxted Homes (Bassingbourn) Ltd

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 10th February 2009

Notes:

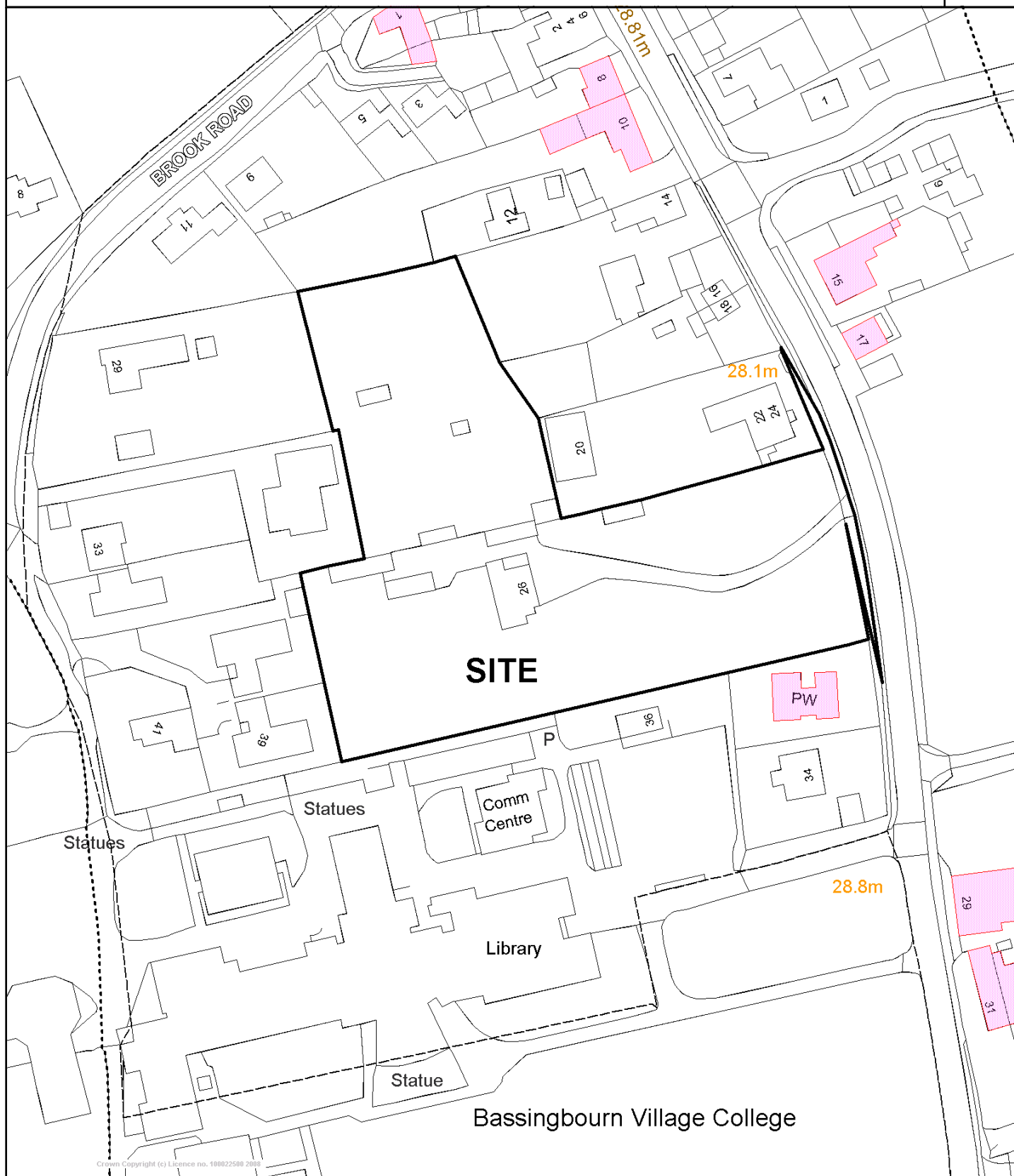
Application S/2101/08/F has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as it relates to an exception site for affordable housing. Application S/2104/08/CAC has been referred to Planning Committee for determination by the Chairman's Delegation Meeting

Members will visit this site on Wednesday 4th March 2009

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. Application S/2101/08/F is a full planning application, received on 12 December 2008, and as amended by drawings received on 16 February 2009, which relates to a 0.85ha area of land to the west of South End. The site comprises The Cedars, no. 26 South End, a 19th Century detached house standing back from the road in well treed grounds. The site also has numerous existing outbuildings and an area of orchard land to the north, located to the rear of the existing properties in South End and Brook Road.
2. The proposal involves the conversion of The Cedars into a pair of three-bedroom dwellings, the extension and conversion of an outbuilding into a one-bedroom bungalow and the erection of 17 further dwellings (4x two-bedroom, 11 x three-bedroom and 2 x four-bedroom), following the demolition of other outbuildings on site (see history below). All 20 units are to be affordable dwellings. The density of the development is 24 dwellings per hectare.



