

A02

F/TH/17/0358

PROPOSAL: Change of use of building from Nursing home to 3No. flats with erection of first floor and two storey extensions following demolition of existing together with the erection of a terrace of 4No 3 bedroom Mews houses with associated parking and landscaping.

LOCATION: Springfield Nursing Home Hengist Road Westgate On Sea Kent CT8 8LP

WARD: Westgate-on-Sea

AGENT: Mr Alex Jackson

APPLICANT: Mr David Pownceby

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Subject to the following conditions:

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

GROUND:

In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Purchase Act 2004).

2 The proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted application as amended by the revised drawing numbered 005 Revision B, 006 Revision A, 007 Revision A, and dated 008 Revision A all received 09/03/18

GROUND:

To secure the proper development of the area.

3 No development shall take place on any external surface of the development hereby permitted until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby approved shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved samples.

GROUND:

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies D1 and CC5 of the Thanet Local Plan.

4 Prior to the occupation of the development, the area shown for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles shall be operational prior to any part of the development hereby approved being brought into use. The area approved shall thereafter be maintained for that purpose.

GROUND:

Development without adequate provision for the parking or turning of cars is likely to lead to parking inconvenient to other road users and detrimental to amenity and in pursuance of policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan.

5 Prior to the first occupation of the development, the secure cycle parking facilities, as shown on approved drawing no. 005 revision B shall be provided and thereafter maintained.

GROUND:

In the interests of promoting increased cycling in accordance with policy TR12 of the Thanet Local Plan

6 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the vehicular access and visibility splays, with no obstruction exceeding 0.9 metres above the carriageway level within the splays, shall be provided and thereafter retained at the position shown on the approved plan.

GROUND:

In the interest of highway safety.

7 The development hereby approved shall incorporate a bound surface material for the first 5 metres of the access from the edge of the highway.

GROUND:

In the interests of highway safety.

8 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved pedestrian visibility splays of 2metres by 2metres behind the footway on both sides of the dwelling access with no obstructions over 0.6m above footway level shall be provided and thereafter maintained.

GROUND:

In the interest of highway safety.

9 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted provision of vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities shown on the approved plan shall be provided and permanently retained.

GROUND:

In the interests of highway safety

10 No development shall take place until plans have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (which have already been subject of a Phase 1 Safety Audit) to detail a pedestrian crossing feature consisting of dropped kerbs on either

side of the proposed new access and a single dropped kerb to cross the carriageway on the southern side. The works approved shall be completed prior to occupation of any unit hereby approved.

GROUND:

In the interests of highway safety.

11 Prior to the commencement of development, a Construction Management Plan which shall incorporate:

- Provision of construction vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities for the duration of construction
- Provision of parking facilities for site personnel and visitors for the duration of construction
- Provision of wheel washing facilities for the duration of construction
- Full details of proposed routes for construction traffic.

The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the agreed details.

GROUND:

In the interests of highway safety.

12 No development shall take place above foundation level of the development hereby permitted until a scheme to demonstrate that the internal noise levels within the proposed terrace dwellings and the external noise levels in back gardens and other relevant amenity areas will conform to the standard identified by BS 8233 2014, Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings - Code of Practice, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work specified in the approved scheme shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation of the premises and be retained thereafter.

GROUND:

In the interests of the amenities of the locality in accordance with the principles of the NPPF.

13 Prior to the installation of any outdoor lighting associated with the development hereby approved, a detailed outdoor lighting scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the type of lights, the orientation/angle of the luminaries, the spacing and height of the lighting columns, the extent/levels of illumination over the site and on adjacent land and the measures to contain light within the curtilage of the site. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with approved scheme and thereafter maintained and retained as agreed.

GROUND:

In the interests of minimising light pollution and to safeguard the amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.

14 Prior to commencement of development a precautionary mitigation strategy for reptiles shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority, which shall include:

- Map showing area of suitable reptile habitat to be lost and retained.

- Details of enhancements to be incorporated in to the retained habitat
- Simple management plan detailing how the retained habitat will be managed
- Detailed methodology to be used to carry out the site clearance.
- Timing of the proposed works

The works must be implemented as agreed within the approved document.

