

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

5 December 2012

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

S/1727/12/OL – STAPLEFORD

Outline application, including means of access, for the erection of up to 8 dwellings and associated parking and landscaping following the removal of hardstanding, at 29-35 London Road for Welch's Group Holdings Ltd

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 17 October 2012

Notes:

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as it is related to application reference S/1726/12/FL (this latter application being a Departure from the Development Plan for which the Officer recommendation is one of approval contrary to the recommendations of Duxford, Whittlesford and Ickleton Parish Councils)

Members of Committee will visit the site on Tuesday 4th December 2012.

To be presented to the Committee by Kate Wood

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.28 hectare application site is located on the north side of London Road and is one of three separate parcels of land within the centre of Great Shelford and Stapleford that are owned and used in connection with the Welch's business. The front/southern part consists of a hard surfaced area that, until recently, has been used for staff and customer parking in connection with the car sales/garage element of Welch's operation whilst the rear/northern part comprises overgrown scrub land. To the west are a pair of Edwardian two-storey red brick and slate semi-detached houses whilst, to the east, are two semi-detached 1960's brick dwellings. Beyond the northern boundary are the rear gardens of houses within Priam's Way. Directly to the front of the site is a layby and bus stop. On the opposite side of London Road to the south is the Welch's garage car sales site, either side of which are pairs of Victorian semi-detached houses.
2. The application seeks outline consent, with all matters other than the means of access reserved, for the erection of up to eight dwellings on the site. The submitted access layout plan, as amended, proposes the provision of a single centrally positioned vehicular access. This would be a 6.5 metre wide shared pedestrian and vehicular surface in a hammerhead arrangement at the end. The access would comprise 4.5 metre kerb radii and 2.4 metre x 70 metre visibility splays in both directions. The existing bus stop would be repositioned approximately 7 metres to the

west of its existing position and would be located in front of the south-western corner of the site.

3. The illustrative layout drawings indicate the provision of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings to the front, with the access road positioned centrally between them, and a terrace of four dwellings to the rear. The access is shown in a hammerhead arrangement, with parking spaces for all the dwellings accessed directly off the hammerhead and provided at a ratio of two spaces per dwelling. The Design and Access Statement suggests that the frontage dwellings would take the form of two large semi-detached villas set back from the street and following the existing building line, whilst the rear dwellings would have lower ridge lines and single-storey height eaves. It is proposed that all eight dwellings would comprise 4+ bedrooms.
4. As stated above, this site is one of three sites upon which the Welch's business is operated, and is referenced within the application as Site B. Separate applications have been submitted for residential development on the other two sites. Site A is located in Granta Terrace and is a 1.63 hectare site comprising Welch's headquarters (used for road haulage, distribution, warehousing, truck and van sales, and vehicle/crane hire) and is the subject of an outline application for 44 houses (Reference S/1725/12/OL). Site C relates to the car sales site on the opposite side of the road and is the subject of an outline application for 14 dwellings (Reference S/1728/12/OL). Welch's are proposing to relocate their entire operation to a new site in Duxford (Reference S/1726/12/FL). All applications are being considered at this Committee and it is essential that the proposals be determined and considered as a package.
5. The planning statement accompanying the application explains that Welch's currently operate on three separate sites with Great Shelford and Stapleford that are located within 100 metres of each other. They are a long-established local company (formed in 1934) and the business consists of the following elements: road haulage, distribution and warehousing; truck and van sales; crane and motor vehicle hire; and car sales. Welch's have 5 transport depots in total in the Eastern region (3 others in addition to those in Shelford and Stapleford) and employ a total of 150 people. There are approximately 75 staff at the Great Shelford and Stapleford sites, around half of which live in Sawston or Duxford.
6. The applicants have advised that the following key issues currently seriously affect their business, and that, as a result, the relocation of the business is essential to the survival of its operation in South Cambridgeshire:
 - The current access to the main haulage and distribution site is along a narrow, residential road (Granta Terrace). This road is unsuitable for 44 tonne articulated lorries, and taking this size of vehicle along a narrow residential street is becoming untenable.
 - Notwithstanding the above, the Government is reviewing existing maximum limits on vehicle sizes (European Directive 96/53/EC), which would allow an increase in trailer lengths from 13.6 to 15.7 metres. In due course, this longer length is likely to become the 'industry standard' to which all Welch's clients will require the company to comply. Such vehicles would not be able to use Granta Terrace, and this factor signals the demise of this site as a distribution location within the next three to five years.
 - The existing buildings at Granta Terrace would have been industry standard when built by Welch's in the 1950s, but are no longer fit for purpose and are

coming to the end of their economic life.