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Scale 1/1250 Date 17/2/2009

Centre = 533111 E 243739 N

March 2009 Planning Committee

3. The proposal creates a mix of dwelling types. There are twelve semi-detached properties, with four detached properties and a terrace of four properties.
4. The plan shows the provision of two communal amenity spaces. One of these is set under the canopy of an existing beech tree to the rear of The Cedars, the other being to the north side of the access roadway close to the front of the site.
5. A total of 46 car parking spaces are provided. Each dwelling would have two allocated spaces, and there are an additional six visitor spaces around the site.
6. The access to the site would be in the same location as the existing, although it would be widened at this point. This will require the removal of some existing planting. The access will then plot a new path into the site rather than using the existing route.
7. To the south, the site adjoins Bassingbourn Village College and the United Reformed Church. To the west, the site adjoins the rear boundaries of properties in Brook Road. Opposite the existing frontage of The Cedars is the Recreation Ground. On its north and east boundaries, the site adjoins properties in South End.
8. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (including an Open Space Statement, a Sustainability Statement, a Renewable Energy Statement, a Statement of Community Involvement and a Health Impact Assessment), a Planning Summary Statement, an Ecological Assessment, a Statement in Support by North Hertfordshire Homes, a Flood Risk Assessment, a Historic Buildings Analysis, and a Trees and Development Report.
9. Application S/2104/08/CAC, received on 16 December 2008, seeks Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of 4 buildings within the site; a greenhouse, a brick shed, a rendered store and, a wooden garage.

Planning History

10. Members will recall a previous application for a similar scheme for 23 dwellings on the site was discussed at Planning Committee dated 6th August 2008 (**S/0883/08/F**). This was refused dated 15th August 2008 for six reasons. These were the principle of erecting this number of dwellings in a Group Village, the proposed harm to the special character and appearance of the Bassingbourn Conservation Area, the negative impact upon a number of trees on the site, four identified serious amenity impacts upon occupiers of neighbouring properties, the insufficient provision of open space on the site, and the lack of information regarding trees within the Orchard.
11. A previous application for Conservation Area Consent for the total demolition of five outbuildings within the site (**S/0872/08/CAC**) was refused on 8th July 2008 on the grounds that three of the buildings are of architectural and historic merit and are an integral component to the setting of the main dwelling and therefore make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed demolition was considered contrary to the aims of Policy CH/5 of the Local Development Framework 2007. The refusal notice adds that the applicant has failed to show that the proposal is justified or that demolition is required. In the absence of an acceptable redevelopment scheme, the proposal is contrary to the advice in paragraph 4.27 of PPG15 which states that consent for demolition should not be given unless there are acceptable and detailed plans for any redevelopment.
12. A Planning application for the erection of five bungalows, including two affordable dwellings on the northern part of the site was submitted in 2004 (**S/1291/04/F**) and

remains undetermined, pending the signing of a Section 106 Agreement securing the two affordable units. Access to the development is via a driveway to be constructed between nos. 14 and 18 South End.

13. An earlier application for the erection of four bungalows (**S/1687/03/F**) was withdrawn.

Planning Policy

14. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007 - **ST/6** – Group Villages
15. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (LDFDCP) adopted July 2007 - **HG/1** – Housing Density, **HG/2** – Housing Mix, **HG/3** – Affordable Housing, **HG/5** – Exceptions Sites for Affordable Housing, **DP/1** – Sustainable Development, **DP/2** – Design of New Development, **DP/3** – Development Criteria, **DP/4** – Infrastructure and New Development, **DP/7** – Development Frameworks, **NE/1** – Energy Efficiency, **NE/6** – Biodiversity, **NE/9** – Water and Drainage Infrastructure, **NE/12** – Water Conservation, **TR/1** – Planning for More Sustainable Travel, **TR/2** – Car and Cycle Parking Standards, **TR/3** – Mitigating Travel Impact, **TR/4** – Non-motorised Modes, **SF/10** – Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments, **SF/11** – Open Space Standards, **CH/5** – Conservation Areas and Policy **Bassingbourn 1**.

