

Committee Report

Item No: 2

Reference: DC/18/04267

Case Officer: Alex Scott

Ward: Elmswell & Norton.

Ward Member/s: Cllr John Levantis. Cllr Sarah Mansel.

RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE RESERVED MATTERS WITH CONDITIONS

Description of Development

Application for approval of Reserved Matters following Outline Planning Permission Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Scale, Appearance, Landscaping and layout for 60 no. dwellings granted under 3469/16.

Location

Land To The East Of, Borley Crescent, Elmswell

Parish: Elmswell

Expiry Date: 13/03/2019

Application Type: RES - Reserved Matters

Development Type: Major Small Scale - Dwellings

Applicant: Orbit Homes

Agent: Armstrong Rigg Planning Ltd

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason/s:

It is a “Major” application for:

- 15 or more dwellings

Details of Previous Committee / Resolutions and any member site visit

Outline Planning Application (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for residential development of up to 60 dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping, public open space areas, pedestrian/cycle links and vehicular access from Borley Crescent (Application Reference: 3469/16) was considered and granted by committee (subject to S106 and conditions) on the 22nd March 2017.

Has a Committee Call In request been received from a Council Member?

No

Details of Pre-Application Advice

Pre-application advice, regarding the reserved matters submission was given by your officers in August 2018.

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework
FC01 - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
FC01_1 - Mid Suffolk Approach To Delivering Sustainable Development
CS05 - Mid Suffolk's Environment
CS06 - Services and Infrastructure
CS09 - Density and Mix
GP01 - Design and layout of development
HB01 - Protection of historic buildings
HB13 - Protecting Ancient Monuments
HB14 - Ensuring archaeological remains are not destroyed
H13 - Design and layout of housing development
H15 - Development to reflect local characteristics
H16 - Protecting existing residential amenity
H17 - Keeping residential development away from pollution
CL08 - Protecting wildlife habitats
T09 - Parking Standards
T10 - Highway Considerations in Development
RT04 - Amenity open space and play areas within residential development
RT12 - Footpaths and Bridleways
SB03 - Retaining visually important open spaces

Consultations and Representations

During the course of the application Consultation and Representations from third parties have been received. These are summarised below.

A: Summary of Consultations

Elmswell Parish Council (Summary)

Object to this as there is a need for bungalows and consider bungalows would be better in terms of housing density, character and highway safety; Other estates recently approved in Elmswell have provided adequate accommodation in terms of housing types, when this proposal does not - consider this to be unsustainable; Concern with regards proposed parking remote from dwellings and anti-social behaviour that would result.

SCC - Highways

No objections received in relation to final proposed layout.

MSDC - Environmental Health - Land Contamination

No comments to make in relation to the above consultation from the perspective of land contamination.

MSDC - Environmental Health - Noise/Odour/Light/Smoke

No objection - subject to securing an acceptable scheme of noise attenuation for dwellings, especially those in proximity to the nearby Rail Line.

MSDC - Environmental Health - Air Quality

No comments to make with respect to Local Air Quality Management.

SCC - Flood & Water Management

Previous holding objection removed - Raise no Objection to RM submission.

Anglian Water

The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Elmswell Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows.

SCC - Archaeological Service

There are no grounds to consider refusal of permission to achieve preservation in situ of any important heritage assets. However, in accordance with the NPPF, any permission granted should be the subject of a planning condition to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset before it is damaged or destroyed.

MSDC - Waste Manager (Major Developments)

No objection subject to conditions.

Landscape - Place Services

Welcome the changes to the proposed layout that have been made to the Public Rights of Way landscape corridors, however concerns still raised with respect to: 1) No private amenity space for proposed flats (Plot 1-8); 2) Long alley-like back garden accesses proposed (Plot 14, 16 and 27); 3) Plot boundaries that meet the public realm should be Brick Walls instead of close board fencing; 4) The public open space provision is neither adequate, nor located appropriately.

MSDC - Arboricultural Officer

No objection to this application subject to it being undertaken in accordance with the measures outlined in the accompanying arboricultural report.

SCC - Rights Of Way Department

Public Footpath 10 is recorded through the proposed development area. We comment as follows:

- o We would be looking for a wide landscape corridor.
- o The road over the footpath will need to be considered by highways for safety and maintenance.
- o The pinch point to the north west of the boundary, we would like to see a larger width for the public right of way.
- o Within the plans, gravel has been used for the surface of the routes, this is not acceptable, we would only accept hoggin.
- o We would be looking for all the routes within the site to be improved via hoggin surfacing. The stretch of FP10 from the road is shown within their redline boundary and we would be looking for this to be resurfaced with hoggin also.