GROUND:

To contribute and enhance the natural and local environment in accordance with paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

15 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in full accordance with the submitted Tree Survey Issue 3 dated June 2017 by LaDellWood, Section 4.0 including tree protection fencing and replacement trees along Hengist Road.

GROUND:

In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to adequately integrate the development into the environment, in accordance with Thanet Local Plan Policies D1 and D2.

16 Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, full details of soft landscape works, to include:

- o species, size and location of new trees, shrubs, hedges and grassed areas to be planted
- o walls, fences, other means of enclosure proposed

shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

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 of any part of the development, or in accordance with a programme of works to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives any written consent to any variation.

GROUND:

In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to adequately integrate the development into the environment in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Thanet Local Plan

17 No development shall commence until full details of the foul water drainage arrangements for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage details shall be constructed as approved before any part of the development hereby permitted is brought into use.

GROUND:

To prevent pollution, in accordance with the advice contained within the NPPF.

18 No further alterations to the roofs of the dwellinghouses whether approved by Classes B, of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order), shall be carried out without the prior permission in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

GROUND:

To ensure a satisfactory external treatment and in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan.

19 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, details of the cycle storage area adjacent to the vehicular access shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented as approved prior to the occupation of the development or any phase of the development to which it relates and thereafter maintained and retained as agreed.

GROUND:

In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to adequately integrate the development into the environment in accordance with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan

20 Prior to the first occupation of the development a bin storage area shall be provided and retained thereafter used for no other purpose as shown on the approved plan.

GROUND:

In the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan.

INFORMATIVES

Please be aware that obtaining planning permission and complying with building regulations are separate matters - please contact building control on 01843 577522 for advice on building regulations

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure, prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, that all necessary highway approvals and consents where required are obtained and that the limits of highway boundary are clearly established in order to avoid any enforcement action being by the Highway Authority. The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under such legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highway and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site

Planning permission does not convey any approval for construction of the required vehicular crossing, or any other works within the highway for which a statutory licence must be obtained. Applicants should contact Kent County Council - Highways and Transportation (web: www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport.aspx or telephone: 03000418181) in order to obtain the necessary Application Pack.

All works on the highway will need to be completed under a Section 278 agreement with the Highways Authority and must be subject to a safety audit.

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended (section 1), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. Trees and scrub are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August inclusive. Trees and scrub are present on the application site and are to be assumed to contain nesting birds between the above dates, unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity on site during this period and has shown it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present.

SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on the eastern side of Hengist Road, Westgate-on-Sea. The site is located to the southern side of the railway line and road bridge that goes above the line.

The site is currently occupied by an imposing two/three building which formerly operated as a nursing home and its associated curtilage, although is now vacant and has been for a period of time (approximately July 2015). The building has been clearly extended to the rear. The site has a number of trees around its perimeter and an 'in-out' vehicular access arrangement and a small area of parking to the western side of the building. To the immediate north of the building is part of the curtilage that is laid to grass.

To the west, south and east (separated by the highway) is the Westgate & Birchington Golf Club/Course.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

F/TH/07/0850 - Erection of single storey extension. Refused 22/08/07

F/TH/07/0051 - Erection of two storey lift shaft and single storey rear extension. Granted 12/03/07

F/TH/07/0046 - Erection of two storey dwelling, following demolition of existing garage. Granted 02/03/07

F/TH/06/0534 - Erection of a two-storey extension and addition of second floor to part of main building to provide additional accommodation. Refused 03/07/06 Appeal dismissed

F/TH/05/0997 - Erection of a three storey extension to provide additional accommodation. Refused 18/01/06

F/TH/98/0175 - Erection of a single storey pitched roof extension to form linking corridor.
Granted 20/04/98

F/TH/95/0286 - Erection of first floor rear extensions to provide additional accommodation and provision of external staircase. Granted 16/06/95

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought for a change of use of building from Nursing home to 3No. flats with erection of an extension following demolition of the extensions to the rear of the existing dwelling. The extension would provide space for a stairwell to serve the flat 2, giving it its own access and a separate staircase to its primary accommodation at first floor and master bedroom in the roof. There are also relatively minor alterations to the fenestration. In terms of accommodation the 3 no. units comprise:

- 1 no. 1 bedroom flat at ground floor;
- 2 bed unit at ground and first floor; and
- 2 bed unit at first and second floor.