Consultation

16. **Bassingbourn Parish Council**

- (a) **S/2101/08/F**. In respect of the application as originally submitted recommends refusal on grounds of poor surface water drainage, the impact upon the junction with High Street due to the increase in traffic, the density and impact would not be in keeping with the Conservation Area, and the ecological impact on the area.

Comments on the amended drawings will be reported at the meeting.

- (b) **S/2104/08/CAC**. It comments that this application is conditional on S/2101/08 and should therefore be refused.
17. The **Conservation Manager** states, in respect of the application as originally submitted, that its comments on the original application noted that the site was a good example of a nineteenth century landscape and emphasised the need to preserve the mature landscape and trees, historic buildings and setting, which all contribute to the interests of this part of the Conservation Area. Whilst the application, as now submitted, follows the advice given by a previous member of team regarding the retention of the main house and the two larger ancillary buildings, the loss of the landscape setting, extent of development, design, materials and resulting impact on this part of the Conservation Area is still a concern.

The rural character of the site with the appearance of mature trees in a managed landscape would be significantly lost, altered and obscured by the proposed development, and further mature trees are at risk in the longer term. Additional pressure on significant trees would be caused by inadequate car parking areas adjacent tree roots (the roots to the largest TPO beech tree would be harmed) and

lack of amenity within cramped gardens overshadowed by large trees (e.g. trees overshadowing Plots 1 & 2).

The setting of the original house would be harmed by the backdrop of modern houses and the over-large development surrounding it. The proposed development fails to follow the traditional hierarchy of development within a village, where the supporting buildings do not compete with the main house. The bulk of the largest terrace (Plots 3-6) immediately adjacent the original building would dominate the more modest buildings on the site and the adjoining houses within this part of the Conservation Area.

The proposed houses along the road frontage obscure the original house from the roadside and provide a less attractive and more urban view into the site. They also fail to follow the pattern of development along the road as one house is set much further back than the other adjacent roadside buildings and the other is at an angle to the road. Parking is closer to the roadside than the houses so would be overly prominent in views from the street and on the approach to the site. The close boarded fence and prominent block paving give an urban appearance at the approach to the site contrary to the existing open rural setting.

The implications of the enlarged entrance are not adequately clear in the submission (for instance the extent of removal of the existing boundary; and the distance of 43 metres is unlikely to be sufficient for a sightline as it was previously required by Highways to be 45 metres). The entrance is wider than any other adjacent opening along this part of the road and would therefore be intrusive in this green rural setting and rural lane. The design of the proposed railings is not appropriate for the 19th Century character of the group, especially the raised bottom rail, the abruptly narrowed detail on top of the intermediate post and the lack of logical stop to the end of the railings.

Subject to the above, there are design issues. The intention is that 'the dwellings are of a 19th Century traditional nature, respecting the local vernacular, with a materials palette which is sympathetic to its setting'. The design fails to be compatible with this. The existing buildings are modest in character, with balanced elevations, simple forms, chimneys on the house providing interest to the roofline, clear hierarchy of openings (higher status rooms on the ground floor should have larger windows than upper floors) and fine simple details.

A plot by plot critique is given for the scheme. The comments conclude that overall the proposed development is detrimental to the special interest of this site due to the potential loss of existing trees, the over-intensive number of units and the bulk, scale, location, form, design and materials of the proposed development. It would therefore neither preserve nor enhance the character of Bassingbourn Conservation Area.

Comments on the amended drawings will be reported at the meeting.

18. The **Historic Buildings Officer** comments that the previous application, which was refused, included a total of five buildings to be demolished. It was agreed that three of these five were of some age and historic interest. They contribute positively towards the setting of the dwelling and the conservation area. As a result, the three should not be demolished. The other two however, are clearly modern and do not make any positive contribution to the conservation area. Their removal would go towards enhancing the conservation area and preserving it.

Then it was discussed further with the applicant and one of the buildings was not capable of being repaired as it is in a very poor state. In addition, two of the buildings are under the volume limit, which means the Council has no control over their demolition and consent is not required.

Therefore, only two buildings require consent as part of this application, buildings B and D. Buildings A and C are under the volume limit and can be demolished without consent. This is despite the previous applications reasons for refusal, which are still valid reasons.

There are no policy reasons that can be used to refuse this application, despite the reservations held by the officer. One of the original five buildings stated for demolition has been removed from the application, so at least one is being retained.