- Given the length of modern trucks, it is increasingly difficult to manoeuvre vehicles around the existing service yard, whilst avoiding other trucks and people.
- Welch's cannot simply move to any business park, allocated industrial park or brownfield site in the District. The company's objectives are: close proximity to the existing base (an absolute necessity to retaining customers and staff); close proximity to the strategic road next work (particularly the A505 and the M11); and; a bespoke, new facility, that can be designed and built to the company's own specification, to address all the problems inherent within the existing sites.
- Welch's have been looking for new premises since the early 1990s. This Council recognised this need as far back as 1993 when Granta Terrace was designated for residential use in the Local Plan, recognising Welch's difficulties and acknowledging the potential of Granta Terrace for residential use. Welch's have been trying to find this 'relocation to another site better related to the road network' for two decades. The company applied for planning permission for the redevelopment of Granta Terrace for residential use in 1993. This application was withdrawn, as Welch's could not find suitable alternative premises, and this problem has blighted the business ever since.

Planning History

7. C/0824/64 – 4 semi-detached houses and 1 detached house – approved
8. C/0624/71/D – 6 terraced houses and garages – refused
9. S/0482/75/O – 5 houses and garages – refused
10. S/1575/78/F – Use of land for car sales and parking – refused, appeal dismissed
11. S/0952/79 – Lawful development certificate for display of cars for sale and customer/staff car parking – refused – appeal dismissed
12. S/1272/82 – Car showrooms – refused
13. S/1176/85/O – Car showroom – refused
14. S/1355/90/O – Car showroom with service and stores area and first floor offices – refused. Appeal dismissed
15. S/1877/93/F – Use of site frontage for used car display and car storage at rear – refused
16. S/2045/00/O – Erection of 5 houses including 2 low cost houses – approved
17. S/1654/01/F – 8 houses – refused, appeal dismissed

Planning Policy

18. National Planning Policy Framework 2012

19. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Core Strategy 2007:
ST/4: Rural Centres
20. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD, 2007:
- DP/1: Sustainable Development
 - DP/2: Design of New Development
 - DP/3: Development Criteria
 - DP/4: Infrastructure and New Developments
 - DP/7: Development Frameworks
 - HG/1: Housing Density
 - HG/2: Housing Mix
 - HG/3: Affordable Housing
 - ET/6: Loss of Rural Employment to Non-Employment Uses
 - NE/1: Energy Efficiency
 - NE/3: Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development
 - NE/6: Biodiversity
 - NE/10: Foul Drainage – Alternative Drainage Systems
 - NE/11: Flood Risk
 - NE/12: Water Conservation
 - NE/15: Noise Pollution
 - NE/16: Emissions
 - SF/6: Public Art
 - SF/10: Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space and New Developments
 - SF/11: Open Space Standards
 - TR/1: Planning for More Sustainable Travel
 - TR/2: Car and Cycle Parking Standards
 - TR/3: Mitigating Travel Impact
21. South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):
Open Space in New Developments – Adopted January 2009
Trees and Development Sites – Adopted January 2009
Biodiversity – Adopted July 2009
Landscape in New Developments – Adopted March 2010
District Design Guide – Adopted March 2010
Affordable Housing – Adopted March 2010
22. Circular 11/95 (The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions) - Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.
- Consultation by South Cambridgeshire District Council as Local Planning Authority**
23. **Great Shelford Parish Council** – Recommends approval, stating it has no objections as long as issues such as overlooking and overshadowing of existing houses can be dealt with at the reserved matters stage.

No objections are raised in respect of the amended plans showing the access layout, visibility splays and bus stop position. In addition, no objections have been raised to the amended noise impact assessment providing the consultants' recommendations are followed in order to protect the amenities of occupiers.

24. **Stapleford Parish Council** – States that it has considered in detail the applications submitted by Welch’s Group Holdings Ltd in respect of the sites at 29-35 and 32 London Road, and Granta Terrace, and recommends outline planning permission is approved for all three sites. Arising from the three applications, the Parish Council has raised a number of points which are listed below:
1. The Council has concerns over the ease of access onto London Road from both Granta Terrace and Aylesford Way.
 2. The Council wishes to question whether the visibility splay at the top of Granta Terrace is adequate?
 3. Overall safety would be improved by the introduction of interactive flashing signs on London Road, which will encourage drivers to slow down and think about pedestrians, cyclists etc.
 4. The need for a road crossing close to Dolphin Way should be considered as this is the most immediate route that will be used by parents, carers and children from the Granta Terrace site when heading to Stapleford primary school.
 5. Council expressed concerns about the position of the bus stop in the vicinity of 29-35 London Road. However, the amended proposal (dated 16 October 2012) covering access layout, visibility splays and the bus stop position (Fig SK51B) is a distinct improvement. Council has recommended approval of this amendment.
 6. The Council is aware that a number of residents from Aylesford Way have objected to provision of access via Aylesford Way. One of their concerns is that the road surface is not designed for heavy flows of traffic and the sewer is shallow. This is in contrast to Granta Terrace, which has been reconstructed at some point to cope with HGV’s etc. in the light of these comments, it would be helpful to know what the Highways Department’s view is on this issue.

At the public session of the Parish Council meeting, one resident raised concerns that Policy ET/8 states that employment sites should be retained for employment and not redesignated for housing. This was also a recommendation that arose in Stapleford’s Parish Plan. The Parish Council considered this point but overall felt that the village benefits more from the planned developments and the improved traffic conditions, and that this outweighs the loss of potential employment in the village. The Council also recognises that the jobs are staying in the local area, as the site at Duxford is only 3 miles away.

25. **The Urban Design Officer** – Recommends approval, stating that the proposals are appropriately integrated with the existing adjacent developments, and the site planning maximises the site opportunities to create a coherent development that reinforces the street frontage. The proposed access is appropriate. The building massing and form illustrated, namely 2 storey residential development, is also acceptable and in keeping with its neighbours. The proposed frontage properties do not respect the building frontage alignment each is adjacent to, and further development must respect the existing neighbours, with the new access road acting as the divide between alignments.
26. **The Trees and Landscape Officer** – Raises no objections, stating that the site has trees further back into the site, with the immediate street scene being very hard in context. It is acknowledged trees would need to be removed. Tree protection measures need to be installed prior to any demolition on site. It is important that there is a robust landscaping scheme which includes trees that in their maturity will be 10-15 metres high and be accommodated within the infrastructure and provided with a rooting environment that will promote establishment and development for the longevity of the trees.

27. **The Landscape Design Officer** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.
28. **The Ecology Officer** – Raises no objections subject to a condition to control vegetation removal during the bird nesting season.
29. **Planning Policy** – The sites are generally suitable for residential development having regard to the LDF and national policy guidance. There is a need for additional housing in the District and a large unmet need for affordable housing which the development of these sites could partly address. Policy ST/2 states that provision will be made for 20,000 new homes to 2016. There were 9,285 completions to 31 March 2011, and the development of these sites would assist the provision of additional housing over the remainder of the plan period. Policy ST/4 identifies Shelford and Stapleford as a sustainable settlement for development and redevelopment within village frameworks without any scheme size limit. If the business was not relocating locally, redevelopment for housing would be contrary to policy. The relocation of the business to Duxford would protect local employment opportunities and add to the range of available local land and premises. There is also evidence that the operation of their existing business in the midst of a residential area is capable of generating a range of environmental problems and, if operated by another business, could generate similar or worse problems for local residents. As the relocation of the business is so important to make the proposal acceptable in planning policy terms, the development of the Duxford site should precede that of the residential sites and be secured by condition or legal agreement. The applications should also be considered as a package and determined at the same time.

The SHLAA Assessments of these sites conclude they have development potential and have therefore been included as development options in the Issues and Options document.

30. **Section 106 Officer** – Comments as follows in respect of the contributions that appear likely to be required having regard to the indicative housing number and mix. It should be noted that the recommendation of the s106 officer is that any section 106 agreement should include a formula mechanism for calculating the necessary contributions at the submission of each reserved matters application (the application before committee is outline only and is not specific as to the housing number and mix).

Education – these figures vary depending on the affordable housing tenure but a good assumption to work on is a total contribution for pre-school and primary school being in the region of £220,000 - £225,000.

Public Art – The statements submitted with the applications comment that a contribution is not necessary as this is not required by Policy SF/6. In January 2009, the Council adopted the Public Art SPD, and this states the provision of public art will be encouraged on schemes comprising 10 or more dwellings. Where a development does not include public art provision, a financial contribution will be required in order to fund the provision of a public art scheme elsewhere in the Parish (between 1-5% of the total construction cost). In recent years, a precedent has been set whereby the Council secures public art works/contributions of around £500 per dwelling and, based on this, the Council would look to secure a public art scheme to the value of around £35,000.

