

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

2 November 2016

AUTHOR/S: Head of Development Management

Application Number: S/2123/15/OFL

Parish(es): Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth

Proposal: Proposed Development of 5 No. New Residential Properties Following Demolition of Existing 3 No. Residential Properties

Site address: 15 Old North Road, Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth, Cambridgeshire, SG8 5JG

Applicant(s): Mr Jeremy Clayton, EW Pepper Limited

Recommendation: Delegated Approval Subject to Expiry of Neighbour Notification Period

Key material considerations: Housing Land Supply
Planning Policy and Principle
Sustainability
Design Considerations
Density
Housing Mix
Residential Amenity
Access and Highway Safety
Affordable Housing
Developer Contributions

Committee Site Visit: 01 November 2016

Departure Application: No

Presenting Officer: Thorfinn Caithness, Principal Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: The officer recommendation to approve conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.

Date by which decision due: 19 August 2016 (extension of time agreed)

Executive Summary

1. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a terrace of 5 (no.) dwellings, following the demolition of an existing terrace of 3 no. dwellings (Nos.15, 17 and 19 Old North Road, Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth). The application site is located inside the village framework for Kneesworth and proposes a more effective and efficient use of previously developed land at a sustainable location.

2. The district does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply, and therefore adopted Development Plan policies in relation to the supply of housing are considered not up to date. The local planning authority must determine the appropriate weight to apply to relevant development plan policies. The NPPF states there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and where relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted for development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.
3. The Parish Council has objections in relation to parking, traffic and the density of the development, however there are no objections from the County Highways Authority and the site is considered capable of accommodating the net gain of 2 no. dwellings.
4. A number of local residents have raised objections in relation to the potential for increased traffic generation, demands for off-street parking and loss of privacy and amenity, however the size, scale and detailed layout and design of the proposals is considered to be acceptable in relation to these matters.
5. None of the objections raised are considered sufficient to outweigh this otherwise appropriately scaled and sustainable proposal. The contribution that this development will make in terms of provision of additional housing, combined with employment creation for the construction industry and allied trades and assistance with meeting the current shortfall in housing all weigh in favour of the application.
6. The Local Planning Authority has only just identified an additional neighbouring property which shares the access to the development site and which did not receive a neighbour notification letter. This property has been formally consulted and members will be updated at the planning committee if a response is received. Delegated approval is sought at the end of the consultation period provided any response does not raise material issues that haven't already been covered in this report.

Site and Surroundings

7. The application site is located on the eastern side of Old North Road towards the northern edge of Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth village. The existing site comprises an attractive, traditional terrace of 3 no. cottages of pitch roof form and buff brick and slate roof construction – Numbers 15, 17 and 19 Old North Road.
8. The site comprises an area of 0.07 hectares of previously developed land. Neighbouring land uses comprise a similar terrace of 3 no. cottages to the North (7, 9 and 11 Old North Road) and a pair of semi-detached bungalows to the South (21 and 23 Old North Road).
9. Vehicular access to the site is taken from Old North Road using an existing, well-established access shared with Numbers 7-11 and 21 and 23 Old North Road and also Grange Court and Grange Farm.
10. Further South and West there are well-established residential estates, comprising of Wellington Place and Nightingale Close respectively. To the East there is a paddock.
11. The existing cottages have flat roof extensions on their rear (eastern) sides, next to which are small rear gardens and off-street parking spaces. The driveway serving 21 and 23 Old North Road is located to the East of these rear curtilage and parking areas.

12. The site is located inside the Kneesworth village framework. Policy ST/7 of the adopted Core Strategy classifies Kneesworth as an 'Infill Only Village', wherein residential development and redevelopment within the village framework will be restricted to not more than 2 dwellings, comprising, amongst other things, a gap in an otherwise built-up frontage to an existing road or the redevelopment of an existing residential curtilage. The application proposals consist of a frontage redevelopment comprising a net gain of 2 dwellings.
13. The site is not located within a designated Conservation Area and there are no Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments adjacent to the site. Moreover, the site is not ecologically sensitive and does not fall within or adjacent to any international, national or local natural environment designations. The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of flooding.