To the rear of the existing building following the demolition of the existing extensions the proposal is for the erection of a terrace of 4No 3 bedroom 2 and a half storey houses with associated parking and landscaping.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Thanet Local Plan (2006)

CC1 - Development in the Countryside (Urban and Rural Confines)

CC2 - Landscape Character Areas

CC5 - Green Wedges

H1 - Residential development

H4 - Windfall sites

TR12 – Cycling

TR16 - Car Parking Provision

D1 - Design Principles

D2 - Landscaping

SR5 - Play space

NOTIFICATIONS

Two letters of objection have been received from third parties. The concerns can be summarised as follows:

- * Access on currently both on a blind bend
- * Footpath that is well used runs out at the railway bridge
- * Property not on mains drainage
- * Over-development of the site
- * Contrary to policy CC5 – Green Wedge

- * Inspector described the building as “an attractive detached building”- whilst you could argue in favour of conversion no need for additional dwellings
- * Intrusive when viewed from the golf course
- * No justification under paragraph 55 of the NPPF

CONSULTATIONS

Westgate Town Council: Further to the receipt of a planning notification for planning application F/TH/17/0358 the Council has the following comments in relation to the application:-

The comments previously submitted by the Town Council are unchanged, the Town Council would like to object to the proposal on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site, loss of character, highways issues, inappropriate development in green wedge and that this will set a precedent for the future.

TDC Strategic Planning: I note that there have been amendments to the proposals, which reduce pressure on landscaping at the boundaries of the site, and therefore reduce impact on the wider Green Wedge. The proposals also move buildings away from the southern boundary.

I understand that the change in the "footprint" of the development proposals from the existing buildings is quite marginal, following the amendments to the scheme.

On this basis, I would not object to the proposals in relation to Green Wedge Policy CC5. My view is that the amended proposals are not a departure to Policy CC5. The last clause of the aims of the Policy, para 10.50 (4) of the Local Plan) is "to prohibit all but essential development and development which does not detract from the character and appearance of the area".

To maintain the character and appearance of the area, it is important that the existing boundary landscaping is retained, and where possible strengthened. I note that there are also a number of trees just over the boundary on the golf course. If there is a way to retain those, that would also help to protect the character and appearance of the area following development.

KCC Highways and Transportation: Initially amendments were sought to the scheme following concerns about visibility splays, width of the access, distance of refuse storage to the highway and provision of a pedestrian crossing feature.

Following amendments and additional information it is confirmed that the Local Highway Authority raise no objection to the scheme subject to conditions relating to parking/turning, access completion and maintenance, surfacing, visibility splays, footpath improvements and a Construction Management Plan.

Environmental Health: No objections subject to a condition to ensure that the new residential properties are adequately protected from railway noise.

Natural England: No objection raised in terms of Designated nature conservation sites.

KCC Ecological Service: No objection following submission of a bat scoping survey, subject to conditions to ensure light spill is minimised, a precautionary mitigation strategy for reptiles and ecological enhancements and informative is also recommended in relation to breeding birds.

COMMENTS

This application is reported to Planning Committee as a departure to the saved Local Plan – policies H1.

The main issues are whether the site would represent a suitable location for new residential development, with particular regard to local policy seeking to direct development outside the Green Wedge and the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Principle

In considering the planning application under Section 38(6) of the Planning Act, any determination must be made in accordance with the development plan (in this case the Thanet Local Plan 2006) unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out at paragraph 215 that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to the degree of consistency with the guidance within the NPPF.

The site currently comprises an existing building which operated as a nursing home and its associated curtilage. The site is therefore classed in part as previously developed land.

The site is located within the Westgate Green Wedge and is outside the urban confines and therefore is contrary to Policies H1 and CC1 of the Thanet Local Plan and falls to be considered under Policy CC5.

The former use is not considered to be a community use, and therefore there is no presumption to retain it for a community use.