Public open space – The applicant has sought to combine the open space requirements for all 3 residential developments and provide all this on Site A. There

are no objections to this so long as the delivery of Site A is secured. The applicant has suggested the provision of an onsite LEAP as per the Open Space SPD requirements. The location of the LEAP and the proximity to the houses does not accord with the SPD and is not therefore considered appropriate. This would result in the off site open space contributions being a total of £184,996.27. If Stapleford Parish Council wishes to adopt the onsite open space, a further contribution would need to be agreed to cover the maintenance of the area. The allocation of offsite open space monies between the two Parish Councils would need to be agreed.

Community facilities – Based on the total needs of the three development sites, a total contribution of £34,992.72 is required.

Household waste receptacles – A financial contribution of around £5000 would be required to provide all units with household waste bins.

Strategic waste facility improvements – A contribution is sought from all new dwellings towards upgrading existing/providing new Household Recycling Centres. The development lies within the catchment area for Cambridge, and the Milton HRC. Based on a contribution level of £190 per household, this amounts to £12,540.

Monitoring – A contribution of £5000 would be required towards monitoring of the planning obligations.

Affordable Homes – States that the proposed total provision of 14 affordable dwellings [on Site A] (comprising a mix of 4 x 1 bed flats, 6 x 2 bed houses, 2 x 2 bed flats, and 2 x 3 bed houses) is acceptable.

The Environmental Health Officer – No formal response has been received to date. However, the EHO has advised verbally that, following the submission of a noise impact assessment, there are no in principle objections, subject to the imposition of conditions, including a noise insulation scheme to protect the dwellings from London Road traffic noise. Members will be advised of the recommended conditions in an update prior to the Committee meeting.

The Environmental Health Officer (Contaminated Land) – States that the main issue relates to the protection of human health. The submitted reports indicate remedial measures are required to be incorporated into the development, with the work being carried out during, rather than prior to, development. Any permission should be subject to a condition requiring works to be carried out in accordance with submitted reports and remediation strategy prior to occupation of the development.

30. **The Environmental Health Officer (Air Quality)** – States that the Air Quality Assessment indicates that the proposed development will have negligible impact on the ambient air quality near the development site and that it is unlikely national air quality objectives will be exceeded. The magnitude of change caused by the development is considered to be imperceptible in accordance with the guidelines published by Environmental Protection (2010). This guidance is not statutory and should be used with caution. Emissions attributed to vehicles, mainly fine particles and nitrogen dioxide, can impact on health and quality of life. In order to mitigate the impact and contribute towards exposure reduction of these pollutants, the applicant should be encouraged to implement residential framework travel plans and consider provision for recharging electric vehicles either within garages or associated parking area. In conclusion, air quality impacts should not preclude the granting of planning permission, but the mitigation proposed in order to minimise the effect of vehicle emissions should be secured through conditions or a S106.

31. ***The Drainage Manager*** – Expresses concern that the proposed method of surface water disposal is to the foul public sewer. A suitable surface drainage outfall must be identified, as infiltration suds do not appear to be suitable for the site. If no outlet can be identified, would wish to object to the application.
32. ***The Environmental Services Department (Waste Management)*** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.
33. ***The Environment Agency*** – States that discharging surface water to the public foul sewer would not be acceptable as it may exacerbate surging of the foul sewer network and sewage treatment works. A sustainable method of surface water drainage must therefore be approved prior to commencement of any development.
34. ***The Local Highways Authority*** – A drawing showing 2.4m x 70m visibility splays is required. 2m x 2m visibility splays to each access are also required. Additional conditions should require the access to be constructed to avoid surface water draining onto the highway, the access to be constructed from a bound material, and to require a traffic management plan during the construction period.
35. ***The County Archaeologist*** – Raises no objections, stating that archaeological works would not be necessary.
36. ***The County Education Officer*** – No response received to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.

Representations by members of the public

37. Letters of objection have been received from the owners of Nos.25 and 27 London Road, the purchaser of No.37 London Road, and the owner of No.47 Priam's Way. These letters raise the following points of concern:
 - The windows in the side of No.27 facing the site all have clear glass and serve bedrooms.
 - There appears to be a discrepancy in the plans regarding the bus stop location – this needs to be clarified.
 - The proposed rear dwellings would be very close to the boundary with No.47 Priam's Way. An adequate screening fence should be erected but the dwellings should ideally be moved further away.
 - If the large tree on the site is removed, it should be replaced with another tree.
 - Any revision to the positioning of the houses or first floor side windows could result in overlooking of No.37 London Road to the east.

Material Planning Considerations

Principle of the development/loss of employment

38. The site is one of three sites within the centre of Great Shelford and Stapleford used in connection with the Welch's business. Policy ET/6 of the LDF states that the redevelopment of existing employment sites to non-employment uses within village frameworks should be resisted unless one of the following criteria is met:
 - It is demonstrated that the site is inappropriate for any employment use to continue having regard to market demand. Applications should include evidence,

- to include a minimum 12 month marketing period, that the site is not suitable or capable of being made suitable for continued employment use;
- The overall benefit to the community of the proposal outweighs any adverse effect on employment opportunities and the range of available employment land and premises;
 - The existing use is generating environmental problems such as noise, pollution or unacceptable levels of traffic.
39. The redevelopment of the three sites for housing would, if considered in isolation, result in the loss of local employment and, hence, be contrary to the above policy. However, Welch's are intending to relocate to Duxford (as proposed within application reference S/1726/12/FL) and, if this application is granted, existing jobs and local employment opportunities would be protected thereby ensuring the aims of Policy ET/6 would not be compromised.
40. Paragraph 6 of this report sets out Welch's justification for the proposed relocation of the business away from their existing sites in Great Shelford and Stapleford. Officers consider that this justification forms a compelling argument for the relocation of the business, and the significant shortcomings inherent within the existing sites has long been acknowledged by the Council. In the 1993 Local Plan, the Granta Terrace site was allocated for housing, as the location of the site in a residential area was considered to generate considerable nuisance to surrounding residents, particularly from HGV movements. The redevelopment of the site for housing, together with the relocation of the firm to other sites in the District better related to the road network and away from residential areas, was considered to solve the problem. Whilst almost 20 years has lapsed since the site was allocated for residential purposes, these issues are still as applicable today.
41. No marketing of the existing sites has been undertaken and it could be argued that, to fully comply with the above policy, the existing sites should be retained for employment purposes rather than redeveloped for housing. However, the premises could only be marketed on the basis of the established use of the site, and this use has clearly been acknowledged as unsuitable and untenable within this residential area. Welch's have worked extremely hard to maintain a good relationship with surrounding residents and to keep any disturbance to a minimum, but this wouldn't necessarily be the case if the sites were operated and occupied by an alternative business of this nature.
42. Notwithstanding the above, LDF Policy ST/4 identifies Great Shelford and Stapleford as a Rural Centre and, in such locations, residential development without any limit on scheme size is acceptable in principle. The Planning Policy team has advised that less than half of the 20,000 new homes required to be provided by 2016 were completed by the end of 2011 and that development of the sites would assist in the provision of additional housing over the remainder of the plan period. In addition, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment concluded that all three sites have development potential.
43. Taking the above policies into consideration, the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes is considered to be acceptable in principle, but only if Members have firstly resolved to grant planning permission for the proposed new site in Duxford (S/1726/12/FL). As the relocation of the business is essential to ensure the proposals are acceptable in planning policy terms, any approval would need to be subject to a legal agreement requiring the Duxford site to be provided in advance of any residential development coming forward. For viability reasons, it is accepted that the completion of the Duxford site in advance of any residential development may not

be achievable or reasonable, and it is therefore suggested that any legal agreement be subject to a requirement for a substantive start to be made on the Duxford site, thereby providing the Council with sufficient evidence and confidence that the company will relocate to the Duxford site. Without such controls in place, the applicants could theoretically move outside the District and benefit from a reduced level of planning obligations and it is therefore essential that the appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent this (albeit unlikely) scenario arising.

Housing density, mix, affordable housing and contributions

44. The erection of 8 dwellings on the site equates to a density of 29 dwellings per hectare, with the overall proposed density across the three proposed residential sites amounting to 38 dwellings per hectare. The density of development therefore accords with LDF Policy HG/1, which requires residential developments to achieve an average net density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare.
45. LDF Policy HG/3 requires the provision of a minimum of 40% affordable housing for new housing development, whilst Policy HG/2 requires the following mix for the market element of schemes proposing up to 10 dwellings:
- 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings – minimum 40%
 - 3 bedrooms – approximately 25%
 - 4 bedrooms – approximately 25%

For larger schemes, the mix of units is intended to provide a range of accommodation, including 1 or 2 bed dwellings, having regard to economic viability, the local context of the site and the need to secure a balanced community.