19. The **Urban Design Team (UDT)** recommends refusal of the application as originally submitted. It comments that it has not been involved with previous applications on this site nor any pre-application advice and therefore its comments simply concern the information submitted with the latest application.
- (a) The UDT is critical of the Design and Access Statement stating that it has failed to look adequately at the surrounding context in sufficient detail. Undertaking such an assessment is particularly important as the site is in the Conservation Area.
 - (b) Whilst the UDT recognises that the site has a number of constraints, such as access off South End, the protected trees and outbuildings which need to be kept and the relationship these have with the narrow plot, the resulting application has created a number of design problems with the layout.
 - (c) The house on Plot 1 is at an odd angle. It should have a relationship with the main road like the existing buildings along South end. The garden is unusable being narrow and tapering to 4m. A large Beech tree overshadows the south west of the house; the canopy reaches the south west elevation. What are the long term maintenance implications?
 - (d) Plot 2 - There will be overlooking issues for the existing caretaker's house which has large picture windows – these are too close to the proposed dwelling. The large Lime tree to the west of the site will reduce the amount of light into the dwelling and the close proximity may mean that future residents may want to remove the tree.
 - (e) Plots 3-6 – large footprint for terrace is out of character with context and elevations show property too tall and out of scale with surrounding bungalows. It is unclear how the character of this building fits in with the Conservation Area and existing house. Stable block appearance is not in keeping with the house. The back to back distances with the school buildings adjacent to the site is questioned.
 - (f) Plot 7 is shaded by an enormous Beech tree and lacks amenity/garden space.
 - (g) Plots 8 and 9 have north facing gardens and in addition trees will provide significant shade creating dark space and again it is questioned whether future residents may wish to remove these trees for that reason.
 - (h) Plot 10 overlooks No12 South End with a distance of 24m.

- (i) The back to back distances between Plots 14 and 15 and the bungalow adjacent the east boundary is questioned.
- (j) Plot 16 has a lack of amenity/garden space and it is questioned whether there is an overlooking issue with the neighbouring plots.
- (k) Plots 17 and 18, the Cedars house has fundamental design problems as there is no clear definition of front and back. The proposal shows the back gardens facing the front, which is not conducive to safe and secure design. There is also concern that the gardens are too small.
- (l) Parking and trees. Whilst on-plot parking is a characteristic of the local area there is concern about the layout of the parking in relation to the TPO trees. The spread of tree canopies over the pavements and parking spaces appear to encroach on the root systems. Building under trees will cause loss of trees, in particular the parking for Plots 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 19 and 20. Parking dominates the development and is totally unacceptable.
- (m) The layout has a suburban rather than rural character, which is the result of the cul-de-sac layout and unsympathetic elevations that do not demonstrate the locally distinctive character of the Conservation Area. For example the applicant uses a mixture of architectural style and materials not commonly found in late 20th Century suburban housing developments, as well as a layout that puts buildings at odd angles in relation to roads. Whilst the applicant has used local materials e.g. render, bargeboard and brick, collectively the elevations do not relate to any particular architectural style. The Design and Access Statement states that design principles are based on the development are based on 19th Century building design, the surrounding Victorian buildings do not use bargeboard. The applicant's elevations have a mis-match of architectural styles which demonstrate a lack of understanding of the context.
- (n) The scale and form of the designs do not reflect the local building design; the semi-detached and terraced farm workers cottages have lower ridge heights and use more symmetrical forms, unlike the asymmetric forms demonstrated by the elevations of Plots 14/15 and 10/11. The farm workers cottages are much lower in scale and simpler in form, being subservient to larger dwellings like the Cedars or older farmhouses. Unlike many of the elevations presented by the applicant, these cottages have less architectural details e.g. straight ridges rather than changes in ridge height. Nor do the surrounding cottages have dormer windows or gables on the front of the houses.
- (o) More important houses, like the Cedars, have gable ends, the greater architectural detailing reflects the status of the house, which is taller than the surrounding local farm workers cottages and modern 20th Century infill bungalows. The applicant's elevations show designs with high ridges and deep roofs, and proportionately the gables shown to the front of the buildings on Plots 11, 12, 13 and 15 are too deep, the pitch of the roofs being too steep. These elevations are out of context with local Victorian buildings that have shallower roof pitches, including the Cedars.
- (p) Whilst the Design and Access Statement acknowledges the parkland setting, the development has not implemented this idea in the design, as demonstrated by the scale and form of the elevations. PPS1, SCDC Policy DP/2 and CH/5 require a development to reflect the surrounding context.