Proposals

14. The application has not been the subject of a pre-application enquiry.
15. The application comprises a full planning submission proposing the demolition of the existing terrace of 3 no. cottages (Numbers 15, 17 and 19 Old North Road) and their replacement with a terrace of 5 no. cottages. The scheme proposes a net gain of 2 no. dwellings.
16. Vehicular access to the site will be taken from Old North Road, using a well established vehicular access located to the North. This will provide access to two rear off-street, block weaved parking areas, one located directly to the rear and side of the proposed terrace (comprising 10 no. spaces (2 per dwelling)). The second parking area is proposed to the north east, adjacent to the vehicular entrance to the site. This second area comprises 4 no. spare parking places.
17. The application proposes two houses types, as follows: -
 - 2 no. 3 bed end terraced houses (Plots 1 and 5).
 - 3 no. 2 bed mid terraced houses (Plots 3, 4 and 5).
18. The houses will have a pitch roof form, with decorative architectural features, including chimneys and front porches. The eaves heights will measure 5.4m and the ridge heights 8.6m. This compares to an eaves height of 4.3m and a ridge height of 6.85m on the existing terraced building. The properties will have a 9.1m span compared to the 6.35m span of the existing properties. This existing span consists of a 3.45m wide two storey frontage section and a 2.90m wide single storey, flat roof rear section. The proposed 9.1m wide span will be completely two storey.
19. All of the proposed properties will have a small frontage amenity area adjacent to Old North North Road, set behind an attractive 1.0m high timber post and rail fence and new native species hedge. There will be a front garden gate serving each property, providing pedestrian access to Old North Road.
20. To the rear of the properties there will be small private gardens, defined by 1.2m and 1.8m high close boarded fences. The 3 no. mid-terraced properties (Plots 2, 3 and 4) will have rear gardens measuring 4.9m x 4.5m (Area = 22 sqm). End terrace Plot 1 will have a slightly larger rear garden measuring 5.25m x 4.85m (Area = 25 sqm). End terrace Plot 5 will have the largest rear / side garden in terms of overall area. The rear garden will measure 7.0m x 4.85m (34 sqm). The side garden will measure approximately 1.25m x 8.4m (Area = 10.5sqm). The overall private side and rear

garden area serving Plot 5 will be approximately 44.5 sqm.

21. The scheme proposes a density in the region of 71 dwellings per hectare.
22. Foul and surface water will discharge to the existing mains sewer, which is currently the case for the 3 no. existing terraced properties.

Planning History

23. S/0101/84/F – Extensions and Garage – Approved 23 March 1984.
S/2048/07/F – Extensions – Approved 19 December 2007.

Planning Policies

24. The following policies are considered relevant to this application. Policies considered 'out of date' in respect of the lack of a five year housing land supply are referred to later in this report.
25. National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)
Section 1 – Building a Strong Competitive Economy
Section 6 – Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes
Section 7 – Requiring Good Design
National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)

Development Plan Policies

26. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Core Strategy DPD, 2007**
ST/2 Housing Provision
ST/7 Infill Only Villages
27. **South Cambridgeshire LDF 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
NE/9 Water and Drainage Infrastructure
NE/11 Flood Risk
TR/1 Planning For More Sustainable Travel
TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
28. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**

District Design Guide - Adopted March 2010
Affordable Housing – Adopted March 2010
29. **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission - March 2014**
S/1 Vision
S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/5 Provision of New Jobs and Homes
S/6 The Development Strategy to 2031

S/7 Development Frameworks
S/11 Minor Infill Villages
CC/6 Construction Methods
CC/7 Water Quality
CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
HQ/1 Design Principles
NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
H/7 Housing Density
H/8 Housing Mix
H/9 Affordable Housing
H/11 Residential Space Standards for Market Housing
TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
TI/3 Parking Provision
TI/8 Infrastructure and New Developments

Consultation

30. **Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth Parish Council** - Recommend Refusal – Concerns over parking, traffic and density of building. If approved, the road should be made up to a standard suitable for the additional traffic.
31. **Local Highways Authority** - No Objections. The visibility splays as shown on the submitted drawing clips third party land. However, given the level of existing use, the low number of additional motor vehicles that the proposal will generate (the proposed two additional dwellings will on average generate 9-10 motor vehicles throughout the day, and at most 2 movements in peak), and the level of encroachment by the splay, on balance the Highway Authority would be hard pressed to substantiate a defensible objection.

