

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 12 October 2016

AGENDA ITEM NO	2
APPLICATION NO	2022/16
PROPOSAL	An outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for up to no 130 dwellings and includes, affordable housing, car parking, open space provision with associated infrastructure.
SITE LOCATION	Land on the west side of, Stowmarket Road, Great Blakenham
SITE AREA (Ha)	
APPLICANT	Christchurch Land & Estates (Great Blakenham)
RECEIVED	April 27, 2016
EXPIRY DATE	August 22, 2016

REASONS FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason :

- (1) it is a "Major" application for:-
- a residential development for 15 or over dwellings

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

1. Pre-application advice from the developer was sought in March 2016 and the application has been submitted as discussed.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2. The site is located on the northern edge of Great Blakenham. It comprises an area of approximately 4.76 ha of open grassland to the west of Stowmarket Road. Woodland lies along the western boundary and the site is on sloping land up to the wood.

The current point of access to the field is via a track lying to the west of Stowmarket Road, which leads through a small informal parking area adjacent to an area of allotment gardens located to the north of the application site.

HISTORY

3. The planning history relevant to the application site is:

2284/16	Screening opinion in respect of a proposed residential development	EIA not required.
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PROPOSAL

4. Outline planning permission is sought for up to 130 residential dwellings based on an average density of 26 dwellings per hectare within residential parcels covering 2.53 hectares; approximately 0.67ha of useable public open space including age appropriate play facilities; approximately 1.56 ha of wildlife corridors/informal footpaths/ screen planting and sustainable drainage details and a principal vehicular access point from Stowmarket Road.

POLICY

5. **Planning Policy Guidance**

See Appendix below.

CONSULTATIONS

6. **Great Blakenham Parish Council**

No comments received

Claydon and Whitton Parish Council

As agreed with the MSDC Planning Department on the permission granted to the SnOasis development, this is the time for applicants to pay for the cost of a roundabout at the junction of Bramford Road, Great Blakenham and the B1113. The movement at this junction of many more HGVs make this even more imperative than the SnOasis development. It is also necessary that there be another lane created at the approach of the B1113 to junction 52 of the A14. In the interests of safety another lane should be created to allow for vehicles turning left and right and straight ahead. During rush hours and at other busy times, drivers use the turn left lane to enter Claydon. This is already dangerous and will be exacerbated by this development. It should be borne in mind that this road system is not only for Great Blakenham but for the whole of the highly populated Gipping Valley.

Also, we do not find this a sustainable development.

Reference should be made back to the Travel Plan.

For the above reasons Claydon & Whitton Parish Council are objecting to this application.

Anglian Water

The foul drainage and from this development will be accommodated through existing capacity and the existing sewerage system at present has available capacity. The surface water strategy/flood risk assessment submitted with the planning application relevant to Anglian Water is acceptable. Suggest condition to agree surface water disposal.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

Fire hydrants will be required but it is not possible to determine the number required. These details will need to be dealt with by condition.

Suffolk Floods and Water Team - Suffolk County Council

Not satisfied with the surface water drainage proposals at this outline stage, but since there are relatively large areas of open space and if there is flexibility in the planning process to adjust to accommodate the required SuDS then SW drainage details might be dealt with by conditions.

Suffolk County Council Highway Authority

The County Council as Highway Authority does not object to the proposal subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 planning obligation and imposition of conditions.

Suffolk County Archaeological Service

No objection - subject to conditions

Suffolk County Landscape Officer

No objection- subject to conditions

Suffolk County Ecologist

No objection - subject to conditions

Natural England

No objection

Based upon the information provided, Natural England advises the Council that the proposal is unlikely to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes. Natural England has assessed this application using the Impact Risk Zones data (IRZs) and is satisfied that the proposed development being carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application, as submitted, will not damage or destroy the interest features for which Great Blakenham Pit SSSI and Little Blakenham Pit SSSIs have been notified. We therefore advise your authority that these SSSIs do not represent a constraint in determining this application.

Natural England recommends that capped street lighting, which directs light downwards and away from the ancient woodland, is incorporated into the design to minimise disturbance to bats. Natural England also recommends that you screen the ancient woodland during construction work to mitigate against the effects of dust on the woodland.