Indeed PPS1 states that “Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.” The UDT consider that this site demands a more sympathetic approach to reinforce local character, the new development should be subservient to the larger dwelling, similar to the remaining outbuildings and local farm workers cottages.

- (q) In summary the UDT is of the view that the applicant is trying to fit too much development onto the site and in so doing is compromising the design and quality of the scheme. It is worth noting that the site density is 23.5 dph and not 20 as stated in the Design and Access Statement. It is clear that 20 dwellings create problems with the layout of the buildings, the provision of car parking and relationship to existing trees. Trees are too close to dwellings (Plots 1, 2, 16 and overshadowing of Plot 7) and parking encroaches the tree canopies (Plots 9,10, 13, 19 and 20). IN terms of layout there are no clear fronts and backs for the Cedars, a poor relationship with the road frontages for Plots 1 and 7, and issues of overlooking for Plots 2, 10, 14 and 15. Due to the high density car parking dominates the design and is totally unacceptable.
- (r) The character of the development is not locally distinct nor is it sympathetic to the Conservation Area, the application demonstrates a lack of awareness of surrounding local context in sufficient detail.

Comments on the amended drawings will be reported at the meeting.

- 20. The **Trees and Landscape Officer** notes, in respect of the application as originally submitted, the changes to the dwellings in the vicinity of the beech and lime are acceptable. There is no objection to the removal of the identified trees. Plots 2-6 are influenced by the beech tree and require pile and beam foundations, so an arboricultural consultant should be present during construction to ensure no root damage. The incursion into the Root Protection Area is also acceptable, assuming an arboricultural consultant is on site and the Trees Officer is notified. No materials shall be transported or stored within these areas. The areas of no-dig construction are acceptable. Plot 2 should have permitted development rights removed so no structures or ground works can be undertaken that may damage roots. The grass area under the beech should be mown twice a year to prevent excessive compaction. All workers should be informed of the protected trees on site and the consequences of breaching protection. All tree protection shall be in situ prior to any construction works on site, and approved by the Trees Officer. Concerns remain regarding the shading the lime will create to plot 2 and the post development pressure to undertake a heavy reduction to the mature tree. Suggest the dwelling ensure daylight capture within the design.

Comments on the amended drawings will be reported at the meeting.

- 21. The **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** is concerned that problems could arise from noise and suggests conditions regarding hours of use for power operated machinery and method statement submissions regarding pile driven foundations. Also, requests an informative regarding bonfires and the burning of waste on site.
- 22. The **Scientific Officer (Contaminated Land)** has considered issues of land contamination on this former farm site. A condition is requested regarding a detailed

scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation objectives

23. The **Principal Planning Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council** has stated that as the scheme is for 100% affordable housing, no education contributions would be required as part of the scheme.
24. **Anglian Water** states that it owns no assets within the site boundary. The foul flow can be accommodated within the foul sewerage network system that at present has adequate capacity. They require details regarding connection. There are no public surface water sewers within the locality. The applicant will either need to construct their own or requisition the provision under the Water Industry Act 1991. Alternatively, the applicant can find a suitable alternative in agreement with the Environment Agency. Bassingbourn Sewage Treatment Works has available capacity for the flows.
25. The **Local Highways Authority**, commenting in respect of the application as originally submitted, seeks the parking space dimensions to be shown on the plan. It adds that two parking spaces per dwelling will be necessary. It requests the access road should be 90° to South End for 10m, which will alter the entire layout. A ramp/rumble strip is requested at the entrance with a proposed 2m footway alongside it. The road should be 6m wide with a 500mm maintenance strip on both sides. Adequate drainage measures shall be constructed to prevent surface run-off onto South End. A radius of 7.5m should be provided at the access. Conditions are requested regarding the proposed vehicle to vehicle visibility splays, the addition of pedestrian visibility splays, the location of a bin collection point at the front of the property (as the proposed is more than 25m from the Public Highway), the closure and reinstatement of the existing access, and the development of a Green Travel Plan. The private drive will be occupied by more than five homes, and long-term implications must be considered. The developer should be reminded it is an offence to carry out works to the Public Highway without the permission of the Highway Authority. Public utility apparatus may be affected and the cost of any alterations should be borne by the developer. Finally, the Highway Authority will seek the carrying out of improvements to the footway linking Elm Tree Way and South End, and an upgrade to the footway on the north side of the South End under a s106 Agreement.
26. The **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** has assessed the scheme in relation to community safety and crime reduction. There are a number of criminal incidents in the area, mostly related to the Village College. Nine recommendations are given:
 - (a) All external perimeter fencing surrounding the site to be 1.8m close boarded. As an extra security measure and to prevent climbing, all fencing to be topped by 300mm trellis.
 - (b) A window should be installed in the kitchen/dining room of plot 3 to allow surveillance of the parking spaces provided.
 - (c) A gate should be installed to the alleyway between plots 4 and 5 (resident key operated) in line with the front elevation to prevent access to the rear.
 - (d) Car parking to plots 4-6 may need to be repositioned to allow better surveillance.
 - (e) Details are required as to how plot 7's annex would be used
 - (f) A plan should be provided showing how the recycling area adjoining plot 7's annex will be incorporated into the Communal Amenity Area.
 - (g) A kitchen window should be added to plot 15 to provide views of the parking area.