Overall, the proposal should have no significant impact on the public highway, therefore no objections subject to conditions relating to the following: -

- The proposed vehicular access should be constructed using radii kerbs.
 - Provision and maintenance of pedestrian visibility splays.
 - Falls and levels of the access road to prevent water draining onto the public highway.
 - Access to be constructed using a bound material.
 - Access to be constructed in accordance with the Cambridgeshire County Council construction specification.
 - Access to be a minimum width of 5m for the first 10m.
 - Traffic Management Plan to be submitted and agreed.
32. **Environmental Health** - Due to the close proximity of the nearest existing residential properties, namely 7 and 11 Old North Road, and the properties opposite the application site, there is a high likelihood that they will be significantly impacted during the construction phase of the development by noise and potential light intrusion. In order to try to mitigate this impact I would advise that conditions / informatives be attached to any consent. In particular, more specific information on the lighting requirements at the various stages of the construction is required.
33. **Section 106 Officer** - The Council has not been requiring Parish related s106 contributions for anything under 10 dwellings since the court of appeal decision. I am not aware of any piece of infrastructure required from this site and which is said to be so fundamental to its delivery that said piece of infrastructure needs providing before

houses may be built. Given that the proposal is for a net gain of only 2 houses, there is no policy requirement for affordable housing contributions.

Representations

34. 6 letters of objection have been submitted by local residents. The following objections have been raised:
- i) Significant road safety issues associated with the A1198, including negotiation of double mini roundabout close to the application site. The potential for serious accidents will be dramatically increased.
 - ii) Significant increases in traffic are associated with the increase from 3 to 5 houses. The collective impact with other developments should be considered.
 - iii) Loss of residential amenity to other users of the access due to increased traffic movements, including 1, 2, 3 and 4 Grange Court and The Grange.
 - iv) Potential for damage and deterioration to the access as a consequence of additional traffic.
 - v) The proposals will place considerable increased demands for off-street parking on the existing lane, given the shared use of the private drive.
 - vi) There are no proposals to improve the condition of the private drive.
 - vii) Loss of residential amenity to existing properties as a consequence of increased traffic and nuisance associated with vehicles being parked.
 - viii) No proposals for future residents to access their front doors without walking right round and directly past the existing properties. This constant movement of pedestrians would reduce privacy.
 - ix) The proposed houses are wider and taller than the existing buildings. This will especially affect 11 Old North Road, which will be considerably overlooked.
 - x) There are understood to be restrictions on the pitch lines. This should be followed.
 - xi) There are no plans to install any permanent lighting. With the massive increase in people and vehicles, additional lighting is a necessity.
 - xii) The proposed extra parking area to the rear of 7 Old North Road will cause increased nuisance and disturbance as a consequence of late night and early morning noise and anti social behaviour.
 - xiii) The proposals will cause an obstacle to the occupants of 21 and 23 Old North Road who will have to navigate their way through the additional parked cars.
 - xiv) There would be much better ways to access the site and design the parking arrangements to serve this development.
 - xv) Concerns about the impact of construction traffic on the condition of the private drive. Not clear how heavy vehicles will turn within the site.
 - xvi) Conflict of construction traffic with existing users of the access and private drive.
 - xvii) Concerns about construction noise and nuisance to neighbours.
 - xviii) Concerns that notice has not been served on those with a shared ownership/interest in the private drive.
 - xix) Concerns that parts of the development site encroach onto neighbour's land, particularly the parking arrangements.

Planning Assessment

35. Applications are to be determined in accordance with the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Development Plan comprises the South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2007, Development Control Policies DPD, 2007 and Site Specific Policies DPD.

36. The emerging Local Plan comprises the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, Proposed Submission Version, July 2013 and associated Policies Map. This plan has not yet been adopted and remains subject to independent examination therefore very limited weight can be attached to the policies contained therein at this time.
37. The key issues in relation to this application are considered to be Housing Land Supply, Planning Policy and Principle, Design Considerations, Density, Housing Mix, Residential Amenity and Access and Highway Safety.

Principle of Development

Housing Land Supply

38. The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) (NPPF) requires councils to boost significantly the supply of housing and to identify and maintain a five-year housing land supply with an additional buffer as set out in paragraph 47.
39. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply in the district as required by the NPPF, having a 3.9 year supply using the methodology identified by the Inspector in the Waterbeach appeals in 2014. This shortfall is based on an objectively assessed housing need of 19,500 homes for the period 2011 to 2031 (as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 and updated by the latest update undertaken for the Council in November 2015 as part of the evidence responding to the Local Plan Inspectors' preliminary conclusions) and latest assessment of housing delivery (in the housing trajectory November 2015). In these circumstances any adopted or emerging policy which can be considered to restrict the supply of housing land is considered 'out of date' in respect of paragraph 49 of the NPPF.
40. Further guidance as to which policies should be considered as 'restricting housing land supply' emerged from a recent Court of Appeal decision (Richborough v Cheshire East and Suffolk Coastal DC v Hopkins Homes). The Court extended the definition of 'relevant policies for the supply of housing' from, 'merely policies in the Development Plan that provide positively for the delivery of new housing in terms of numbers and distribution or the allocation of sites,' to include, 'plan policies whose effect is to influence the supply of housing by restricting the locations where new housing may be developed.' Therefore all policies which have the potential to restrict or affect housing supply may be considered out of date in respect of the NPPF. However even where policies are considered 'out of date' for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 49, a decision maker is required to consider what weight should attach to such relevant policies.
41. In the case of this application policies which must be considered as potentially influencing the supply of housing land are as follows:

Core Strategy

ST/2 (Housing Provision), and
ST/7 (Infill Only Villages)

Development Control Policies

DP/1 (Sustainable Development)
DP/7 (Development Frameworks)
HG/1 (Housing Density)

HG/2 (Housing Mix)

Emerging Submission Local Plan

S/7 (Development Frameworks)
S/11 (Minor Infill Villages)
H/7 (Housing Density)
H/8 (Housing Mix)
H/11 (Residential Space Standards)

42. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It says that where relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted for development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, or where specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
43. The site is located inside the Kneesworth village framework. The principle of residential development is therefore considered to be acceptable. The redevelopment of the site to accommodate 5 no. as opposed to 3 no. dwellings (a net increase of 2 no.) weighs in favour of the application in light of the current lack of a 5 year housing land supply.
44. Kneesworth is identified as an Infill Only Village under Policy ST/7 of the LDF Core Strategy and as an Infill Village under Policy S/11 of the emerging Local Plan. Policy ST/7 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to limit the scale of additional residential development in Infill Villages to modest schemes of up to 2 dwellings comprising, amongst other options, gaps in otherwise built up frontages and / or the redevelopment of existing residential curtilages. The application proposals comprise a net gain of 2 no. dwellings and therefore accord with Policy ST7. Policy S/11 of the emerging Local Plan also seeks to limit the scale of residential development in Infill Villages, restricting development to schemes to not more than 2 dwellings in otherwise built up frontages and / or to the redevelopment of existing residential curtilages. In the case of both the existing and emerging policies it is set out that in exceptional circumstances, a slightly larger development (not more than about 8 dwellings) may be permitted where this would lead to the substantial recycling of a brownfield site bringing positive overall benefit to the village.
45. The erection of 5 no. dwellings (a net gain of 2 no.) would therefore be consistent with the scale and amount of residential development normally supported in Infill Villages and thus is considered to be acceptable in relation to this tier of the settlement hierarchy, set out within both the existing and emerging Development Plans. Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth is considered to be sufficiently sustainable to accommodate the scale of housing proposed by this application. Therefore substantial weight can be applied to policy ST/7 of the adopted Local Plan and Policy S/11 of the emerging Local Plan.

Deliverability

46. The application site does not suffer from any specific or insurmountable site specific constraints, so there are no known technical or other constraints to the site's delivery. Officers are therefore of the view that the site can be delivered within a timescale whereby significant weight can be given to the contribution the proposal could make to the 5 year housing land supply.

Design

47. Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Furthermore, paragraph 58 of the NPPF states that developments should, amongst other things, add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, respond to local character and history, reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation, and be visually attractive with appropriate landscaping.
48. The layout, siting, scale and detailed layout and appearance of the scheme is considered to be acceptable, likewise the proposed boundary and hard and soft landscaping treatments. The existing street scene comprises a pair of two storey terraced blocks of buildings with pitch roof forms. The application proposes the demolition of one of these blocks and its replacement with a new two storey terraced block, comprising 5 no. rather than 3 no. properties. The new block will have a similar pitch roof form and will remove the existing flat roof rear extension elements. The eaves and ridge heights will be increased by approximately 1.5 – 2.0 metres and the two storey building span will also be increased by approximately 3.0 metres.
49. However it is considered that this design approach would be reflective and in keeping with the existing street scene and would have the potential to improve the overall quality of the building block by removing the existing flat roof sections. A similar buff brick and grey slate roof tile is proposed and subject to a standard materials condition to agree specific finished materials it is considered that the design of the development is one which can be supported. An attractive hedge and 1 m high timber post and rail fence is proposed for the Old North Road frontage and rear curtilages will be defined by close boarded fences.

Sustainability of development

50. The NPPF states that there are 3 dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. These aspects are considered in the assessment of highlighted issues below.