46. The application relating to Site B proposes 8 x 4-bedroom market dwellings. As stated earlier in the report, this application is intended to be considered as a package along with sites A (Granta Terrace) and C (London Road), with a total of 66 dwellings proposed on all three sites. Across the three sites, it is proposed to provide 14 no. (21%) affordable dwellings, all of which would be located on Site A, due to the requirements of affordable housing providers and management issues associated with scattered sites.
47. This level of overall affordable housing provision clearly contravenes the minimum 40% requirements set out within Policy HG/3 and the Affordable Housing SPD. In accordance with the requirements of the SPD, the applicants have undertaken a [confidential] viability assessment and appraisal, and the Council has appointed an independent expert to assess the viability of the four proposals. This exercise included: a) reviewing the information submitted by the applicant in respect of the residential sites; b) providing an assessment of the build and infrastructure costs associated with the relocation site; and c) providing a report to the Council with recommendations on the likely level of planning obligations achievable. The Council's consultant worked closely with the applicant to scrutinise the information which resulted in most items being agreed upon. The principal issue that could not be agreed upon is the extent to which the three residential sites should cross subsidise the relocation of the existing business. The initial view from the Council's consultant was that the three residential sites were technically viable with 40% affordable housing, as the residual land value exceeded an assumed existing use value for the sites. During negotiations the applicant explained that, due to high land costs in South Cambridgeshire, they would be unable to relocate the existing business within the District should such a high level of affordable housing provision be required. It was also explained that other finance sources (i.e. company savings) would be required to

fund parts of the new facility as figures quoted were not fully inclusive of all costs. As a result the applicant suggested that the proposal would be unviable at an affordable housing provision in excess of 12%. The Affordable Homes Team has suggested that, regardless of other material considerations, it would be unable to support a scheme that delivered less than 20% affordable housing.

48. The application relating to Site A has subsequently been amended to increase the level of affordable housing provision from 12% to 21%, providing a total of 14 units. Further viability appraisals were evaluated following changes to the indicative scheme design and have been presented to the District Council. The applicant has also updated their position statement taking account of the negotiations that have since been concluded. Taking these viability considerations into account, together with the response from the Affordable Homes team advising that the number, location and mix of the proposed affordable dwellings on Site A is acceptable, Officers are minded to recommend the applications be approved on the basis of delivering 14 affordable dwellings, to be secured through a Section 106 Agreement.
49. There would be 52 market properties provided across the three sites, with the following mix being proposed:
 - 18 no. 1 and 2 bed dwellings (Sites A and C) – 34.6%
 - 3 no. 3-bed dwellings (Site A) – 5.8%
 - 31 no. 4+bed dwellings (Sites A and B) – 59.6%
50. Policy HG/2 explains that, for large development schemes, there can be some flexibility in the normal 40%/25%/25% ratio required on smaller sites. In this instance, the three sites are considered to achieve a good ratio of smaller 1 and 2 bed units. The number of proposed three bedroom dwellings is very low, but the applicant's agents have advised that the increase in affordable housing provision from 12% to 21% is predicated on the ability to achieve the larger type of units on the remainder of the three sites. It is argued that the sales market for private housing is at the family end of the spectrum in a location such as this, hence the proportion of larger sized units. On balance, and taking into account these factors, the overall mix of the market element of the proposal is considered to be acceptable.
51. As the most significant part of Welch's business is conducted on the Granta Terrace site (Site A), the company would need to remain on this site until the Duxford development has been completed. As a result, it is most likely that this would be the last of the three proposed residential sites to come forward. As the affordable housing for all three sites is intended to be provided entirely on Site A, it would be essential that Sites B and C be subject to a Section 106 Agreement to require the provision of a commuted sum in the event that Site A fails to come forward within an agreed timescale.
52. As this scheme proposes 8 dwellings, there would be no formal requirement for any on-site provision of public open space. For the sake of clarification, however, it is proposed that the public open space requirements associated with all three sites be accommodated entirely within Site A.

Highway safety

53. Stapleford Parish Council has raised concerns regarding the highway safety implications of the proposal, requesting that consideration be given to the introduction of flashing signs and an additional pedestrian crossing near to Dolphin Way.