MSDC - Strategic Housing (Affordable/Major Dwel/G+T)

21 Affordable units (35% of total) should be provided on site comprising 15 affordable rent units and 6 shared ownership units.

Concern that most of the proposed affordable dwellings are too small:

- The 1 bed flats should be 50 sqm and not 45.1 sqm as proposed

- The 2 bed bungalows should be 70 sqm and not 67.9 sqm as proposed
- The 2 bed houses should be 79 sqm and not 71.9 sqm as proposed
- The 3 bed houses should be 93 sqm and not 84.7 sqm as proposed

Note that the proposed 69.9 sqm of floorspace for the affordable 2 bed flats is acceptable.

Comments with regards MARKET DWELLINGS proposed : Consider too few bungalows, terraced houses, and semi-detached houses are proposed. Across all the other developments that have planning permission there are very few bungalows and most of those are for affordable housing. There is already a significant supply of 4 bedroomed homes across all developments and in the existing housing supply. It is very disappointing to have so few bungalows included in view of the Council's ageing demographic profile and the need for accommodation that households can downsize to and remain in their local community.

SCC - Strategic Development Contributions Manager

No comments to make on the above reserved matters planning application.

NHS England (50+ Dwellings/C2/Care Or Nursing Homes)

The proposed development is likely to have an impact on the 1 GP operating within the vicinity of the application site. This practice does have sufficient capacity for the additional growth resulting from this development and cumulative growth in the area.

The proposed development will be likely to have an impact on the NHS funding programme for the delivery of primary healthcare provision within this area and specifically within the health catchment of the development. West Suffolk CCG would therefore expect these impacts to be fully assessed and mitigated by way of a developer contribution secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

SCC - Travel Plan Co-ordinator

Formal response will form part of the Suffolk County Council Highways response.

MSDC - Planning Policy - Contrary To Dev Plan/Departures

Do not wish to make formal comment.

MSDC - Communities (Major Development)

No comments received.

MSDC - Environmental Health - Sustainability Issues

No comments received.

SCC - Fire & Rescue

No comments received.

SCC - Street Lighting

No comments received.

Ramblers Association

No comments received.

B: Representations

Letters of concern or objection have been received from 4 no. third party sources during the course of determination. Comments received are summarised below:

- Consider Elmswell have been ruined by so many new builds and is no longer a Country Village, more like a Small town;
- The proposal would result in the loss of more countryside which is unacceptable and should be protected for its own sake;
- Concern with regards loss of trees hedgerows and wildlife;
- Concern with regards the proposal's impact on local roads during construction;
- Concern with regards impact of additional traffic on Elmswell's Roads;
- Concern with regards increased on-street parking, particularly on existing estate roads;
- Consider more Bungalows should be provided on the site;
- The only road into the estate is Borley Crescent, this is a fairly busy road, especially at peak times. This is not helped by the junction at the end of Blackthorne Road which can be blocked by vehicles waiting to cross the railway;
- Concern that no new builds in Elmswell would be affordable to resident's children and grandchildren;
- Consider the Village School and Doctors cannot cope with the additional numbers;
- Consider the developer should contribute to the extension of the School and the building of a Doctor's Surgery in Elmswell;
- Consider the proposed design and layout is cramped and bland with not enough Bungalows proposed;
- Consider proposal would result in unacceptable noise and disturbance to existing residents because of increased traffic movements;
- Consider proposal would result in increased air pollution due to additional vehicles;
- Consider landowners and developers will be making vast sums of money from the development, with no consideration for existing residents;
- Concern with regards impact on existing PROW (FP10) - do not wish to walk through a housing estate - request footpath is moved to the eastern edge of the development;
- Trust developers will not renege on tree/bush screen planting on the eastern side of the development and that effective restrictions can be put in place to prevent residents cutting down trees, as happens in other parts of Elmswell.

PLANNING HISTORY

REF: 3469/16

Outline Planning Application sought (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for residential development of up to 60 dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping, public open space areas, pedestrian/cycle links and vehicular access from Borley Crescent

DECISION: GTD

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1. The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1. The site comprises some 1.8 ha of agricultural land outside but abutting the north eastern edge of the village of Elmswell. The site adjoins an existing residential development, located to the west of the site. The site is bounded by Blackbourne Meadow to the north, farmland to the east and the railway line to the south. There is existing planting and hedgerows along the east and northern boundaries of the site. There are existing public footpaths to the north and west which provide access to the village and the countryside.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1. The application is submitted further to outline planning permission ref: 3469/16, granted in February 2017, and seeks approval of reserved matters relating to the Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping of 60 no. dwellings.
- 2.2. The application proposes delivery of 39 market housing units and 21 affordable housing units, as well as well as approximately 0.25 hectares of Public Space. The existing Public Right of Way which traverses the north-west boundary of the site is proposed to be retained and boarded by landscape planting, crossed by a road at only one point.
- 2.3. The proposed density of housing development would be approximately 50 dwellings per hectare, with back to back distances of no less than 20 metres.
- 2.4. The proposed dwelling heights are broken down as follows:

Market Dwellings

Single Storey Semi-Detached (Bungalows)	= 2 no.
Two Storey Detached Dwellings	= 14 no.
Two Storey Semi-Detached Dwellings	= 12 no.
Two Storey Terrace Dwellings	= 11 no.