Economic

51. The provision of 5 no. new dwellings will give rise to employment during the construction phase of the development, and the net gain of 2 no. dwellings has the potential to result in an increase in the use of local services and facilities, both of which will be of benefit to the local economy.

Social

52. The development would provide a clear albeit very modest benefit in helping to meet the current housing shortfall in South Cambridgeshire through delivering a net increase of 2 no. residential dwellings. Officers are of the view the provision of additional housing, however modest, is a benefit and significant weight should be attributed to this in the decision making process. The scheme also proposes smaller 2 and 3 bed house types, which are likely to be more attractive to first time buyers and local people in housing need wishing to stay in the area. Paragraph 47 of the NPPF seeks to boost significantly the supply of homes and paragraph states that local

planning authorities should plan for and deliver a wide choice of homes to reflect market trends and the needs of different groups in the community. The application proposals respond positively to these national housing policy objectives.

Environmental

53. There are not considered to be any significant environmental sustainability implications associated with the application proposals. It is accepted that the demolition and construction phases of the development may bring a degree of noise nuisance and disturbance. Therefore it will be necessary to impose a number of planning conditions to control these activities, including construction traffic, hours of operation and construction lighting. Subject to adherence to these it is considered that the impacts on existing residential amenity can be satisfactorily managed.
54. The net increase in housing will inevitably lead to some increases in traffic generation and off-street parking demands, however the size and scale of the development is considered to be very small and the level of traffic and parking demands are not considered to be so significant that the character and quality of the existing local environment would be harmed. The parking provision is laid out in a manner whereby it will be clear to all which spaces relate to which dwelling. There will be 2 no. spaces per dwelling, which is the standard required, plus 4 no. spare places for visitors. There should be no loss of off-street parking for existing neighbouring properties and no blockage of the rear access lane.
55. The proposed increases in eaves and ridges heights and building span would be a noticeable change for those living adjacent to the site, however the change is not considered to be so substantial as to adversely affect environmental quality, or for that matter, residential amenity.
56. Overall, it is considered that the character, quality, local distinctiveness and sense of place which currently prevails would not be unduly harmed by the application proposals.

Housing Density

57. Policy HG/1 of the adopted Local Development Framework sets out that residential developments should make the best use of the site by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are exceptional local circumstances that require a different treatment. Moreover, higher average net densities should be achieved in more sustainable locations close to a good range of existing or potential services and facilities and where there is, or there is potential for, good local public transport services.
58. The site measures 0.07 hectares in area. The development equates to a density of 71 dwellings per hectare. This density is considered to be very high, and Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth is not considered to be so sustainable a village which might ordinarily support such a high density compared to other higher order settlements which have a greater number of services and facilities and better accessibility to public transport and employment.
59. Despite the very high density proposed by the application there are two important factors to consider. Firstly, the overall size and scale of the proposal is very small, comprising a net gain of only two dwellings, and the existing density of 43 dph is already high, therefore it is not considered that a high density scheme would be out of keeping with the application site and the small scale increase would not significantly

compound the existing high density character. Secondly, Policy HG/1 comprises a housing supply/restriction policy and therefore is out of date having regard to the current shortfall in housing. A judgement needs to be made regarding the amount of weight to be attached to this out of date policy. It is considered that only limited weight should be given to Policy HG/1 in this case, in light of the housing shortfall and having regard to the high density character of the existing site.

60. Whilst it is acknowledged that a very high density development has the potential to compromise environmental quality and amenity, such an outcome is not considered anticipated. Whilst the proposed gardens are on the small side, this is already true of the existing terraced cottages and so a detailed design which proposes similar small gardens would be reflective and in keeping with the established local character of the two blocks of terraces. Likewise, with respect to parking, the existing development displays a pattern of high density parking to the rear of the terraces. The proposed parking arrangements would be reflective of this prevailing character. It is therefore considered that the application site has the capacity to accommodate and absorb the very high density proposed given the prevailing built environment characteristics, which are themselves already high density in nature.

Affordable Housing

61. The application proposals have been discussed with the Council's Section 106 officer. Policy H/9 of the emerging Local Plan seeks provision of 40% affordable housing on schemes of 3 or more dwellings. Although the application proposes an overall development of 5 no. dwellings, the scheme comprises a net gain of only 2 units, therefore affordable housing contributions are not triggered in this case.