54. This outline application is solely seeking approval for the means of access at this stage. The Local Highways Authority has been consulted on the proposal and has raised no objections to the highway safety implications of the proposal, with the access layout drawing being amended to show the requested 2.4 metre x 70 metre visibility splays in their entirety. The application is therefore considered acceptable from a highway safety perspective without any need or requirement for the provision of additional safety measures in the area.
55. There was some discrepancy in the originally submitted drawings, which appeared to indicate the existing bus stop would be relocated to the front of Nos. 25 and 27 London Road. This has been rectified and the drawings amended to show the bus stop would be relocated within the existing layby area and positioned directly to the front of the application site.

Design and visual impact

56. The application has been submitted following extensive pre-application discussions with Officers, with the illustrative layout being amended to address comments and concerns raised during this process. The illustrative plan shows the provision of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings to the front of the site, either side of the centrally positioned access, with a terrace of four properties to the rear, set back 25 metres away from the rear of the frontage units. It is suggested that the rear units would have low eaves and lower ridge heights than the frontage dwellings with first-floor rooms accommodated in the roof-space and lit by dormer windows/roof lights.
57. In order to accommodate 8 dwellings on the site, a tandem form of development is proposed. Generally, this form of development is not characteristic of the immediate area. However, there are clear views across the site of the rear of dwellings within Priam's Way and there is therefore a developed rather than open backdrop to the site. The principle of erecting dwellings within this location is therefore considered to be acceptable.
58. The Urban Design Officer has considered the submitted illustrative layout and advised the form of development indicated is appropriate.

Residential amenity

59. The site is adjoined by residential properties to the east and west, with the latter property having a number of bedroom windows in its east elevation looking towards the site.
60. In the history section, above, reference is made to a scheme proposing 8 dwellings on the site that was refused and then dismissed at appeal in 2001. This scheme proposed to retain the existing car park to the front of the site and to erect a terrace of large two-storey properties set approximately 25 metres back from the frontage of the site and extending across the entire width of the site. This was refused (and dismissed) partly due to the impact on the amenities of the residents on both sides of the site by reason of overshadowing and overbearing. This scheme was very different to the current proposal, as the dwellings were higher, some 15 metres further forward and closer to the side boundaries than the rear terrace indicated within the current illustrative layout. The refused scheme was therefore significantly closer to the main rear windows and private garden areas of both adjacent dwellings.
61. Whilst the illustrative layout indicates a back-to back distance of 25 metres between the front and rear dwellings, the distance to the rear of Nos.27 and 37 London Road

would only be approximately 15 metres and 22 metres respectively. Within any detailed or reserved matters plans, great care would need to be taken to ensure that any first floor openings would not result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking of these neighbouring dwellings main private garden areas and rear windows. The layout indicates that the rear terrace would be sited in close proximity (approximately 8 metres) to the rear boundary of the site. However, the adjacent properties in Priam's Way have approximately 40 metre rear garden depths and the distance between any first floor rear openings would therefore comfortably comply with the District Design Guide recommendations (of a minimum 25 metre distance).

62. As well as the amenities of existing residents, it is also necessary to consider whether residents of the proposed dwellings would experience a satisfactory level of amenity. The application has been accompanied by a noise impact report that assesses the impact of road noise on future residents and concludes that such noise can be mitigated by installing appropriate ventilation and enhanced glazing.
63. It is considered that the submitted layout plan satisfactorily demonstrates that the site is capable of accommodating up to 8 dwellings in principle without resulting in harm to the character of the area, highway safety or amenities of adjacent residents.

Contamination/drainage issues

64. The application has been accompanied by a contamination assessment which indicates that remedial measures are required to be incorporated into the development comprising clean soil cover, upgraded water supply pipes and for services to be fitted with clean corridors. This will need to be carried out during rather than prior to development. A condition requiring the remediation strategy to be implemented prior to occupation should therefore be added to any permission.
65. The application proposes that surface water would be discharged to the public foul sewer. Both the Environment Agency and Council's Drainage Manager have raised objections to this aspect of the proposal. A condition would therefore need to be added to any consent to ensure that an acceptable surface water drainage scheme is provided prior to the commencement of any development on the site.

