

Item No: 1

Reference: B/08/00145/FUL

Parish: SPROUGHTON

Location: The Stables, High Street

Proposal: Erection of 2 no. two-storey dwellings (semi-detached). Alterations to existing vehicular access.

Applicant: Seven Project Ltd

Case Officer: Ben Elvin

Date for Determination: 20/03/08

The consideration of this application was deferred by the Development Committee on 2 April 2008 to allow Members to visit the site and assess the access arrangements. A panel of Members visited the site on 9 April 2008.

SITE

1. The site forms an area of land that currently hosts 3 cottages, accessed via an existing drive from High Street (B1113). To the front of these cottages lies an area of land which appears to be used for car parking for these properties.
2. The existing cottages lie to the rear of the dwellings fronting High Street, in a backland location which resulted from the conversion of an existing farm building into the 3 cottages around 10 years ago.
3. To the north of the site lies a works building occupied by a restoration company.
4. The site is within the Built-Up Area Boundary of Sproughton and within the designated Special Landscape Area.

PROPOSAL

5. The application proposes the erection of a pair of semi-detached 2-bedroom dwellings to the north side of the site. The dwellings have been designed to follow a form similar to that of the converted building.
6. Car parking spaces are proposed to be formally laid out. A total of 13 spaces are to be provided within the site, with a space allocated for one of the existing frontage properties identified within the rear curtilage of that property.
7. Clarification was sought by Members in respect of the proposed works to the vehicular access. The applicant has submitted a plan showing the proposed works, which include the removal of both the existing brick pier to the left hand side of the access and the planting beds.

RELEVANT HISTORY

8. B98/00642 (1998) – Planning permission granted for the conversion of farm buildings to 3 two-storey dwellings, construction of 8 car parking spaces, 2 further car parking spaces to serve No.5 High Street and alteration to existing vehicular access.
9. B06/01245 (2006) – Planning permission refused for the erection of 2 no. detached dwellings. Alterations to existing vehicular access and parking area.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

10. **PPS1** - Delivering Sustainable Development
11. **PPS 3** - Housing

PLANNING POLICIES

12. The following Development Plan policies are applicable to the proposal:
 - **HS02 & HS03** - (Villages)
 - **HS27** - (Housing Density and Type)
 - **HS28** - (Infilling and Groups of Dwellings)
 - **HS30** - (Design)
 - **HS32** - (Public Open Space – Developer Contributions)
 - **CN01** - (General Design)
 - **TP15** - (Parking Standards)

This report only includes policy references. For further details please see Page 4.

OBSERVATIONS

13. PC – Object for the following reasons;
 - Incorrect depiction on the plans of No.5 High Street.
 - No.3 High Street can only be accessed via a gate in the wall off the car parking area.
 - The existing dwellings (the Stables) would be adversely impacted by overshadowing and through reduction of their gardens.
 - The lack of quality recreational space for the new dwellings.
 - The door levels shown on the elevations could not be achieved due to the sloping ground level.
 - No discussions have taken place with the occupiers of No.9 High Street
 - Parking provision is not sufficient and could lead to further parking on High Street.
14. LHA – No objections, subject to conditions.
15. EA – No response received.

REPRESENTATIONS

16. Four letters of objection have been received which make the following points:
 - Traffic increase/congestion along High Street
 - Vibration from large vehicles using the access
 - Construction noise
 - Vehicle safety/pedestrian conflict at access
 - Parking provision is inadequate
 - Increased parking in High Street
 - Will parking spaces for neighbouring properties be achieved by legal agreement?
 - Infill development is inappropriate
 - Loss of views
 - Potential overlooking from velux windows
 - Loss of daylight to windows.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

17. The site lies within the defined built-up area and in planning policy terms there is no objection to the principle of additional residential development in this location. Indeed Government Guidance (PPS3) seeks to promote the development of previously developed land and to make efficient use of such land by developing at higher densities that have hitherto been the case, subject to local character and identity being preserved.

Layout/Impact on Pattern of Development

18. The prevailing pattern of development in the area is for frontage development onto High Street, with some estate development to the rear. However, this site currently hosts three dwellings towards the rear (eastern) edge of the site. A large works building (converted maltings) also lies to the rear of frontage properties to the north of the site.
19. The proposed form of development, at a 90° angle to the frontage plots and to the cottages at the rear, is not something that would normally be supported if the existing cottages were not in existence. However, the position of these cottages to the rear of the frontage development gives this site a unique relationship in this part of Sproughton. The proposed dwellings have been sited so as to remain behind the visible facade of the cottages that exists when viewed from High Street. The proposed dwellings would have little impact on the street scene and would lie adjacent to the works building. In this respect, their siting and location is such that would be unlikely to cause any particular detriment to the pattern of development that currently exists.