Housing Mix

62. The application proposes a limited mix of 2 and 3 bedroom properties, however given the net gain of only two dwellings and the small scale nature of the application site it is not possible or reasonable to deliver a better mix of house types and sizes. Nevertheless, the proposal will increase the supply of smaller and thus more affordable homes, which are also important housing policy objectives at this time. There is not considered to be any overriding conflict with Policy HG/2 of the adopted Local Plan in relation to housing mix.

Developer Contributions

63. The new development would put extra demand on open space and community facilities in Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth. Recent Government advice (issued through the National Planning Practice Guidance) has led to confusion over the ability of local planning authorities to seek financial contributions. That advice has now been largely cancelled as a result of the recent judicial review decision, which allows the payment of contributions to continue in appropriate cases.
64. In this case, the Council's Section 106 Officer is not aware of any piece of infrastructure required from this site and which is said to be so fundamental to its delivery that said piece of infrastructure needs providing before houses may be built, therefore in this case, contributions are not sought.

Residential Amenity

Existing Residents

65. Some local residents have expressed concerns about the impact of the proposals on privacy and residential amenity, arising from the increase in dwelling numbers and associated traffic and pedestrian movements, a likelihood for general increase in activity and noise nuisance and disturbance and the competition for off-street parking provision.
66. The scale of the development is very modest and the proposed layout is one which displays a legible design with clear definition of public and private space, shared access and dedicated parking. There is considered to be ample off-street parking to cater for the demands of existing and future residents and the location and layout of this is such that there will be no loss of existing parking for existing residents or obstruction of the access serving these existing residents.
67. The detailed layout, size, scale and design of the new terraced block is broadly reflective of the existing block, with principal elevations facing east and west towards Old North Road and the paddock to the rear. There will be no direct overlooking of existing neighbours. A small window is proposed at first floor level in the northern and southern elevations of the two end terraces. These windows will serve landings. A condition is necessary to ensure these windows are obscurely glazed and non opening to prevent overlooking of 11 Old North Road to the north and 21 and 23 Old North Road to the south.
68. The two storey span of the building will be increased, however Plot 1 will project only 1.0m past 11 Old North Road, at a separation distance of 4.5m, and the new two storey southern gable of Plot 5 will be located 15m to the north of the rear elevation of 21 Old North Road. These physical relationships are considered to be acceptable and officers are satisfied that there will be no physical overbearing impacts associated with the proposals.
69. Overall, the submitted drawings demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the amount of development proposed without having an unreasonable impact on residential amenity through overlooking or overbearing impact, as required by the relevant amenity criteria of policy DP/3 of the Local Development Framework.
70. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has requested the imposition of a number of conditions to protect existing neighbouring amenity during the construction phase. The Highway Authority has also recommended the submission and agreement of a construction management plan. These conditions are considered necessary.

Future Residents – Garden Sizes

71. Officers have some reservations with regards the small garden sizes proposed by the application. The Council's adopted Design Guide sets out that the design of the grounds surrounding buildings is as important as the design of the buildings themselves. Every home should have the benefit of some private or communal outside amenity space, which can take the form of private gardens, communal gardens, roof terraces or balconies. Private gardens should be of a size and shape to allow effective use for the number of people the property is designed for, for growing plants or vegetables, for general amenity, for play in family housing, etc. and where possible be orientated to allow sunlight into each garden. Private gardens should also

incorporate a private sitting out area positioned close to internal living accommodation, incorporate suitable means of enclosure, feel safe and secure, be placed away from public areas, enable flexibility of use and personalisation and provide accessible yet discreet locations for clothes lines. The Design Guide goes on to say that ideally residential units should be provided with access to the following sizes of private amenity space: -

- 1 or 2 bedroom house in urban setting = 40 sqm;
- 1 or 2 bedroom house in rural setting = 50 sqm;
- 3 bedrooms or more in urban setting = 50 sqm;
- 3 Bedrooms or more in rural settings = 80 sqm.

