

SUDBURY – ROSE VILLA, PRIORY WALK

Erection of 3 no. two-storey dwellings and 3 no. two and a half storey apartments (existing dwelling to be demolished). Construction of new vehicular access.

Applicant: Ashlong Developments Ltd.

Case Officer: Gareth Durrant.

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SITE

1. The site currently supports a two-storey dwelling and is 0.06 hectares in size. The dwelling is of brick construction with a slate roof and is currently vacant. The Priory Walk frontage is to the west of the site. The site is outside but adjacent to the conservation area. To the north is a pair of semi-detached dwellings (2 New Houses and Johanne). There is a listed wall to the east of the site which is associated with No.57 Friars Street to the north, itself a Grade II\* listed building. To the south is a three-storey building containing flats and townhouses. This building is one of three new buildings forming the recently constructed Priory Gardens development. There is an existing vehicular access to the site from Priory Walk.

PROPOSAL

2. The application proposes the erection of three dwellings and three flats in a single building. This amount of development represents a density of 100 units per hectare. The dwellings are in a two-storey terrace form facing towards Priory Walk and are situated towards the north boundary running in a southward direction. The proposed flats are attached to the southern end of the terrace and are provided over three-storeys (one flat to each floor).
3. The two-storey dwellings would have a ridge height of 7.7 metres above existing ground level and would be constructed in brick with clay pan tiles to the roof. The flats would be constructed at a lower level than the dwellings and have a ridge height of 9.6 metres (approximately 1 metre higher than the proposed terrace). The flats are detailed to complement the adjacent Priory Gardens development with a mix of brick and boarding proposed to the walls. The roof of the flats would be finished in natural slate.
4. A design and access statement has been submitted with the application to help explain and justify the development. This can be viewed in advance of the meeting by prior arrangement with the case officer.

RELEVANT HISTORY

5. 2007 – A planning application for the erection of 4 dwellings was withdrawn (B/06/01982/FUL).

## NATIONAL GUIDANCE

6. **PPS1 (2005) Delivering Sustainable Development** - relates to achieving sustainable development and high quality layout and design.
7. **PPS3 (2006) Housing** - sets out the Governments housing policies for planning.
8. **PPG15 (1994) Planning and the Historic Environment** – includes Government Guidance regarding (inter alia) conservation areas and the setting of listed buildings.

## PLANNING POLICIES

9. The following Development Plan policies are relevant to this application;

### **Suffolk Structure Plan 2001**

- CS1 (distribution of new development and provision of infrastructure)
- CS3 (location of housing development)
- ENV1 (character and setting of conservation areas and listed buildings)
- ENV3 (design standards)
- ENV22 (archaeology)
- T9 (development related private car parking)

### **Babergh Local Plan (Alteration No.2)**

- HS01 (housing development in towns)
- HS27 (housing density and house type)
- HS28 (infilling)
- HS30 (design of new housing)
- HS32 (public open space provision – small sites)
- CN01 (maintaining local distinctiveness)
- CN06 (development affecting the setting of listed buildings)
- CN08 (development having an impact upon conservation areas)

*\* please note that details or extracts of policies are no longer included in reports - see page 4 of these papers*

## OBSERVATIONS

10. TC – no objection, but notes the concerns of the Sudbury Society regarding water run off. They comment that there is a need for permeable surfaces to be used at the site.
11. EH – stress the need to ensure that the massing, forms and detailing are appropriate and in scale with the surroundings (adjacent grade II\* listed building and conservation area). It is also important that the materials, especially the roofs, should be of a high quality.
12. The form of the three houses is relatively simple, but with such a deep roof span we would suggest that a hipped roof would be more appropriate and would lessen the visual bulk of this element. The three flats have a somewhat contrived roof form that does not reflect the plan form. One would expect the ridge to run along the longest axis of this building. This option would accommodate the requirements of the upper unit more comfortably and add variety to the rooflines of the group as a whole.