The site is within walking distance of the facilities and services that Westgate offers as well as its public transport, schools and employment opportunities. Therefore the site is considered to be sustainably located, whilst being situated in the Green Wedge.

It is acknowledged that the Council does not currently have a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, housing application such as this, should be considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF's) presumption in favour of sustainable development.

This is because local policies relating to the supply of housing are no longer considered up-to-date (para 14). Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that where relevant local policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless; any adverse impacts of doing so would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the

policies of the NPPF taken as a whole; or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted. It is acknowledged that this scheme would make a contribution to the Districts housing stock.

Whilst it is acknowledged that there is the absence of a five year supply of housing sites, it is not to say that this should be considered conclusive in favour of the grant of planning permission, but it adds some weight in favour of the proposal.

Policy CC5 states that within the green wedges, new development will not be permitted, unless it can be demonstrated that the development is not detrimental or contrary to the stated aims of the policy, or it is essential for the proposed development to be located within the green wedges. The proposed development is for the conversion of a former nursing home and erection of four dwellings, for which it is not essential to be located within the green wedge, however it should be considered as to whether it would be detrimental or contrary to the stated aims of the policy.

These are:

- 1) to serve as a barrier to the further outward growth and coalescence of Thanet's urban towns,
- 2) to prevent the consolidation of development on the boundaries between the built-up areas of the towns and the open countryside of the wedges,
- 3) to conserve and protect the essentially rural and unspoilt character, and distinctive landscape qualities of the countryside that separates the urban areas, and
- 4) to prohibit all but essential development and other development which does not detract from the character and appearance of the area.

A recent housing appeal on a Green Wedge site; Westwood Lodge, Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs is considered to be relevant to this case (planning reference number OL/TH/15/0788).

There are similarities between the two sites, although it is acknowledged that in terms of application site area and amount of development proposed they are significantly different; Westwood Lodge was for 153 residential units. In terms of similarities the sites both have an existing residential building in situ and both applications proposed dwellings around this. In addition the sites are well screened by existing vegetation within the wider Green Wedge area. In both cases the adjacent land provides a clear break between built up areas.

In the case of the Westwood Lodge appeal the Inspector considered that the contribution the site made to the maintenance of a physical separation to be limited. The Inspector also considered that due to the boundary treatment that the proposal would be "...barely perceptible from a longer distance from public footpaths and roads in the locality to the north, east and west, due to the extensive tree cover along the site's boundaries..."

The Inspector further stated:

"To conclude, the proposal would result in the loss of a small part of the Green Wedge, but as it would not significantly increase the coalescence of Broadstairs and Margate the separate identities of the two settlements would not be adversely affected. This would not

materially compromise this aim of the Green Wedge. There would be some localised adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Green Wedge along the Ramsgate Road and Poorhole Lane frontage due to the further loss of trees within the site, and the introduction of additional dwellings that would be partially visible. However, as the woodland visible along the northern and eastern site boundaries would be largely retained its distinctive landscape qualities would not be prejudiced.”

It is appreciated that the proposed residential development is not essential development, as housing could be located elsewhere within the District. In this case, however, it can be classed as ‘other development’ as detailed within paragraph 10.50 (4) of the Local Plan, it is then for the proposal to demonstrate that it does not detract from the character and appearance of the area.

The development of this site for housing could, therefore, be acceptable subject to the detailed consideration of all material considerations including the impact upon the character and appearance of the area, the impact of living conditions on the neighbouring properties and the future residents of the proposed development and highway safety.

Character and Appearance

Saved Policy D1 of the Local Plan states development proposals will be expected to provide high quality and inclusive design, sustainability, layout and materials.

The NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and states that developments should respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

The application site consists of part developed and part undeveloped ‘green wedge’ which contributes to the overall character and appearance of the rural locality.

This building has been extended numerous times over the years in association with its former use, however, it is considered that the original building makes a positive contribution to the area. The existing extensions to the original building are considered to be unsympathetic in their design and appearance.

The original proposal showed a terrace of 5 dwellings, but following concerns expressed by officers one of the terrace properties has been removed.