Ecology issues

66. The application has been accompanied by a Phase 1 Habitat Survey which concludes that the site is of low ecological importance, but that the ash tree could provide a suitable habitat for nesting birds, and should therefore only be removed outside the nesting season. The Trees Officer has raised no in principle objections to the loss of this tree (subject to the imposition of a landscaping condition), whilst the Council's Ecology Officer also has no objections subject to a condition to control vegetation removal during the nesting season.

Sustainability issues

67. The application proposes that the 10% renewable energy requirements would be achieved through the use of solar panels.

Developer contributions

68. The planning statement includes an agreement to the contributions required towards the provision and maintenance of open space, community facilities, education, waste and monitoring. Whilst the statement also contends that a contribution towards public

art is not required, following the response from the S106 Officer, the agents have concurred with this requirement also being incorporated into any legal agreement.

Recommendation

69. If planning application S/1726/12/FL is approved by Members, the recommendation is one of delegated approval, as amended by tree survey date stamped 19th September 2012; drawing number SK51B date stamped 16th October 2012; noise impact assessment date stamped 12th November 2012; and drawing numbers G003/102 Rev PL3 and 104 Rev PL2 date stamped 21st November 2012. Any approval would need to be subject to the prior signing of a Section 106 Agreement, in accordance with the terms set out in this report, and to the following conditions:
1. Approval of the details of the layout of the site, the scale and appearance of the development, and the landscaping (hereinafter called the “reserved matters”) shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority in writing before any development is commenced.
(Reason – This application is in outline only.)
 2. Application for the approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
(Reason – The application is in outline only.)
 3. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.
(Reason – The application is in outline only.)
 4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1:1250 site location plan, G003/101 Rev PL1 and SK51B.
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
 5. The layout shown within drawing numbers G003/102 Rev PL3 and 104 Rev PL2 is for illustrative purposes only and is not approved by this consent.
(Reason – The application is in outline only.)
 6. Before the occupation of any dwellings on the site, the access from the existing highway shall be laid in accordance with the approved drawings.
(Reason – In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
 7. The access shall be constructed with adequate drainage measures to prevent surface water run-off onto the adjacent public highway, in accordance with a scheme submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with a scheme submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason – To prevent surface water discharging to the highway in the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
 8. No unbound material shall be used in the surface finish of the driveway within 6 metres of the highway boundary of the site.

(Reason – To avoid displacement of loose material onto the highway in the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

9. No development shall take place until details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - i) Contractors' access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel;
 - ii) Contractors' site storage area(s) and compounds(s);
 - iii) Parking for contractors' vehicles and contractors' personnel vehicles;Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policies DP/3 and DP/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
10. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out 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, 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 DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
11. Any removal of trees, scrub or hedgerow shall not take place in the bird breeding season between 15 February and 15 July inclusive, unless a mitigation scheme for the protection of bird-nesting habitat has been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason - To avoid causing harm to nesting birds in accordance with their protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and in accordance with Policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
12. During the period of construction, no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site before 0800 hours and after 1800 hours on weekdays and 1300 hours on Saturdays, nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason – To minimise noise disturbance to adjoining residents in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)
13. Prior to the commencement of any development, a noise insulation scheme for the dwellings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason – To minimise noise disturbance to future residents of the dwellings in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)
14. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of sustainable surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained in accordance with the timing/phasing

arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and prevent flooding and surging of the sewerage system in accordance with Policies DP/3 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

15. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until:

- a) The works specified in the MLM Remediation Strategy & Verification Plan July 2012 for this site have been completed, and a validation report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the approved scheme.
- b) If, during remediation works, any contamination is identified that has not been considered in the remediation method statement, then remediation proposals for this material should be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the remediation strategy implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

(Reason – To ensure that risks from land contamination and potential pollutants to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters (particularly the principal aquifer and River Granta), property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with Policy DP/1 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

70. In the event that S/1726/12/FL is not approved by Members, the recommendation for this application is one of refusal on the grounds that, in the absence of alternative premises, the proposal would result in the loss of local employment contrary to Policy ET/6.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- Supplementary Planning Documents: Open Space in New Developments, Trees and Development Sites, Biodiversity, Landscape in New Developments, District Design Guide, Affordable Housing
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Circular 11/95
- Planning File References: S/1727/12/OL, S/1725/12/OL, S/1728/12/OL, S/1726/12/FL, C/0824/64, C/0624/71/D, S/0482/75/O, S/1575/78/F, S/0952/79, S/1272/82, S/1176/85/O, S/1355/90/O, S/1877/93/F, S/2045/00/O, S/1654/01/F.

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