72. Given that Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth is a built up area it is considered reasonable to class it as an urban area, in which case Plots 2, 3 and 4, which are 2-bedroom dwellings, should ideally have 40 sqm of private garden space. The application proposes only 22 sqm for these three terraced properties. These properties have a little over a half of the garden size that the adopted Design Guide recommends.
73. Plots 1 and 5 are 3 bedroom properties and thus should have 50 sqm metres of private garden space. Plot 1 proposes only 25 sqm, again only half of what is required. Plot 5 proposes 44.5 sqm of private amenity space, albeit approximately 10 sqm of this comprises a 1.0m wide strip along one side.
74. Overall, it is clear that the rear, private garden sizes are below the recommended amounts set out in the adopted Design Guide, for both urban and rural contexts.
75. Whilst officers have some reservations about the small garden sizes proposed, it is the case that the existing two terraces of cottages have similarly small garden sizes and so the characteristics of the development reflect the existing situation. It is also fair and reasonable to attach weight to the positive outcomes to be delivered by the application, such as the more effective and efficient use of previously developed land at a sustainable location, the contribution the proposal will make to addressing the current shortfall in housing land supply and the fact that the National Planning Policy Framework calls upon the planning system to facilitate the delivery of mix of property types and sizes, including smaller properties and starter homes for first time buyers. It should therefore be recognised that not everyone desires or needs a larger amenity space and in the case of the application proposals there is space to create a patio to sit out, room to store a wheelie bin and room to hang washing.
76. In relation to the provision of space for play, particularly for families which may choose to occupy the larger 3-bedroom end terraces, the applicant has highlighted the presence of a number of public amenity areas and recreation facilities within close proximity of the application site, which can provide close, accessible alternatives which will more than compensate for the smaller garden sizes proposed. These include the Willmot Recreation Ground (1 mile away, 20 mins walk), and sports fields at Oxford Close to the north (0.3 miles, 8 mins walk) and on The Causeway to the west (0.6 miles, 11 mins walk). Having regard to the availability of this local recreational provision it is considered that despite the conflict with the Design Guide, the application proposals can be considered acceptable.

Highway Safety

77. The application has generated concerns and objections from the Parish Council and local residents in relation to traffic increases, congestion, highway safety and parking

provision. These are noted, however the very small size and scale of the development is unlikely to generate significant increases in traffic generation, given the net increase in only 2 no. properties, combined with the fact that the house types are very small. The proposals also make adequate provision of off-street parking to cater for the demands of the additional properties, without consuming the off-street parking provision serving other existing dwellings. The scheme in fact proposes 2 no. off-street parking spaces per dwelling plus an additional 4 no. spare off-street spaces for visitors.

78. The Highway Authority has considered the application and raises no objections subject to the imposition of conditions regarding provision and maintenance of pedestrian visibility splays, the specification of the access construction, the falls, levels and construction of the proposed access and submission of a traffic management plan. The proposal is thereby acceptable in relation to access, highway safety, traffic generation and parking provision.

Other Matters

79. A number of local residents have expressed concerns that the existing access onto Old North Road is shared with several other existing properties, and furthermore that the proposed parking arrangements encroach onto third party land. The shared use of the access and the private drive is a private matter, not a material planning consideration. Procedurally, the applicant has served the requisite notice on the owner of the access. In terms of parking arrangements and highway safety, the Highway Authority has been formally consulted and has no objections to the application.

Conclusion

80. In considering this application, the following relevant adopted development plan policies are to be regarded as 'out of date' while there is no five year housing land supply:

Core Strategy

ST/2 (Housing Provision), and
ST/7 (Infill Only Villages)

Development Control Policies

DP/1 (Sustainable Development)
DP/7 (Development Frameworks)
HG/1 (Housing Density)
HG/2 (Housing Mix)

Emerging Submission Local Plan

S/7 (Development Frameworks)
S/11 (Infill Villages)
H/7 (Housing Density)
H/8 (Housing Mix)

81. This means that where planning permission is sought which would be contrary to the policies listed above, such applications must be determined against paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

82. The proposed development raises relatively few technical concerns and accordingly little weight can be given to the above 'out of date' policies.
83. The proposal should be regarded as a small scale housing scheme which seeks to use previously developed land at a sustainable location more effectively and efficiently without compromising that character, quality, local distinctiveness and sense of place of the environment.
84. It is considered that considerable weight can be given to these positive benefits, which also include the provision of more housing, the provision of smaller, more affordable houses and starter homes, jobs for the construction industry and allied trades and benefits for local shops and services.
85. The adverse impacts of this development identified by local residents, namely increased traffic, pressure for parking and loss of privacy and amenity cannot be substantiated into reasonable grounds for refusal and are not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole which aim to boost significantly the supply of housing and which establish a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the context of the lack of a 5-year housing land supply.
86. Planning permission should therefore be granted because material considerations clearly outweigh the limited harm identified and the conflict with out of date policies of the LDF relating to housing delivery.

Recommendation

87. Officers recommend the application is approved subject to the following:

Conditions

- (a) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.**

(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)

- (b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:**

15-L26-PL001B – Existing and Proposed Site Plan and Location Plan.