- (h) Plot 16's front door should be relocated to improve surveillance to the property.
 - (i) Defensive planting should be provided against the amenity space wall and plot 7's annex to prevent ball games against these walls.
27. The **Housing Development and Enabling Manager** is supportive of a scheme of this size in principle. It is not clear if the units would meet Design and Quality Standards as defined by the Homes and Communities Agency. This is required if the Registered Social Landlords wishes to seek grants. The split is for 50% rented and 50% intermediate. They would prefer a 70/30 split in favour of rented accommodation, which is the largest need. Flexibility is required regarding tenures for the intermediate schemes, due to the current climate. Intermediate rent is proving more desirable, giving the applicants the option of renting at 80% of market rent values before considering purchasing in three years time.
28. Comments from the County Archaeology Team, Building Control, the Urban Design Team, the Contracts Officer, the Ecology Officer and the Conservation team will be reported verbally at Planning Committee if received. Please note the County Archaeology Team previously stated the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological work. In their letter dated 13th June 08.

Representations

29. 27 letters of objection have been received from local residents to the scheme as originally submitted and the demolition of the outbuildings. The reasons for objections are summarised below:
- (a) The lack of public consultation and lack of confidence in the applicant.
 - (b) The site is not a brownfield site.
 - (c) The loss of the existing orchard.
 - (d) The loss of habitat for wildlife and lack of survey information.
 - (e) The loss of trees on the site and the pressures on others during construction and when the dwellings are occupied.
 - (f) The impact upon the Conservation Area.
 - (g) The lack of justification for the removal of the existing outbuildings, some of which are in good condition. The greenhouse comprises an attractive brick wall.
 - (h) The lack of integration with the area in terms of density, layout and character.
 - (i) Excessive housing density on site.
 - (j) Excessive development in a Group Village, and lack of facilities within the village.
 - (k) The lack of employment in the village.
 - (l) Potential increase in flood risk in an area with a high water table and concerns regarding surface water drainage.
 - (m) Increase in demand for sewage disposal.
 - (n) Increased noise in a quiet area.
 - (o) The potential increase in crime due to the layout.
 - (p) Increased traffic congestion onto the High Street.
 - (q) The lack of on site parking.
 - (r) Increased highway dangers from the proposed access, particularly with the number of parked cars on South End and the proximity to the Village College.
 - (s) Concerns regarding the A1198 junction.
 - (t) Lack of public transport to Bassingbourn.
 - (u) Inadequate Communal Amenity Space and lack of surveillance.
 - (v) Oppressive location of the car parking.

- (w) Inadequate screening from surrounding properties.
 - (x) Inability to maintain wall by no. 37 Brook Street due to hedge planting.
 - (y) The overbearing impact from plots 19 and 20 to 22/24 South End.
 - (z) Overlooking to no. 11 Brook Road from plots 8 and 9.
 - (aa) Overlooking from plot 7 to no. 31 Brook Road, and the location of the recycling enclosure with regards to this property.
 - (bb) The loss of light and overbearing nature from plot 6 to no. 39 Brook Road.
 - (cc) Overlooking to at least 9 surrounding dwellings.
 - (dd) The loss of habitat for wildlife and lack of survey information.
 - (ee) The loss of outbuildings on site, particularly the wood store that forms an attractive boundary with no. 31 Brook Road.
 - (ff) Problems associated with the construction of the site
30. One letter of support has been received. This highlighted demand for affordable dwellings in the village.
31. Comments on the amended drawings will be reported at the meeting.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

32. The key issues regarding the application are the principle for a scheme of 20 dwellings on the site, the need, mix and tenure, the impact upon the Conservation Area, the impact upon trees, ecology, the impact upon neighbour amenity, highway safety and parking, drainage and flooding, open space provision, the potential for crime and other matters raised.
33. Although discussions have been held between the applicant and officers since the earlier refusal, and comments made in respect of two revised layouts, the current scheme was not submitted for informal comment prior to the new application being made.

