

ALPHETON – LAND AND BUILDINGS AT ALPHETON MILL, BRIDGE STREET

Submission of details under O.P.P B/03/00696/OUT –siting, design and the external appearance of, and the landscaping of the site for the erection of 2 no. detached dwellings with associated garaging.

Applicant: A.R.Clarke (Builders) Ltd

Case Officer: Mrs. Christine Thurlow

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BACKGROUND

1. The site benefits from outline planning permission for the erection of two detached dwellings on the site. Access was the only matter agreed as part of this submission with all other matters reserved for future consideration. The outline was granted subject to conditions, of which condition 7 required the submission of boundary treatments concurrently with the reserved matter submission.

SITE

2. The land and buildings lie in Bridge Street, close to the A134. Alpheton Mill House is the principal Listed Building (Grade II\*) within this group.
3. There are several small buildings on the site, none of them being of any age or historic interest. They appear to be used for storage, particularly of cinematographic equipment, and there is evidence of repair of this equipment taking place also.
4. The vehicular access to the site (shared with the Mill, the Mill House and an adjacent brick and flint former barn) from the A134 has limited visibility. Traffic speed is generally high, despite a recently introduced 40 mph speed restriction.
5. The site is close to a river and as such is within the identified Flood Plain. The site also lies within the Special Landscape Area.

PROPOSAL

6. The application seeks approval for reserved matters pursuant to outline approval B/03/00696/OUT. The submission provides the details of the siting, design and external appearance of two detached dwellings and associated garaging and the landscaping and boundary treatment for the development.
7. Plot one is proposed to be sited 50 metres back within the plot with garaging positioned in front of the dwelling adjacent to the north site boundary. This dwelling would essentially have an L shaped footprint with residential garden beyond the rear elevation into the west area of the site.
8. Plot two would be sited adjacent to the west elevation of the existing barn that fronts Bridge Street and have a smaller garden area than plot one. The garaging for this dwelling would be opposite on the south site boundary with Mill House.

9. Access is proposed as approved under the outline consent from the A134 with the existing access/right of way and turning area being utilised.
10. Landscaping proposals include the removal of four trees on the north boundary, the retention of the large group of trees to the western area of the site and new planting to the south boundary and around the proposed development.

### RELEVANT HISTORY

11. There are numerous planning and listed building applications relating to Alpheton Mill House, the Mill and the brick and flint barn located on the frontage to the site. The specific planning history relating to this part of site (“the Danish Piggery and associated buildings”) and relevant to consideration of this application are:-
12. 1972- Established Use Certificate (S/72/959/M)
13. 1994 – Outline planning permission refused for works in connection with the connection with the change of use of the building from a Class B1 to residential (B/94/00161/OUT) on grounds of being tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling and contrary to countryside policies.
14. 2001- outline planning permission refused for works in connection with the conversion of a commercial workshop to a dwelling (B/00/1364/OUT) on grounds of being tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling and contrary to countryside policies, unacceptable consolidation of sporadic development and the development would not preserve or enhance the setting of important listed buildings on the site. A subsequent appeal was DISMISSED.
15. The brick and flint barn immediately to the north of the application site, previously used for storage and as a workshop, has been the subject of several planning permission for residential conversion, the most recent being in 2002 (B/01/01592/FUL).
16. 2004 – Outline planning permission granted for the erection of 2 no. detached dwellings with associated garaging. (B/03/00696/OUT refers)

### POLICY

#### **PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development**

17. Planning policies should seek to protect and enhance the quality and amenity value of the countryside. A high level of protection should be given to landscapes, wildlife habitats and natural resources.
18. Reduce the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development.

#### **PPG3 – Housing**

19. To promote more sustainable patterns of development and make better use of previously developed land, the focus for additional housing should be in existing towns and cities.

20. Not all development can take place within urban areas. How much development should take place outside existing areas will depend on the overall need for housing land, the capacity of existing urban areas to accommodate additional housing and the efficiency with which land is developed. Where development has to take place outside urban areas, the Government is looking to local planning authorities to utilise the most sustainable option.