15-L26-PL002 – Proposed Plans, Elevations and Street Scene.

15-L26-PL003 – Proposed Access Vision Splays

(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)

- (c) No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- (d) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall also include specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.**

(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.)Boundary Treatments.

- (e) 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.)

- (f) No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed before the development is occupied in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.**

(Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- (g) Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of foul water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.**

(Reason - To reduce the risk of pollution to the water environment and to ensure a satisfactory method of foul water drainage in accordance with Policy NE/10 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)Falls and Levels and Drainage and Construction of Access Road

- (h) Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.**

(Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- (i) The access shall be a minimum width of 5m, for a minimum distance of 10m measured from the near edge of the highway boundary.**

(Reason – In the interests of highway safety).

- (j) Two 2.4 x 70 metres vehicular visibility splays, as measured from and along the nearside edge of the carriageway shall be provided on both sides of the access in accordance with the details hereby approved. The splays shall be kept clear of all planting, fencing, walls and the like exceeding 600mm high.**

(Reason – To provide adequate inter-visibility between the users of the access and the existing public highway for the safety and convenience of users of the highway and of the access).

- (k) Two 2.0 x 2.0 metres pedestrian visibility splays shall be provided and maintained in perpetuity, in accordance with the details hereby approved. The splays shall be kept clear of all planting, fencing, walls and the like exceeding 600mm high.**

(Reason – In the interests of highway safety).

- (l) The proposed access shall be constructed so that its falls and levels are such that no private water from the site drains across or onto the adopted public highway.**

(Reason – For the safe and effective operation of the highway).

- (m) The proposed access shall be constructed using a bound material to prevent debris spreading onto the adopted public highway.**

(Reason – In the interests of highway safety).

- (n) No demolition or construction works shall commence until a traffic management plan has been agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. The principal areas of concern that should be addressed are: -**

- (1) Movements and control of muck away lorries (all loading and unloading should be undertaken off the adopted public highway).**
- (2) Contractor parking, for both phases all such parking shall be within the curtilage of the site and not on street.**
- (3) Movements and control of all deliveries (all loading and unloading**

should be undertaken off the public highway).
(4) Control of dust, mud and debris).

(Reason – In the interests of highway safety).

- (o) No construction work and or construction related dispatches from or deliveries to the site shall take place other than between the hours of 0800 – 1800 Monday to Friday, 0800 – 1300 Saturday and at no time on Sundays or Bank or Public Holidays unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.**

(Reason – In the interests of residential amenity).

- (p) In the event of the foundations for the proposed development requiring piling, prior to the development taking place the applicant shall provide the local authority with a report / method statement for approval detailing the type of piling and mitigation measures to be taken to protect local residents from noise or vibration. Potential noise and vibration levels at the nearest noise sensitive locations shall be predicted in accordance with the provisions of BS 5528, 2009 – Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites Parts 1 – Noise and 2 – Vibration (or as superseded). Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

(Reason – To protect the amenities of nearby residential properties in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007, Policy NE/15 – Noise Pollution, NE/16 – Emissions and DP/6 – Construction Methods).

- (q) No development shall take place until details of any construction external safety lighting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting impact shall be assessed in accordance with The Institute of Lighting Professionals “Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011”.**

(Reason – In the interests of residential amenity).

- (r) The first floor landing windows in the northern elevation of Plot 1 and the southern elevation of Plot 5 shall be obscurely glazed and non-opening, and shall remain as such at all times thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

(Reason – In order to protect the occupants of neighbouring properties to the north and south from overlooking and loss of privacy, in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework, 2007).

Informatives

- (a) The granting of a planning permission does not constitute a permission or licence to a developer to carry out any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with, the Public Highway. A separate permission must be sought from the Highway Authority for such works.
- (b) The developer should take all relevant precautions to minimise the potential for

disturbance to neighbouring residents in terms of noise and dust during the construction phases of the development. This should include the use of water suppression for any stone or brick cutting and advising neighbours in advance of any particularly noisy works. The granting of this planning permission does not indemnify against statutory nuisance action being taken should substantiated noise or dust complaints be received. For further information please contact the Environmental Health Service.

- (c) Before any existing buildings are demolished, A Demolition Notice will be required from the Building Control section of the Council establishing the way in which the property will be dismantled, including any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains and establishing hours of working. This should be brought to the attention of the applicant to ensure the protection of the residential environment of the area.

Background Papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission 2014

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