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Dear Mr McMurray

**MRS I RICHARDSON
LAND TO THE REAR OF 12-18 THE LANES, GREAT WILBRAHAM**

I write in response to your e-mail received on 27th September enclosing a copy of the letters received from the Mr and Mrs Start, the owners of 74 Angle End, Great Wilbraham and the Great Wilbraham Parish Council.

In response to the points raised, I comment as follows;

1. Conservation Area

From the outset of the planning process, it was acknowledged that the site is situated within the village 'Conservation Area'.

The pre-application submissions and discussions with South Cambridgeshire District Council, details of which are contained within the Design and Access Statement, have focused on the scale and design of the development and reflect the comments received from the Planning and Conservation Departments.

Notwithstanding that the application is for 'outline' consent, at the request of the Council, the architects produced a total of seven layout options for consideration, together with indicative elevation drawings to clearly demonstrate the scale of the buildings proposed.

It should further be noted that, due to the designation of the site as being within the village 'Conservation Area', the number of dwellings proposed was, at the request of the Council, reduced from eight down to six, resulting in a housing density of circa 19 per hectare; i.e. well below the recommended development density and reflecting the setting of the proposed development.

2. Access

At the outset of the planning process, Cambridgeshire County Council Highways were consulted on the options available for the development of a new access to serve the site.

The subsequent Highways Statement and detailed design drawings prepared by Mike Ford Associates were approved by the County Council and were submitted as an Appendix to the Design and Access Statement.

3. Biodiversity

I forwarded on both letters to Mr K Wells of Little Green Consulting Limited who undertook the Biodiversity Report on behalf of our client.

His comments, in response to the points raised, were as follows;

The Phase 1 survey is designed to assess the habitats for any potential protected species that may be using the site. The use of historical records is normal in this type of survey: the records are provided by the Local Biological Records Centre, and enable the status of rare and protected species to be taken into account as an indication of species that could be present on, or adjacent to, the site.

The Phase 1 survey highlighted the potential for nesting birds, bats in trees and reptiles, and further survey would be carried out before any works start on the site to identify how (or if) these species are using the site, and enable mitigation to be put in place as necessary to protect, and enhance the wildlife. There would be no impact on protected species, and mitigation would ensure that the site is enhanced for wildlife post development. Should bats be using the trees to roost, then the trees will be retained within the layout, and lighting designed to ensure that the roost are not impacted. Landscaping would include native and wildlife attracting species to enhance the foraging opportunities on the site. If populations of reptiles are using the site, the site would be fenced prior to any construction activities with reptile exclusion fencing to ensure that no reptiles from the surrounding area are harmed. Reptiles within the site boundary would be translocated to an off-site (or on-site if population size is small) receptor area. A detailed mitigation strategy would be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and Wildlife Trust, and implemented in full prior to any ground works.

Any clearance of scrub or trees would be carried out outside the nesting bird season or following an assessment for nesting birds by a suitably qualified ecologist, to ensure that no birds are harmed by the proposals. Again landscaping would include berry and nut bearing species which would enhance the foraging potential of the site for birds, post development, and nesting boxes would be included to provide additional nesting opportunities.

The Biodiversity Report was submitted as part of the pre-application process to enable the Councils' ecologists to review and comment on it. No further survey work was requested by the Council. It should be noted that the remedial and mitigation works outlined above, will form part of the application for full planning consent in due course.

4. Sewage and Flooding

The site lies outside of a Flood Risk Area and, to this end, I would draw your attention to the information contained within the Design & Access Statement.

With regard to the Parish Councils' comments regarding the possible overloading of what they consider to be an antiquated sewage system, I have contacted Anglian Water who, as you will probably be aware, would not normally comment on developments of less than 10 dwellings as any development below this number is unlikely to have any 'significant impact' on the existing facilities. In this instance, however, Anglian Water have confirmed that they will provide a 'formal comment' on the Scheme.

5. Low Cost Housing Provision

I would refer you to; (a) our correspondence with four 'Affordable / Low Cost' Housing Associations, (b) the e-mail correspondence between myself and South Cambridgeshire District Council and a (c) the draft Section 106 Agreement providing for an offsite contribution towards affordable housing contained within the Affordable Housing Statement submitted as part of the application.

At my last meeting with the Parish Council, we did discuss the response received from the Housing Associations and that provision was proposed for an 'offsite' housing contribution.

6. Parking On Site

Parking has been provided for as advised during pre-application stage and to meet requirements set out within the Development Control policies DPD, which require an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling across the development. The policies further seek to encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport i.e. by bicycle or public transport.

If required, the provision of parking could be reviewed at a full application stage, as the current application, although detailed in some respects, is for 'outline' consent.

7. Height of the Buildings

It is stated by the Parish Council that the proposed houses will be much higher than the surrounding properties which will cause overlooking of houses and gardens which is exacerbated by the 'back land' development.

As mentioned in Point 1 (Conservation Area) above, the scale and design of the proposed development has been undertaken having regard to the setting and constraints of the site. We would refer you to sections 2.5.10 and 2.5.12 of the Design and Access Statement submitted, which confirms that the highest dwelling of 2.5 storeys is approximate in height to Great Wilbraham Baptist church. The three bedroom and two bedroom dwellings step down in height to address comfortably the lower height of the existing cottages at 12-18 The Lanes.

Supplementary landscaping, which would form part of a full application would deal with the points raised regarding the overlooking of the gardens to the rear of the adjoining properties.

8. Consultation

I confirm that whilst some, but not all, of the neighbouring properties were consulted prior to the submission, the Parish Council were consulted both at an early stage of the planning process (prior to the submission of the first pre-application enquiry) and shortly before the application was submitted, to both facilitate discussion and enable comments to be raised.

The design and layout of the proposed development and the detail provided has been discussed at a three pre-application meetings with Planning Officers from South Cambridgeshire District Council who we understand have also liaised with their colleagues to ensure that the design meets the National Planning Policy Guidance on distances from boundaries, heights etc. The design as now submitted met with the informal approval of the various Departments concerned.

I trust that the above points deal with the comments received from the Parish Council and from the owners of 74 Angle End, but if I can be of any further assistance or you require any additional information to be provided, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



SIMON J GILBEY MRICS

Partner

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