Affordable Dwellings

Single Storey Semi-Detached (Bungalows)	= 2 no.
Two Storey Terrace Dwellings	= 11 no.
Two Storey Flats Building	= 1 no. (Containing 8 no. Flats)

- 2.5. The proposed bedroom numbers are broken down as follows:

Market Dwellings

1 Bedroom	= 0 no.
2 Bedroom	= 10 no.
3 Bedroom	= 18 no.
4 Bedroom	= 11 no.

Affordable Dwellings

1 Bedroom	= 4 no.
2 Bedroom	= 14 no.
3 Bedroom	= 3 no.

- 2.6. The proposed dwellings would be provided in a range of types and styles. Proposed external facing material would be a mix of facing red brick (with natural cement mortar), cream colour render and red and black pantiles.

3. The Principle Of Development

- 3.1. The development is outside the settlement boundary but granted outline planning permission and this is the submission of reserved matters. While there are objections and comments on principle issues, these have been dealt with under the outline granted. The issues of Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping only are for consideration.

4. Site Access, Parking And Highway Safety Considerations

- 4.1. Access details and connections to the site have been dealt with under the outline permission. The outline permission also establishes the principle of 60 dwellings and related traffic to and from the site. Parking and visitor parking meet the requirements under the SCC Parking Standards. The parking proposals are as follows: -

91 allocated parking spaces
19 Garage spaces
29 Visitor/Informal off road parking bays

- 4.2. Parking provision is considered to meet the minimum requirement for parking places as shown in the Suffolk Parking for Guidance 2015.
- 4.3. Tandem parking has been raised previously as a concern by Members and it is understood SCC Highways may be changing policy in 2019 in respect of this matter, but currently the adopted guidance states the following in full:-
“Tandem parking (one vehicle behind the other) is acceptable on-plot, within the curtilage of a dwelling but should be discouraged in areas which offer general access, e.g. parking courts. The provision of tandem parking reduces the uptake of spaces, often used instead for bin storage in rear parking courts, and their provision encourages on-street parking. Allowance must be made for vehicle manoeuvring, in terms of space and highway safety, if tandem parking is proposed.”
- 4.4. SCC’s previous concerns relate to instances where three spaces in tandem occur (with or without a garage included) and the potential impact on main roads through a development as occupiers may need to shuffle their cars around or choose instead to park more on the main road and avoid shuffling cars. Where garage design historically precluded parking of vehicles and storage of domestic items such as bicycles, lawnmowers etc some displacement of vehicles was not unusual. The current garage design standards are intended to allow for both and overcome this problem.
- 4.5. Your officers have reviewed all comparable cases in 2017/2018 and their treatment of tandem parking. There have been a number of major housing schemes in the last few years, for example in Stowmarket, Thurston and Great Blakenham that have been approved by both Mid Suffolk committees and most of these have a degree of tandem parking. An average of 20% of the dwellings in major schemes approved in the last two years have tandem parking in the form of three spaces (whether in garage or not) in front of each other. Until very recently this has not been considered an issue as current guidance and policy does not restrict such proposals and only discourages this in certain instances. There are also benefits of tandem parking as it reduces

how car dominated design by for example, avoiding wide driveways, to consider alongside drawbacks.

- 4.6. With consideration of views given by members at recent committee meetings the applicant in this case has sought to minimise tandem parking on the site to a low 8.3% and those remaining areas where tandem parking takes place would be in areas away from the site access, where traffic flows would be lesser. In conclusion the final layout proposed ensures a safer layout with reduced tandem spaces and traffic calming measures now integrated with the proposal.
- 4.7. In conclusion, the provision of 600 dwellings and access points have been agreed under the outline permission. Detailed road alignment in addition to the level and location of all parking is acceptable in policy terms. The changes during the course of the application have created a spacious and cul de sac based layout with access to public green space, the countryside and village services. It is considered that the applicant has addressed all concerns by making important and substantial changes to the layout. It is considered that the latest scheme before you are the result of beneficial amendments and improvements to the proposal.