NHS England

The proposed development is likely to have an impact on the services of 1 GP practice operating within the vicinity of the application site, Barham and Claydon Survey The GP practice does not have capacity for the additional growth resulting from the development. The development could generate approximately

312 residents and subsequently increase demand upon existing constrained services.

A developer contribution will be required to mitigate the impacts of this proposal. NHS England calculates the level of contribution required, in this instance to be £42,780. NHS England therefore requests that this sum to be secured through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) linked to any grant of planning permission.

National Grid

Apparatus has been identified in the vicinity of the proposed works. (Advisory comments)

Ministry of Defence

No safeguarding objection

MSDC Strategic Housing

35% affordable housing on this proposal based on 130 units equates to 45 AH units. Based upon the housing needs and choice based lettings information above the following mix is recommended:

Affordable Rent Tenancy:

- 12 x 1 bed flats (50 sq m)
- 18 x 2 bed 4person house (79 sqm)
- 2 x 3 bed 5person house (93 sqm)

Shared Ownership

- 10 x 2bed 4person house (79 sqm)
- 3 x 3bed 5person house (93 sqm)

Open Market Homes mix: It is notes that there is a supporting affordable housing statement with this application recommending 35% affordable housing which is welcomed. 65% open market units are therefore proposed. 35% of those being 4 bedroom units. Whilst this is an outline proposal, it is recommended that consideration be given to the highest percentage of bedroom sizes being 1 to 3 bedrooms reflecting the need for smaller units.

MSDC Arboricultural Officer

No objection to this application as there appears to be little conflict between the development, based upon the illustrative masterplan, and any significant trees/hedges on or adjacent to the site. Conditions required for Arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan.

MSDC Environmental Health General

No objection

MSDC Environmental Health - Land Contamination

No objection - subject to condition requiring submission of a strategy to investigate contamination of the site.

LOCAL AND THIRD PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

7. This is a summary of the representations received.
- Impact on road network
 - Impact on doctors surgery
 - Impact on schools
 - Loss of rural Suffolk
 - Lack of information available
 - Insufficient shops
 - Play area is remote from housing
 - Noise and light pollution
 - General concern with regard to wildlife
 - Destruction of the landscape
 - Little regard for archaeological potential
 - Lack of parking

ASSESSMENT

8. **The principle of development:**

The site is located outside the Settlement Boundary for Great Blakenham in the Saved Local Plan 1998. Therefore, there is a policy presumption against development in such locations. Great Blakenham is identified as a Key Service Centre in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy Focused Review identifies Key Service Centres as locations that can accommodate additional housing growth.

Paragraph 47 of the NPPF requires LPAs to identify a 5 year supply of specific deliverable housing sites. NPPF Paragraph 49 states that 'relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Mid Suffolk District Council does not have this housing land supply at this time and as such the relevant policies set out above are not considered to be up to date. Indeed paragraph 14 of the NPPF states in this respect:

"For decision-taking this means:

approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and

where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:

any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted"

The NPPF requires that development be sustainable and that adverse impacts do not outweigh the benefits to be acceptable in principle.

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF sets out three dimensions for sustainable development, economic, social and environmental:

"an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure:

a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy."

The proposal is to develop up to 130 new dwellings which would not only add to the supply of housing in the district but includes an element of affordable housing which would provide additional housing in that respect as well, such that the proposal can be considered to fall within the social dimension of sustainable development.

The application site is well connected in highway terms, Stowmarket Road to the east and the B1078 to the north of the site provide access to the A14, a strategic route providing access to Ipswich, a regional employment centre. The nearest bus stops are located less than 100m to the centre point of the site and the site is considered to have a good level of public transport accessibility.

Furthermore with regards to the economic strand the proposal would provide a development of reasonable size to support the local economy both in terms of construction and in respect of residents using local services.

In the light of all of the above the proposal is considered to be sustainable development within all three identified strands such that there is a presumption in favour of this proposal, in accordance with the NPPF.