The Principle of the Development

34. Bassingbourn is classified as a Group Village in the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted January 2007. The classification allows residential development up to an indicative maximum size of 8 dwellings within village frameworks and takes into account the facilities in the village and its accessibility. This may exceptionally be extended to about 15 dwellings where this would make the best use of a single brownfield site. The proposal would create a net gain of 19 units, with 20 dwellings in total.
35. Policy HG/5 of the LDFDCP 2007 relates specifically to exceptions sites for affordable housing. This seeks dwelling numbers to meet identified local housing need on small sites within villages. There are previous examples of other cases of 20 dwellings being acceptable as a small site, the most recent being in Bassingbourn with the approval of 20 affordable dwellings at The Causeway. I do not consider the scheme to be excessive in principle subject to site specific issues, and it would meet the aims of Policy HG/5.
36. Although the density of the scheme at 24 dwellings per hectare is below the minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare usually sort, I consider there to be exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment in order to make best use of land and retain local character. I note concerns regarding the lack of job opportunities in the village. This is the same for a number of Cambridgeshire villages, where employment

is elsewhere. The need for dwellings in the village would outweigh this issue in this instance.

Need/Mix and Tenure

37. The Housing Development and Enabling Manager supports the scheme in principle. She would prefer a 70%/30% split between rented accommodation and intermediate accommodation, rather than the 50/50 split proposed. This matter could be controlled through the Section 106 Agreement.

Impact upon the Conservation Area

38. The application lies in the heart of the Bassingbourn Conservation Area. Both the Conservation Team and the Urban Design Team remain unsupportive of the development of this site in the manner shown.
39. There is concern at the scale and form of the development and both conclude that will neither preserve nor enhance the character of the Conservation Area, for the reasons detailed in their respective comments
40. Although amended drawings have been received I am of the view that these comments will not change to any significant degree.

Demolition of Existing Buildings

41. I would refer Members to the comments of the Historic Buildings Officer earlier in this report, and the comments that only two of the buildings now proposed for demolition require Conservation Area consent.
42. Despite reservations it is felt that an objection cannot be sustained to the demolition of these buildings.

Impact on Trees

43. The application is accompanied by a Trees and Development Report. The Trees and Landscape Officer has commented regarding the new scheme, One of the reasons for refusal of the previous application, S/0883/08/F, was the impact upon the existing protected trees on site. This focussed specifically on the beech and lime trees on site. The beech tree is the mature species set up against the existing outbuilding that would form an annex to plot 7. The proposed layout retains an area of Community Amenity Space under this tree. There are some concerns that use of this land could cause soil compaction. The Trees Officer has requested a management plan is implemented to ensure the grass under the beech tree is only mown twice a year to prevent excessive compaction and relieving the pressure on this tree.
44. The relocation of dwellings around the lime tree also overcomes the previous reason for refusal. However, there remains some concern regarding the relationship between the lime tree and plot 2. The tree would be in the garden of this dwelling on the southern boundary and will cause a significant loss of light to the dwelling and garden of this proposed dwelling. This may lead to post development pressure on the tree, including removal or serious modifications. This would consequently adversely affect the character of the area. The revised drawings attempt to resolve this issue and I will report any further comments of the Trees and Landscapes Officer.

45. There are no other concerns raised by the Trees Officer regarding the removal of the trees from the site. Strict conditions would be necessary for foundation work, development within Root Protection Areas, storage of construction materials, and construction methods for the access.

Impact upon Neighbour Amenity

46. In respect of the scheme as originally submitted I am concerned that there are several areas within the scheme where there is a potential adverse impact on neighbouring dwellings. In particular I am concerned about the proposed dwellings on Plot 2, which would be overbearing to the occupiers of 36 South End; Plot 7 in respect of the relationship with 31 Brook Road; Plot 19 which is overbearing to the occupiers of 22/24 South End and; the car parking adjacent the boundary with 37 Brook Road
47. The amended drawings submitted attempt to address these issues, and include the substitution of two storey dwellings on Plots 2 and 7 by 2-bedroom bungalows; the rearrangement of the parking adjoining 37 Brook Road; and a slight movement of Plot 19 further away from the boundary with 22/24 South End. A detailed assessment of these revisions will be reported at the meeting.