Highways/Parking

20. The Local Highway Authority (LHA) objected to the previous application for two dwellings on the site due to the sub-standard visibility at the highway junction. It was noted at that time that one dwelling could be provided on this site, subject to access layout improvements and off-street parking being provided for properties to the front. In relation to the current proposal the LHA have indicated that they have no objection to the proposed development subject to access improvements being undertaken. These improvements have been incorporated into this scheme.
21. Thirteen parking spaces are to be provided within the site, which would lie along the southern boundary in an area already used for parking of vehicles. A further space is provided to the rear of No.5 High Street. This level of parking is in excess of what would be required by the Parking Standards. However, the scheme for the conversion of the cottages which was approved in 1998 also provided a large number of spaces on the site. The level of parking provision currently proposed would not therefore be excessive in comparison with the earlier scheme nor would it be "parking dominated" as the spaces are obscured from view.
22. The applicant has been asked to clarify the access arrangements into the site and to identify the proposed works to the walls which form the entrance to the site. The large brick pier to the left side of the access will be removed along with the planting beds, increasing the access width.

Amenity

23. With reference again to the previous refusal of permission on this site, the two plots previously proposed were located either side of the access way. There were issues in respect of the location of the plot to the south side of the site in respect of its proximity to a significant Horse Chestnut tree in the rear garden of No.9 High Street. The siting of the dwelling, its orientation and its relationship to the gardens of neighbouring properties gave rise to significant concerns with regards to the loss of amenity to the occupiers of those neighbouring properties. Further, the levels of amenity space provided to the refused dwellings was significantly less than that now proposed.

24. The siting of the proposed semi-detached properties would mean that the rear aspects would face the commercial building at the north of the site. The front aspects would face onto the parking area and would be some distance from the gardens to properties facing High Street. There are some existing windows (part clear-glazed, part obscure glazed) within the rear elevation of the works building. There will be some overshadowing of these windows through the proposed dwellings. However, given that this is a commercial enterprise, the loss of light is not considered to be such that would warrant refusal of the application.

Design

25. The building has been designed to relate to the existing cottages. The simple form, shallow depth and detailed fenestration will provide a form of development that will be in keeping with the existing development in this site. In considering development of this nature, it is clear that the existing views of the cottages that exist from High Street should be preserved. As the main vista here is towards plots B and C of these cottages, it is clear that the location of the new dwellings to the north side of the site will ensure that this vista remains unaltered.
22. The design and detailing of the dwellings would require that good quality materials and finish need to be achieved. This is particularly so when taking into account the character and finish of the cottages.

Public Open Space

23. Policy HS32 requires the applicant/developer to either provide 10% of the application site as public open space (where agreed in advance with the Local Planning Authority) or financial contributions towards the upgrade/expansion of existing Local Authority maintained areas of public open space away from the site. In this case, the provision of 10% of the application site is not a suitable option given the small size of the site (which will not provide a useable area of open space). The applicants have been advised of the need to enter into a legal agreement and have indicated that this will be submitted shortly.

REASON FOR APPROVAL

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with local plan policies HS02, HS03 and HS27 given the existing exception to the general pattern of development in the locality. The scheme provides an acceptable level of parking and, by virtue of the siting and orientation of the dwellings, will ensure that the amenity of neighbouring premises is not harmed. The proposal also achieves widening of the existing vehicular access, to ensure that highway safety is not jeopardised.

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) That, the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to secure a Planning Obligation Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, to secure:
- Financial contribution towards Public Open Space provision
- (2) That, subject to the completion of the planning obligation in Resolution (1) above being secured the Chief Planning Control Officer be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:
- Materials
 - As required by the Local Highway Authority
 - Provision and retention of vehicle parking and manoeuvring areas.
 - Landscaping scheme
 - Removal of permitted development rights for extensions and outbuildings.

- (3) That, in the event of the planning obligation referred to in Resolution (2) above not being secured, the Chief Planning Control Officer be authorised to refuse planning permission for the following reasons:
- Inadequate provision for public open space being contrary to Policy HS32 and PPG17.