

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 18 March 2015

AGENDA ITEM NO	4
APPLICATION NO	3995/14
PROPOSAL	Demolition of garage block, erection of 3 No bungalows and associated parking.
SITE LOCATION	Land rear of 39 Mill Road, Laxfield
SITE AREA (Ha)	
APPLICANT	Mid Suffolk District Council
RECEIVED	December 22, 2014
EXPIRY DATE	March 10, 2015

REASONS FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason :

The application is made by Mid Suffolk District Council on land owned by them.

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

1. Pre application advice has been given on this proposal. That advice has generally been followed.

Laxfield Parish Council held a consultation and information event about the proposed developments in the locality on 24th September 2014.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2. This application concerns an area of land extending to 0.13Ha. situated to the west of Mill Road, Laxfield.

The land is located to the rear of the local authority and former local authority housing fronting Mill Road. Part of the site is occupied by four lock-up garages and a hardstanding used for the parking of cars, the remainder is overgrown.

To the north, east and south the site is bounded by the rear gardens of adjacent residential development. To the west is open countryside.

Vehicular access is via a metalled driveway from Mill Road some 2.5m. wide. with narrow grassed strips at either side.

HISTORY

3. The is no planning history relevant to the application site.

PROPOSAL

4. It is proposed to demolish the existing block of four garages and erect a terrace of three two-bedroomed bungalows.

The bungalows will each have two parking spaces to the front of the property. In addition, seven parking spaces for general use will be provided close to the location of the former garages, and two of the dwellings backing onto the application site will have parking spaces placed in their rear gardens, accessed through the application site.

The existing trees along the site boundary are shown retained.

POLICY

5. **Planning Policy Guidance**

See Appendix below.

CONSULTATIONS

6. Laxfield Parish Council support the application and comment they are pleased that previous suggestions about replacement of parking have been incorporated into the proposal.

SCC Highways have no objection subject to a condition

SCC Archaeology - comments will be reported verbally

Suffolk Wildlife Trust - comments will be reported verbally

MSDC Strategic Housing comment as follows:-

- These properties will meet the needs of a household wishing to live in a social rent tenure property which is of high quality design, energy efficient within a small village setting close to a Key Service centre with access to many facilities and service. The housing scheme has been worked up in partnership with the Parish Council although at the time of writing this consultation document no documentary response was registered on the planning portal from the parish. The application is supportive of Mid Suffolk DC strategic priorities to provide additional affordable social rent tenure, energy efficient homes.

A further comment from Strategic Housing on the approach to sustainable construction is contained in 'Assessment' below.

MSDC Environmental Control (Contamination) - comments will be reported

verbally

Suffolk Fire and Rescue comments on the specification required for hardstandings has been copied to the Agent.

LOCAL AND THIRD PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

7. Two letters of objection have been received from the same local address. The points made are (summarised):-
- Access is constrained, often by resident's parked cars
 - Vehicles displaced from the garage/parking area will exacerbate problems elsewhere nearby.
 - Similar proposal considered 25 years ago but scrapped 'due to access'
 - People have paid rent on garages for 30 years and now feel 'pushed aside' with no alternative arrangements.

ASSESSMENT

8. As noted above, this initiative is directed at meeting an identified need for affordable housing in this part of the District, and has evolved through a survey and consultation exercise in association with Laxfield Parish Council.

The site is within the defined settlement boundary for Laxfield, which is identified as a Primary Village in the adopted Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2008). The principle of residential infill is therefore fully in accordance with adopted policy and is not an 'exceptions' site.

However, in order to safeguard dwellings for future affordable occupancy it is usually appropriate to secure a Section 106 obligation to that effect. There is a potential risk of future tenants becoming eligible to exercise a "Right to buy" which would remove the dwellings from the affordable stock. The Council is not able to enter a Section 106 planning obligation with itself and your Officers are taking legal advice as to the proper method by which to address this risk. A verbal update will be given at your meeting.

The site is currently occupied by 4no. lock-up garages and a hardstanding with the potential for parking perhaps another 5 or 6 cars comfortably. It is not clear whether all of the garages are used to house a vehicle but it is thought that at least 2 do not. On that basis, the scheme will displace some 10 potential off street parking spaces.

The Highway Authority raise no objection subject to a condition requiring the parking spaces to be provided prior to occupation.

The proposed layout shows 7 parking spaces retained in addition to the dedicated front-of-plot spaces for the new bungalows, and three on-plot spaces in the rear gardens of 31 and 32 Mill Lane (these appear to be already in place

and may be 'permitted development' subject to drainage arrangements). This suggests there will be no significant loss of spaces although, notwithstanding the Highway Authority comment, it may be more practical if the parallel space closest to the entrance was hatched and retained as a passing bay.

The bungalows themselves are of an acceptable design and, as single storey buildings, raise no issues of neighbour amenity. Creative application of the landscaping scheme secured by condition can ensure that the bungalows occupy their own defined space, accessed through, but separate from the reconfigured parking area.

Regarding sustainable construction, the Strategic Housing Team comment as follows:-

- The Code for Sustainable Homes, code levels, are obsolete with effect from 1 April 2015. Therefore all new Council homes will be constructed to the Council's Housing Design Brief. This standard includes all current best practice design and construction guidance, such as those set by the Homes and Communities Agency and Lifetime Homes Standards. Following consultation with the Councils Development Partner, Havebury Housing Partnership and other Housing Association colleagues, Officers confirm that a 'fabric first' approach to Council house building will provide benefits to both the Council and our Tenants. This concentrates on improving energy efficiency levels by maximising the insulation properties of the actual building. This together with Lifetime Homes Standards will ensure high quality well designed homes with low running costs. Lifetime Homes achieves this through design improvements, ensuring the long term flexibility of homes for the benefit of their occupants, by for example reducing future adaptation requirements and costs.

Subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement securing the properties for 'social rent' tenure, permission with appropriate conditions is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

That on the satisfactory completion of an Agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 securing the properties for affordable rental, powers to grant Full Planning Permission with conditions covering the following matters be delegated to the Corporate Manager (Development Management).

- 1 Standard time limit**
- 2 List of approved documents**
- 3 All parking spaces to be provided prior to occupation**
- 4 Hard and soft landscaping, including boundary treatments, to be agreed prior to commencement**
- 5 Landscaping timing and tree protection**
- 6 Details of facing and roofing materials to be agreed prior to work above slab level**
- 7 Archaeology if required**

Philip Isbell
Corporate Manager - Development Management

Ian Ward
Senior Planning Officer

APPENDIX A - PLANNING POLICIES

1. Mid Suffolk Local Plan

GP1 - DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF DEVELOPMENT

2. Planning Policy Statements, Circulars & Other policy

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

C01/03 - Safeguarding aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives

APPENDIX B - NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS

Letter(s) of representation(s) have been received from a total of 1 interested party(ies).

The following people **objected** to the application

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The following people **supported** the application:

The following people **commented** on the application: