

PINEWOOD – ST CLARE’S CHURCH CENTRE, BELMONT ROAD

Erection of 5 no. detached two storey dwelling with attached garages and erection of 2 no. semi-detached two storey dwellings with 1 no. attached garage.

Applicant: The Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich and Brairley Homes Ltd

Case Officer: Gemma Pannell

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BACKGROUND

This application was included in the Schedule A applications to be determined by Development Committee on 23/05/07 (Paper G6 item 3). However it was deferred for a Committee Site Inspection in order that Members could consider the visual impact of the proposed development, its density and the effect on protected trees on the site. The Site Inspection took place on 30/05/07.

SITE

1. The site is located to the northern side of Belmont Road within the defined built up area. The site encompasses an area of approximately 0.24 ha with a frontage of 110m and an average depth of 23m. The site currently supports a church centre (fire damaged in 2002) and ancillary car parking area. The site is bounded to the north by a woodland area through which passes a small brook. The trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO No. 101 dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 1972).

PROPOSAL

2. The application seeks planning permission for the erection of 5 no. detached dwellings and 2 no. semi-detached dwellings. Access will be from two new access points onto Belmont Road, one access will serve four of the detached dwellings and the second access will serve one detached property and the pair of semis.
3. The dwellings are all two storey and have a maximum ridge height of 8.5 metres. The dwellings are designed to front Belmont Road and follow the slight curve of the road.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT/DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

- The proposals for the development have been drawn from the principles established with the outline planning permission.
- 7 dwellings on this site represents a density of 30 dwellings per hectare
- The proposals comprise a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes designed with flexibility, adaptability, sustainability and energy efficiency.

- The proposal integrates within its setting respecting the character of surrounding development by forming and completing a new frontage along Belmont Road.
- The proposed siting of the new dwelling respects that of the adjacent buildings by being set back from the road frontage. Careful consideration has been given to the woodland to the rear of the site which will form a dense backdrop to the proposals.
- Traditional materials and details are proposed such as a mixture of red and buff facing brickwork, reconstituted stone heads and cills and pitched roofs finished in reconstituted slates, plain tiles and pan tiles.

## HISTORY

4. 1988 – Planning permission granted for the retention of temporary church centre and associated car park for five years. (B/88/01845/FUL refers)
5. 1991 – Planning permission granted for renewal of temporary church centre for a further 10 years. (B/91/01206/FUL refers).
6. 2000 – Appeal dismissed for outline planning permission for erection of 6 no. detached two storey dwellings with garages and construction of vehicular access (existing building to be demolished). (B/00/001217/OUT refers). The inspector concluded that the site could accommodate residential development but that the illustrative layout was such that the inclusion of trees within individual plots would result in a material threat to their retention.
7. 2004 – Outline planning permission granted for erection of 4 no. detached dwellings (existing building to be demolished) Construction of new vehicular access. (B/02/01304/OUT refers)

## POLICY

### **PPS3 – Housing**

8. PPS3 states that the density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of existing style or form. If done well, imaginative design and layout of a new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment.

### **Suffolk Structure Plan 2001**

- CS1
- ENV3
- ENV16
- ENV17

### **Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 2 (2006)**

- HS01 (Towns)
- HS08 (Affordable housing)

- HS27 (Density and House Type)
- HS28 (Infilling)
- HS30 (Design of new houses)
- HS32(Public Open Space)
- HS34 (Smaller Dwellings)
- LP01(Planning Obligations)

## OBSERVATIONS

9. PC – No objection received initially. However further representations received as follows:-

“The Parish Council have looked at this once again. On reflection we now feel that we have concerns with the density of the development being proposed and also with its very close proximity to the trees both now and in the future. We would therefore appreciate it if the Development Committee would make a Site Inspection in order that these concerns may be addressed.”

10. CHA – Recommend standard conditions.
11. EA – Subject to the approval of Building Control a percolation test should be undertaken to ensure soakaways will work adequately in adverse conditions. If tests find that soakaways do not work alternative proposals should be submitted.
12. SPS – The design appears inappropriate and retro. There are no sustainability features, no respect for orientation, no use of passive solar energy and appear contrary to local plan policies on sustainability. Does the proposal include the appropriate proportion of affordable housing? If not, why?
13. AW – Recommend conditions relating to the disposal of foul drainage
14. SCC(Arch) – Recommend standard archaeological watching brief

## ASSESSMENT

- **Planning Policy**
- **Layout & Design**
- **Affordable Housing and Dwelling Mix**
- **Protected Trees (TPO's)**
- **Levels**

### **Planning Policy**

15. Policy HS01 provides that in towns housing developments will be granted planning permission, provided that there are no material adverse effects on residential amenity, the environment or traffic generation and policy HS27 states that residential development will not be granted permission where the density is below 30 dwellings per hectare.
16. The proposal represents a density of 30 dph. PPS3 states that the density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of existing style or form. If done well, imaginative design and layout of a new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment.

