

DC/20/05572

Dear Sir

I have become aware of the above application being presented to the Planning Committee next week with a favourable recommendation. Whilst I appreciate the lateness of this submission I would be grateful if these comments can be included alongside those already contained in the Officer committee report and the Planning Committee be made aware of my strong reservations over this application.

I fully support the objection from the Parish Council and those from local residents.

It is important to note that the Parish Council supports the principle of development and raised no objection to the approved outline consent.

The outline permission sets some very important parameters over the development which are important in respect of this application, even though it is a full application and to attach those conditions the council needed to be confident that they passed the legal tests of imposing conditions. I agree that the conditions on the outline (namely the two points of access and the scale limit) are important conditions that should be carried through in any subsequent application.

In terms of access, Suffolk parking standards require three off road parking spaces for four bedroom dwellings. This proposal (although indicated in the report is three bedroom) is in relativity a four bedroom house as the study if of appropriate size to perform that function and its use within the dwelling cannot new controlled or enforced. There is insufficient space on the site for three cars to park, and manoeuvre so that vehicles can enter and leave in a forward gear. The proposals also show an additional access point over and above the outline permission which in this location is unacceptable in terms of its impact on the highway and the appearance of the development. The case officers assessment in paragraph 6.8 is incorrect on this point. The room has appropriate window and would comply legally with the size standards which can be bedrooms and therefore needs to be considered capable of such - indeed the case officer acknowledges that it can accommodate a bed!. Failure to consider the room as a potential bedroom could leave the decision to be challenged if planing permission is granted. Indeed, I would argue that there is very little different in size between bedroom two and the study so I do not see how this conclusion has been reached and cannot see any evidence of this comparison in the report. It is therefore imperative that the Committee consider the dwelling as a four bedroom unit and make a decision accordingly as to whether the appropriate level of parking for 3 cars can be accommodated in a manner which allows them to enter and leave in a forward gear. I contend this is not possible.

The block plan attached to the permission is therefore incorrect in that it states the neighbouring part of the wider development site is subject to a reserved matter approval - the additional access point means that it would deviate from the wider outline permission and therefore no other part of the development site can proceed as a reserved matters submission and would all need to be full applications.

Turning to design, I have to say, the scheme represents poor design which is completely out of character with its location. This is a point raised by the Parish and local residents. The NPPF clearly states that poor design which does not relate to its surroundings should be refused - this is one such clear example. The proposed dwelling occupies the full width of the plot so there is no relief to its neighbouring approved property. This is a clear sign that the site represents over-development. When looking at the character of the area, they are detached properties located centrally within plots with clear gaps to their neighbour.

The design, whilst striking and different, is poor. The low roof and projecting turret at the front adds to the bulky nature and poor design. The low profile of the roof is a ploy to argue to the height of the building, but there are no properties in the local area with such a design. Whilst the height may be similar to that of the existing bungalow, it is clear that the proposed dwelling is much bulkier and prominent and will jar with the streetscene and cause an unacceptable impact. The outline application clearly stated that dwellings should not exceed 1.5 storeys - this is a two storey dwelling - this is clear from the layout plan with the second floor being full height rather than contained in the roof. If the height was not an important matter why limit it in the first place? The case officer is correct that this is a full application and therefore is not bound by those conditions, but the scheme is bound by the previous consent and those issues insofar that they are very important considerations and inappropriate evidence has been supplied in the report to demonstrate why this proposal should deviate from those outline planning conditions.

The proposed dwelling also has large, deep gables devoid of any interest. Members will note that to the west of the site is an open field and this blank deep facade will be unduly prominent for some considerable distance when approaching the site. This again is poor design and any dwelling on this plot should be designed to show interest and openings to the elevation. The elevation facing east is also blank and has the potential (albeit from a closer distance) to be bulky and unneighbourly.

The case officer's assessment in paragraph 3.2 is legally flawed. The NPPF and NPPG do not form part of the Development Plan as stated. These documents are material planning considerations, albeit important ones.

I would urge the Committee to refuse this application on the grounds that it represents poor design (reference the NPPF) which is out of character with the streetscene and is over-development by virtue of its bulk, full width on the plot and inability to provide sufficient parking within its curtilage.

Whilst the principle of development is acceptable, any proposal should comply with those conditions set out on the outline consent which were attached for valid appropriate reasons. Access should be as per the outline approved plan and any dwelling should be of a scale which is clearly 1.5 storeys in its form and design - ie first floor accommodation clearly designed within its roof.

If Members are minded to support this proposal I would strongly urge a site visit so that they can fully appreciate the harm that this development will cause in a prominent location in the village.

Thank you for taking to consider this. I would be grateful for formal acknowledgement that this has been received and will be circulated to Members of the Planning Committee in its entirety so they can consider these issues.

Kind Regards

Mr and Mrs Beighton
30 Pound Hill
Bacton IP14 4LP