Highway Matters

Concern has been raised about the capacity of the existing road network to accept further development and the application was submitted by a transport assessment. The County Highway Authority have asked for further information to be submitted to address shortcomings in the transport assessment but have nonetheless concluded that the application is acceptable subject to conditions.

Archaeological Implications

The site of the proposed development has high potential for the discovery of

important hitherto unknown heritage assets of archaeological interest in view of its large size and the presence of numerous un-designated heritage assets located within the vicinity, which are recorded in the County Historic Environment Record. A significant Roman and Saxon finds scatter was located to the east (BLG 004), along with a prehistoric and Roman field system (BAY 056). Recent archaeological investigations to the south have detected a substantial Late Iron Age/early Roman enclosure associated with the remains of a number of structures (BLG 035). Multi-period finds have also been located within the vicinity of the site, whose situation within the Gipping Valley is topographically favourable location for occupation of all periods. Archaeological evaluation undertaken at this site has identified remains relating to prehistoric, Roman and Medieval activity (BLG 037). As a result, there is high potential for the discovery of additional below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, and groundworks associated with the development have the potential to damage or destroy surviving archaeological remains.

There are no grounds to consider refusal of permission in order to achieve preservation *in situ* of any important heritage assets. However, in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Paragraph 141), 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.

Impact on residential amenity

The main properties affected by the development are in Chequers Rise and those along Stowmarket Road. The site is of a reasonable size to allow for a layout and design which would not create unacceptable harm to neighbour amenity in terms of loss of light, overlooking or overshadowing.

Impact on landscape

The applicant has provided an acceptable assessment of the likely landscape and visual impacts of the proposal and this has been put together as a result of significant pre application work between the County's landscape officer and applicant. The site is in a valley side location in the countryside overlooking the Gipping valley adjacent to a Special Landscape Area and is partially visible from within the Grade I Listed parkland at Shrubland Hall.

The indicative scheme of landscaping appears, in general, to be appropriate. The retention of the relatively new planting on the site and a reasonable stand off from the Ancient Woodland County Wildlife Site is an important component of the proposed layout and there is the opportunity for the woodland to have a well balanced relationship with the new development. There are also opportunities for improvements to the wood, especially given the reduction of the woodland due to activities west of the wood and beyond this site. Given the sensitivity of the site and the receiving landscape it is essential that the details submitted at reserved matters stage conform to the proposed layout and design presented in the application in particular DRWG_2546_101 and DRWG 2546_022H. Overall the site is considered to sit within the landscape as a natural expansion of the existing settlement.

Biodiversity

A preliminary ecological appraisal of the site was submitted with the application. Ecological reports including a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Cotswold Wildlife Surveys Sept 2015) have been prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist in accordance with CIEEM report writing guidelines and using appropriate methodologies.

The likely impacts from the proposed development on Protected and Priority Habitats and Species have been adequately assessed to allow determination and appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been identified which can be secured by conditions of any consent.

The interim Bat Activity and Dormouse Survey report (Cotswold Wildlife Surveys Sept 2016) provided recently indicates that these Protected Species are not likely to be adversely impacted by the proposed development but that surveys are still on-going. In the event that Outline consent is approved, I suggest that the final Dormouse surveys must be completed prior to the detailed design of any development on the site to ensure that, should the species be present, any impacts are avoided or appropriately mitigated.

In addition to mitigation during construction, confirmation that all the fencing within the development is hedgehog-friendly will be required as mitigation for this species.

In the event that the final Dormouse survey & assessment is carried out and appropriate mitigation for this and other protected species can be secured at Reserved Matters stage, then the proposal could be acceptable subject to conditions including delivery of the submitted Landscape and Ecological Enhancement Plan (Fig 9 Pegasus).

In conclusion your offices do not consider that the development would give rise to the risk of an offence to protected species.

Flood Risk

The entire site lies in an area designated by the Environment Agency as Flood Zone 1 and is outline to have a chance of flooding of less than 1 in 1,000 in any year indicating that the site is at a low risk of flooding from fluvial sources.