17. The site lies within the defined built up area boundary and has the benefit of outline planning permission for 4 no. dwellings and as such there can be no land use objection to the proposed residential development either in terms of ministerial advice or development plan policy. The main issue to be considered is the impact of the increased density and the impact that the proposal will have on the trees to the rear of the site that has the protection of a tree preservation order.

### **Layout, & Design**

18. Policies ENV3 of the Structure Plan and HS14 and CN01 of the Local Plan Alteration No.2 seek to resist development that would have a materially adverse impact on residential amenity and seek well designed layouts that provide an appropriate scale, density, form, parking and garden provision. Further policy T9 of the Structure Plan seeks parking for new development to be provided in accordance with the Suffolk Advisory Parking Standards.
19. Each of the houses has a reasonable private amenity area and the provision of amenity space is commensurate with the size of the dwelling it relates to and is considered to be acceptable.
20. Parking provision complies with the Suffolk Advisory Parking Standards and provides parking with a mixture of garaging and parking spaces.
21. The siting of the dwellings ensures minimal impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring properties by virtue of orientation, siting, position of rooms and location. Therefore in this respect, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any significant loss of residential amenity to existing or proposed dwellings. Furthermore the design is considered appropriate given the location within an existing housing estate.

### **Affordable Housing and Dwelling Mix**

22. Policy HS08 which refers to affordable housing in settlements with a population over 3,000, of which Pinewood is one, only requires affordable housing to be provided on applications for more than 15 dwellings, therefore affordable provision is not required on this site.
23. Policy HS34 requires that a proportion of the units should be one and two bedrooms with a floor area of less than 75 square metres. The proposal provides 2 no. two bedroom units (29% of the total number on site) to meet the requirements of this policy.

### **Protected Trees (TPO's)**

24. The Local Planning Authority has previously recognised the importance of the woodland area that abuts and overhangs the site and accordingly these trees protection by virtue of a Tree Preservation Order in 1972. Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 imposes a duty on the Local Planning Authority to ensure that in granting planning permission adequate provision is made for the protection of trees.
25. The outline approval sought to ensure that the TPO'd trees within the application site were excluded from the gardens of the dwellings and undertook

to secure a Section 106 legal agreement which formed an agreement for the management of the woodland in perpetuity. The current application would also need to include a similar agreement.

26. The application has been assessed by the Council's arboricultural officer who is satisfied that the woodland will not be adversely impacted upon by the proposed development. Clarification is currently being sought from the applicant's agent that the inspection programme outlined in Hayden's Tree Survey & Arboricultural Implication Assessment dated 26 July 2006 has been secured to help ensure against compromise to the trees during the course of the proposed development. A verbal update on this matter will be given at the meeting.
27. Revised plans have been requested to include the protected tree belt not in the application site area in order that a Section 106 obligation can be legally secured. A further verbal report on this outstanding matter will be undertaken at the meeting.
28. The ground levels on the application site area vary significantly and in relation to Belmont Road. Although one section through the site has been submitted in close proximity to the garages for plots 1 and 2 more sections are required across the remainder of the site and in relation to the tree belt together with details of existing and proposed ground levels, such that a through assessment of the impact of the development can be made in relation to the protected trees and their roots and the impact of the proposed development on the usual amenities of the locality. A further report on this outstanding matter will be undertaken at the meeting.

#### REASON FOR APPROVAL

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies HS01, HS08 and HS27 which are aimed at ensuring that this site is developed satisfactorily for residential development and at an appropriate density and to meet an identified local housing need whilst respecting the quality of the environment and safeguarding interests of road safety and residential amenity.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That subject to the receipt of satisfactory outstanding

- A The Solicitor to the Council be authorised to secure a Planning Obligation under Section 106 of the 1990 Act to ensure:
  - i) The transfer of the woodland to BDC for management in perpetuity. Information and revised plans cancelling paragraphs 26, 27 and 28 of the Assessment above.
  - ii) The payment of a commuted sum towards the management of the woodland
  - iii) The payment of contributions towards public open space provision.
- B Upon securing the above obligation, the Chief Planning Control Officer be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions –
  - Materials
  - Levels
  - Landscaping

- Archaeology
- Any as recommended by CHA
- As recommended by AW
- As recommended by EA
- Boundary treatment
- Protection of trees during construction
- Removal of PD rights for extensions and outbuildings
- Details of any hardsurfacing beneath canopies

**Otherwise,**

**RECOMMENDATION B**

Refuse planning permission.

- Inadequate provision of public open space and play equipment
- Inadequate protection of the woodland

**DECISION**