Highway Safety and Parking

48. The proposal has a revised access onto South End. The Local Highways Authority has not objected to the access itself, subject to conditions regarding both vehicle to vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays. They do however state that the access should be at 90° to the carriageway for the first 10m to allow the safe entering and leaving of the site onto South End. The proposed plans show a bend in this location, meaning visibility into the access, especially when approaching from the south, is poor due to the frontage trees. The other issues raised can be sorted by conditions.
49. The amended layout plan attempts to address the comments made by the Local Highway Authority and its further comments will be reported.
50. With regards to parking, 46 spaces have been provided. This is distributed as 2 spaces per dwelling, plus an additional 6 visitor spaces spread across the site in pairs. The Council's parking standards seeks 1.5 spaces per dwelling, plus space for visitor parking. I note the comments from the Local Highways Authority regarding the numbers. Although they are above the policy requirements, given the parking issues on South End, it is felt that in this instance, the numbers are acceptable, subject to the matters discussed in relation to neighbour amenity.
51. The previous scheme had a car lodge located on the east boundary of the site. This was a reason for refusal given its proximity to the rear boundaries of nos. 37 and 39 Brook Road. The proposed layout removes this structure, but still has parking spaces against this shared boundary. These would stretch the length of the rear garden. I have concerns regarding the location of this parking and the impact upon the occupiers of this neighbouring property. This dwelling is just 7m from the boundary and has a limited rear garden, and facing ground floor windows. They would be subject to increased noise and disturbances from this car parking area.
52. Policy Bassingbourn 2 is not a saved policy from the 2004 Local Plan and therefore has no current weight in the decision making process. It sought new residential development to only be granted if junction between the A1198 and The Causeway

was improved. Works have taken place at this junction, and I do not consider the proposal would have any serious affect on this junction.

Drainage and Flooding

53. There has again been a considerable amount of local concern about the ability of the existing foul water drainage system to cope with the demands that would arise from the proposed development. Anglian Water has confirmed that there is adequate capacity for foul water discharge. With regards to surface water drainage, there are no public sewers in the locality. The applicant will need to find an alternative method of surface water drainage, which would need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority following consultation with the Environment Agency. This can be done by condition. Any further comments raised by the Building Control Team will be reported verbally.

Open Space Provision

54. The site is in very close proximity to the existing recreation ground and I am therefore of the view that an Informal Play Space need not be provided however a Local Area for Play (LAP) should be provided within the site. The application provides for an area of open space in front of the Cedars.

Other Matters Raised

55. I note comments regarding the lack of confidence in the applicant. This is not a material planning consideration. Comments have been raised regarding Policy Bassingbourn 1. However, this relates directly to the site on the northern side of the High Street designated for residential development. There is likely to be disruption to the village during construction, as there would be for any scheme of this type. A condition can restrict hours of operation for power operated machinery to ensure it is within sensible times.
56. The revised drawings attempt to address some of the concerns raised during the application, however these were prepared in advance of the receipt of many of the consultation replies, in particular those of the Conservation Manager and Urban Design Team.
57. Whilst the revised application attempts to address some of the previous reasons of refusal I remain of the view that the scale and form of development, which is being proposed for this sensitive Conservation Area site, is inappropriate and should be refused.
58. In conclusion, whilst I support the principle of trying to provide 100% affordable housing on this site I am of the view that the scheme in its current form cannot be supported.

Recommendation

S/2101/08/F

1. That the application be refused on the grounds that the scale and form of the proposed development fails to either preserve or enhance the Bassingbourn Conservation Area, the adverse impact on existing trees, neighbour amenity and, any concerns of the Local Highway Authority.

S/2104/08/CAC

1. That Conservation Area consent is granted subject to
LBC 1

Informative:

1. This Conservation Area Consent is made independent from the application for the redevelopment of the site, which will be determined on its own merits.

Highways comments:

2. Temporary facilities shall be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning and loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during the period of construction. Prior to the commencement of the use of the site, the approved wheel washing facilities shall be provided to the written satisfaction of the LPA in consultation with the Highways Authority.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007
- Planning Files Ref: S/2104/08/CAC, S/0883/08/F, S/0872/08/CAC, S/1291/04/F & S/1687/03/F

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