The existing site is greenfield, therefore overland surface water runoff from the site is believed to currently drain to the ground. It is not feasible to discharge surface water to a watercourse as the nearest water course is the River Gipping located 100m to the east of the site.

Following development, it is proposed that the surface water will be contained within a pipe network, modular storage, permeable paving and detention basin.

The submitted flood risk assessment concludes that the proposed development is a very low risk of flooding from fluvial sources, the site is far enough inland not to be at risk of any tidal flooding and that flood risk from surface water is considered low at the site.

Conclusion

The site is in a sustainable location such that there is a presumption in favour of development, in accordance with the NPPF. The benefit of affordable housing provision for the highest need in this sustainable location is considered to outweigh any harm arising from the development and further more the proposal is not considered to risk significant harm to the landscape, residential amenity, highway safety or biodiversity to warrant refusal. The development is considered to be in accordance with the relevant Local Plan, Core Strategy and Core Strategy Focused Review policies and the objectives of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

(1) Subject to the prior agreement of a Section 106 Planning Obligation on appropriate terms to the satisfaction of the Professional Lead - Growth and Sustainable Planning to secure:

- Affordable Housing
- As recommended by County Highway Authority

(2) That the Professional Lead - Growth and Sustainable Planning be authorised to grant Outline Planning Permission subject to conditions including:

- Outline Time Limit
- Submission of Reserved Matters
- Approved Plans
- Fire Hydrants
- Surface Water (Anglian Water)
- Street Lighting
- Screen Ancient Woodland
- Arboricultural Method Statement
- Tree Protection Plan
- Land Contamination
- Noise Survey (concurrent with Res Matters)
- Surface Water (SCC)
- Highway Conditions (SCC)
- Landscape Conditions
- Removal of permitted development for extensions
- Ecological Enhancements

Philip Isbell
Professional Lead - Growth & Sustainable Planning

Gemma Pannell
Planning Officer

APPENDIX A - PLANNING POLICIES

1. Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the Core Strategy Focused Review

Cor1 - CS1 Settlement Hierarchy

Cor2 - CS2 Development in the Countryside & Countryside Villages

- Cor5 - CS5 Mid Suffolks Environment
- Cor6 - CS6 Services and Infrastructure
- CSFR-FC1 - PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
- Cor9 - CS9 Density and Mix
- CSFR-FC1.1 - MID SUFFOLK APPROACH TO DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2. Mid Suffolk Local Plan

- GP1 - DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF DEVELOPMENT
- HB13 - PROTECTING ANCIENT MONUMENTS
- RT12 - FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS
- CL8 - PROTECTING WILDLIFE HABITATS
- CL5 - PROTECTING EXISTING WOODLAND
- H17 - KEEPING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AWAY FROM POLLUTION
- CL6 - TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS
- H15 - DEVELOPMENT TO REFLECT LOCAL CHARACTERISTICS
- H13 - DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
- H7 - RESTRICTING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
- T10 - HIGHWAY CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT
- H16 - PROTECTING EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AMENITY
- HB1 - PROTECTION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

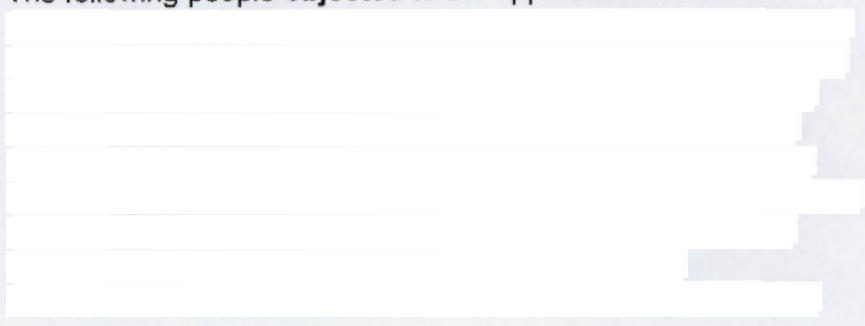
3. Planning Policy Statements, Circulars & Other policy

- NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

APPENDIX B - NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of representation have been received from a total of 9 interested parties.

The following people **objected** to the application



The following people **supported** the application:

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