The proposal has a relatively low density however it must be considered against the constraints of this site; being within the Green Wedge, within a site surrounded by trees with an existing building of architectural merit.

The existing top portion of the roof of the extensions of the original building can be seen from a distance from Canterbury Road, although this is diminished to some degree by the distance involved and vegetation along the Canterbury Road (with only the occasional gap) and around the site. It is appreciated that this is greater at certain times of year when there is limited foliage. It is therefore considered that the new dwellings would be seen in glimpse views from Canterbury Road. In terms of views from Hengist Road again the site is screened

by the existing perimeter trees, although the site can be easily viewed when standing directly in front of the originally building; however the proposed new dwellings would not be seen from this vantage point. The site and proposed dwellings would not be visible from Ryder's Avenue (to the north of the railway line). It is considered that the proposed built form would not be highly visible due to the verdant nature of the site and would not be significantly different to the current built form in situ. As such the impact upon the wider Green Wedge is considered to be modest.

The proposed dwellings occupy a similar position to the existing extensions that are to be removed, however the dwellings are moved slightly further in from the boundaries. The layout responds positively to the site constraints and maximises the developable area. Setting the dwellings further back into the site and reducing the number by one unit allows sufficient space around the development to reduce their visual prominence on site and have a visual impact not significantly different to the existing extensions to the property, when viewed from outside the site and long views from Canterbury Road. The layout of the proposal is acceptable and in accordance with policy.

The design would have a false pitched roof (to limit the height) with half hips to the end dwellings. The maximum height of the rear extension is approximately 7.5m comparing with a height of approximately 8.1m of the proposed houses. Two and a half storey dwellings are appropriate in terms of height and massing within this site. In terms of design, it is considered the submitted scheme has a contemporary design but is reflective of the traditional design of the main building, whilst not seeking to directly replicate it. It is considered that this will add variety and interest to the site and remove the unsympathetic existing extensions to the former Care Home.

The proposed materials would predominately be brick to the facades, to match the existing building, stone cills and lintels to match the existing building. The roof would be slate and conservation style rooflights. Officers consider the materials to be appropriate; conditions will ensure they are of high quality and acceptable within the scheme.

It is considered therefore that up to 4 dwellings and three flats with sufficient off-street parking could be physically accommodated within the site in the form proposed without resulting in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, complying with Saved Local Plan policies D1 and CC5.

Living Conditions

The proposed buildings are positioned away from existing residential properties approximately 70m from White Cottage to the south of the site (the site is bounded by the railway line to the north and the golf course to the east and south), and will have no impact on privacy of any residences.

In terms of future occupiers, there is sufficient distance between the properties to allow for adequate levels of sunlight and daylight. The levels of amenity for future occupiers have been assessed and are acceptable. The development is acceptable in relation to existing neighbouring amenity and in relation to the amenity provided for future residents.

Each of the proposed residential units has its own amenity space, although it is acknowledged that this vary in terms of size. A relatively small area is provided to flats 2 and 3. It is appreciated that flat 2 is only a one bedroom unit and therefore under policy SR5 does not require a doorstep play space. Whilst these two units may have a smaller area in comparison to the other units there is also a communal area that is available within the site. The communal amenity space has been designed to give residents a communal lawn and refuse collection and storage area. The amenity space meets the requirement in Policy SR5. Additional landscaping, trees and hedges will enhance the setting of the proposed development.

Details of the boundary treatment between the terrace units is not detailed, this can be secured by condition.

It is considered that the indicated landscaping would provide a suitable quality and would result in good amenity space for occupants as well as visual amenity from the public realm. Officers consider it appropriate to secure the detailed matters through condition.

Transportation

The NPPF highlights the importance of transport policies in meeting sustainable development. It is stated that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel.

There are no issues in terms of traffic or road safety, as confirmed by the response from KCC Highways. One of the exiting vehicular accesses to the site will be permanently closed and there will only be one vehicular access to the site. Fifteen car parking spaces are proposed in the amended scheme, which includes, two visitor car parking spaces and is within the parking requirements. The scheme also requires off-site highway improvement works. The submitted plans propose a crossing which has been considered to be unworkable by KCC due to the position of a proposed crossing point. However KCC Highways have advised that a pedestrian crossing feature can be provided with an altered design and subject to a phase one safety audit, and accordingly this is proposed to be secured by condition, which would ensure footways are provided prior to the occupation of the development.