5. Design And Layout [Impact On Street Scene]

- 5.1. The development is predominantly two-storey with only 6.6% (4 no.) being single-storey (Bungalows). The layout has been discussed above in part, but is essentially a network of cul de sac roads spurring off the principle access road, which connects with lesser scale estate roads, looping through the centre of the development. Proposed estate roads are also linked to existing and proposed public footpaths to the north and side site boundaries and associated public green spaces, creating a welcoming, quality, pedestrian-friendly residential environment. Back gardens meet back gardens and avoid unsupervised spaces. Public green spaces to site boundaries provide green corridors to accord with landscaping recommendations, as well as creating a softer buffer to the adjoining countryside. The proposed public footpaths and green spaces also link into the existing PROW network and provide access to the countryside and villages services and facilities.
- 5.2. The proposed housing density of 50 dwellings per hectare, although higher than the 40 dph as set out in development plan policy CS9, is considered to be acceptable in such a large sustainable village environment, which maximises efficient use of land and provides 50% of the proposed dwellings in the form of flats and terraces. The application also proposes predominantly 2 bedroom properties, ideal for first time buyers, those living alone, and those wishing to downsize.
- 5.3. The layout proposes a wide range of house types, with 20 total variations proposed. The designs of the dwellings have been developed several times throughout the application process. The resulting range of house types now enjoy detailed features with a greater range of character variances when compared to an average estate of a similar scale. It is considered that the proposals will provide a development of sufficient interest and individual character, suitable in the proposed location. The issue with regards the lack of bungalows proposed has been raised during the course of consultation, however despite this being an acknowledged housing need your officers do not consider this to be a reason for refusal as the scheme delivers other housing types which would equally address other housing needs, and would deliver 21 no. affordable housing units, which would be significantly less should a greater percentage of more land hungry Bungalows be proposed.
- 5.4. The issue of proposed dwellings not being in accordance with national space standards has been raised by your Strategic Housing Officers and by members of the public. Your officers have considered these concerns and advise that there are no existing development plan policies which

specify dwelling space standards and the proposal is, therefore, not contrary to the provisions of the plan in this respect. It is also considered that the internal floor areas proposed by the applicant are within acceptable tolerances, when compared to the national space standards.

- 5.5. Your planning officers do not share the view offered by strategic housing that too many 4 bedroom properties have been proposed and that too few terraced and semi detached properties have been proposed. A mere 18% of the total number of dwelling proposed are 4 bedroom in a development which predominantly proposes 2 bedroom properties. Furthermore: 70% of the proposed dwellings are either flats, terraces or semi-detached properties.

6. Landscape Impact, Trees, Ecology, Biodiversity And Protected Species

- 6.1. The proposed scheme of landscaping, providing strong landscape buffering, of appropriate species, to all site boundaries, and to the north and east countryside boundaries in particular, is considered appropriate to the type and scale of development proposed. The proposed scheme of landscaping is also considered to provide green corridors traversing the edges of the site, to the benefit of ecological species.
- 6.2. Council landscape consultants have been consulted on the application proposal and raise not objection insofar as the proposal relates to boundary landscape planting and screening and opportunities for biodiversity.
- 6.3. Overall the proposed scheme of landscaping is considered to adequately screen and soften the proposed development into the existing landscape, to create an appropriate soft edge to the village in this location, and to provide suitable opportunities for ecological species.

7. Impact On Residential Amenity

- 7.1. Policy H13 of the development plan seeks to ensure new housing development protects the amenity of neighbouring residents. Policy H16 of the development plan seeks to protect the existing amenity of residential areas.
 - 7.2. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF sets out a number of core planning principles as to underpin decision-taking, including, seeking to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of developments and places.
 - 7.3. The indicative layout demonstrates the site is readily capable of accommodating the proposed number and density of dwellings in a manner that will not unduly compromise the residential amenity of future occupiers of the development or occupiers of neighbouring dwellings. The proposed dwellings give no rise to unacceptable amenity impacts, owing largely to the separation distances between proposed dwellings and existing neighbouring dwellings.
 - 7.5. The proposal, therefore, accords with the aspirations of development plan policies H13 and H16 and with paragraph 127 of the NPPF in this regard.
-

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

8. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 8.1. The principle of development has been agreed for the number of dwellings proposed as well as the access arrangements. The resultant development provides an environment that is not car dominated, has good supervision and details a variety of dwelling styles and materials that provides interest to a range of streetscapes. All statutory consultees offer no significant objection to the scheme that cannot be addressed by way of existing or further conditions. The proposals are well connected to a number of existing public rights of way, will create a new landscaped edge to the village and provide green public space assets for the community to benefit from.

RECOMMENDATION

That authority be delegated to the Acting Chief Planning Officer - Growth & Sustainable Planning to Grant reserved matters, subject to the following conditions:

- Approved Plans and Documents
- Those required by SCC-Highways
- Those already imposed as part of Outline Planning Permission Ref: 3469/16