13. LHA – comments to be reported.
14. SCC (Archaeology) – The proposal lies within an area of archaeological importance within the precinct of the Dominican Friary, founded before 1248 and dissolved in 1538. Medieval Friary walls and pottery were recorded in 1969 from the housing development to the south-east of this proposal. A standard condition is recommended to ensure that an adequate record is made of any archaeological features or finds which would otherwise be destroyed by development.
15. EA – submit advisory comments to the applicant.

Environmental Health – no adverse comments.

16. Sudbury Society – This still represents overdevelopment. To keep the height of the flats down the architect has resorted to a most inelegant and visually intrusive roof design. We also have concerns about the great expanse of parking space at the front. Do people really need two parking spaces in an area within easy walking distance of the town centre? Visually, this area of parked cars will dominate the site. There is also the potential problem of run-off in severe downpours. This problem may be alleviated by a permeable surfacing material.
17. Third Party Representations: Three letters have been received in objection to the application. The issues and objections raised are summarised as follows;
  - Area is already congested and suffers parking problems.
  - Existing dwelling should not be demolished.
  - No areas for children to play in the vicinity
  - Over-development of the site.
  - Potential de-valuation of properties.
  - Potential impact upon the structural integrity of the listed wall.

## ASSESSMENT

18. The application site is situated within the built up area boundary. As such the proposed redevelopment of the site is acceptable in principle and indeed accords with National and Local policies which seek to make more efficient use of urban brownfield land.
19. Government planning documents PPS1 and PPS3 and various Development Plan policies seek to ensure that new developments are of a high quality of design and layout. Weight is added to this requirement at this particular site because of its location close to a Grade II\* listed building and separate listed garden wall. The site is also adjacent to the Sudbury Conservation Area.
20. The construction of six dwellings as proposed (3 dwellings, 3 flats) at a density of 100 dph represents overdevelopment of the application site. There are simply too many units proposed. This becomes evident in the amount of the site which needs to be committed to off-street parking and manoeuvring of vehicles associated with the development, which leaves little opportunity for soft frontage landscaping. Furthermore, the buildings themselves are poorly designed owing to the poor form, design and detailing (particularly the proposed flats). Similar concerns have been expressed by English Heritage (whom have commented with regard to the impact upon the setting of the grade II\* listed building) and the Sudbury Society. Significant amendments would need to be made to the scheme to bring it into a form which could

be supported. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission is refused on design grounds.

21. It is not considered that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact upon the amenities of occupiers of adjacent dwellings by virtue of overlooking from windows, dominance or overshadowing. Furthermore, it is unlikely to affect views into and out of the Conservation Area.
22. The local highway authority has only recently been consulted of the application, so their comments were not available at the time this report was prepared. If any objections are raised by the Authority, these could be added as a further reason for refusal. The recommendation below reflects this possibility. It is not anticipated that the highway authority will object to the application as they were content with the previous application on highway grounds (B/06/01982/FUL).
23. Policy HS32 of the adopted Local Plan requires all applications proposing new dwellings to make provision for public open space. This is either in the form of on-site provision (minimum of 10% of the application site area) or off-site provision in the form of a commuted payment. In this case, given the small size of the site and layout of the development on site public open space provision is not considered appropriate. Any financial contribution would need to be secured via a S106 Agreement. The applicant has not been formally approached about this matter because of the recommendation of refusal. The absence of a S106 Agreement is as a further reason for refusal set out in the recommendation below. This would safeguard the policy requirement in the event that the applicant opts to appeal against the refusal of planning permission (on the assumption that is the committee's resolution).

## RECOMMENDATION

Following receipt of comments from the LHA, the Chief Planning Control Officer be authorised to refuse planning permission. Reasons;

- Overdevelopment of the site, the extent of the site required for car parking and the detrimental visual impact upon the character of the area
- Proposed buildings being of poor form, design and detailing which fails to respect the character of existing development in the vicinity and being detrimental to the visual amenities and character of the area.
- Inadequate provision for public open space
- As may be recommended by LHA

## DECISION

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