The Council's cycle standards propose 2 spaces per residential unit. These are all secured units, flat 1, plot 4 and 7 have these within their curtilage and the remainder having them close to the main entrances to the site which is considered acceptable, and can be secured by condition.

Overall the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of highway and traffic issues without causing severe harm to the transport network or highway safety.

Ecology

The NPPF states at paragraph 109 states that the "planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible ..." The NPPF continues at paragraph 118

that "if significant harm resulting from the development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

KCC Ecology initially requested additional survey work. This additional survey work has been undertaken and KCC Ecology have confirmed that they now have all the ecological information required to determine the application.

They raise no objection subject to the imposition of conditions requiring the mitigation measures proposed to be incorporated within a Construction Management Plan.

The recommended conditions are considered reasonable and necessary to ensure that any ecological, biodiversity harm from the development is mitigated.

Other issues

The proposed development requires a refuse collection point accessibility and separation of waste types. The scheme facilitates ease of access to the bin storage areas without the need to manoeuvre containers passed parked cars and is near the public highway to aid collection on bin days.

The site is identified as being within flood zone 1, therefore the area is considered to be at low risk to flooding.

The site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TH/TPO/6/2006), the area covered is along the road frontage and along the front portion of the southern site boundary. The submitted proposed site plan shows the location of the trees in relation to any proposed development. All but one tree is to be retained; this is due to its condition. Special construction measures are required for the other nine trees, the impact upon the trees is therefore considered to be acceptable subject to condition requiring the development to be carried out in full accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and proposed site layout. Additional soft landscaping is proposed along the site perimeters.

Whilst the proposed construction of four dwellings would include areas of soft landscaping to the rear, it is considered that the level of development could increase the amount of surface water run-off, although not significantly given the existence of extension to the main building which will be demolished as part of this scheme.

The application form indicates that the surface water would be discharged into soakaways. Officers consider that this is appropriate in dealing with any adverse impact from surface water run off on the site.

Foul drainage is proposed to the mains sewer, given the minor nature of the scheme, it is considered that the proposal would not severely affect the sewer infrastructure. However given the information available it is appropriate to seek further details to agree foul drainage by condition.

Officers consider that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact in terms of increasing flood risk in the area.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to be the re-development of a site which is part previously developed land and part undeveloped land for residential purposes. Whilst the site lies within the Green Wedge as identified by the Local Plan, the authority does not have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites.

In this case the site is enclosed by existing vegetation and trees that will be retained as part of the scheme, furthermore existing unsympathetic extensions will be removed from the original building and the proposed terrace of dwellings has a similar footprint. Whilst not essential development, it can be classed as 'other development' as detailed within paragraph 10.50 (4) of the Local Plan, in officers opinion the proposal also demonstrates that it does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. Given this and the Inspectors conclusions within the Westwood Lodge appeal it is considered acceptable in principle in terms of policy.

The provision of 7 residential units would make a modest contribution to the District's housing supply, supporting economic and social dimensions of sustainable development, with employment provided through construction and to the local economy for seven new households. Furthermore there would be associated economic benefits in terms of additional Council tax revenues. Weight can, therefore, be attached to this application due to these social and economic benefits.

As stated however, with regards environmental considerations, the application site is reasonably well located in terms of accessibility to various facilities and existing residential development, within an enclosed site in the wider Green Wedge.

Furthermore the proposed development is considered to be of acceptable design within the context and constraints of the site and would remove inappropriate and unsympathetic extensions to the original building as well as getting this building back into use.

The amenities for future residents are considered to be of an appropriate standard, while the amenities to the existing residents would not be significantly affected. Finally, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of highway impacts, sustainability, ecology and drainage.

Therefore the proposal is considered to constitute development and the application is recommended for approval as an acceptable departure from Policies H1 and CC1.

Case Officer

Gill Richardson

TITLE: F/TH/17/0358

Project Springfield Nursing Home Hengist Road Westgate On Sea Kent CT8 8LP