### **PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas**

21. Away from large urban areas, planning authorities should focus most new development in or near to local service centres where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together.
22. Local planning authorities should strictly control new house building in the countryside away from established settlements or from areas allocated for housing in development plans.
23. Paragraph 10 of PPS7 makes clear that isolated new houses in the countryside require special justification for planning permission to be granted. One of the few circumstances where residential development may be justified is when accommodation is required to enable agricultural, forestry and other certain full-time workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work.

### **PPG 13 (Transport)**

24. Local planning authorities should make sufficient land available either within or adjoining existing villages to meet the needs of local people but villages will "only be suitable locations for accommodating significant additional housing" where it can be demonstrated that additional housing will support local services, such as schools or shops, which could become unviable without some modest growth (this may particularly be the case where the village has been identified as a local service centre in the development plan), additional housing is needed to meet local needs, and the development can be designed sympathetically and laid out in keeping with the character of the village.

### **PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment)**

25. PPG15 was issued in September 1994 and remains the main document for Government advice and guidance to Local Planning Authorities on the operation of the planning system in relation to the historic environment.

### **Suffolk Structure Plan 2001**

- ENV2 (Conversion of buildings)
- ENV3 (Design Standards)
- ENV4 (Protection of the Countryside)
- ENV6 (New Housing in the Countryside)
- CS1 (Sustainable Development), and
- CS3 (Location of new Housing Development)
- ECON2 (Employment Sites)

**Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 2 (2006)** the policy references below relate to the adopted version of the Local Plan - the policy numbers in some cases differ from those in the second deposit draft. Where this is the case, the previous reference number is given in brackets

- HS02 (HS03) (Villages),
- HS04 (New Residential Development in the Countryside),
- HS30 (HS14) (Design and Layouts),
- CR01 (Protection of the Countryside)
- CR04 (CR05) (Special Landscape Areas)
- CN01 (General Design & Context policy)
- CN05 (CN09) (Listed Buildings)
- CN06 (CN10) (Listed Buildings)
- EN12 (EN05) (Flood Plains)
- EM24 (EM15) (Employment Sites)

### OBSERVATIONS

26. PC – Make the following comments:
- Brick colour should be red
  - The inclusion of gates between the shared drive are the property of the Mill
  - Native trees should be planted
  - Little space between the property’s new garage and the existing garage to the Mill. There should be sufficient space for maintenance.
  - Repositioning of electricity cables should be given careful consideration
27. HoES – The proposed properties will not be served by mains foul drainage however the application gives insufficient detail to enable me to determine whether the arrangements proposed for providing independent foul drainage are adequate. As the outline consent did not include a condition requiring detailed specification of the foul drainage system and as such this matter cannot be taken into consideration when determining the current application and is included as an advisory comment only.
28. CHA – Recommend standard condition for manoeuvring and parking.
29. EA – No objection
30. One letter of objection received making the following points:-
- A dense hedge should follow the border between the properties rather than a close boarded fence. The fence on the rear border will make the garden feel boxed and urbanised.
  - The plans refer to “new gates” which open onto our property. These will interfere with the use of our garage and entry and exit from our driveway. These should be withdrawn from the application.
  - The positioning of the electricity pole onto our border is out of the question.

- The positioning of the garage for Plot 2 will necessitate the demolition of the existing garage which has an overlapping rainwater channel with our own garage. Therefore the roof of our garage will need to be made complete and self contained with its own guttering without expense to ourselves.
- Legal clarification should be sought regarding the re-surfacing of the drive.
- The materials used should be sympathetic to the surroundings.
- There is no mention of water treatment/sewerage and the water treatment plant in our property is not for the use of the Mill, the Mill House and the Old Barn, but NOT of the proposed development.

## ASSESSMENT

31. The main issues to consider in the assessment of the application are:

- Siting, including the relationship to the Listed Building;
- Design and external appearance;
- Landscaping;
- Relationship to adjoining dwellings.

32. The principle of development and access to the site has been established through the outline permission and are not for consideration as part of this submission.

### **Siting, including the relationship to the Listed Building**

33. The key policies pertinent to the consideration of the design elements of the proposals are ENV3 of the Structure Plan and HS30 and CN01 of the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 2 (Second Deposit Draft). These policies seek well-designed layouts that provide an appropriate scale, density, form, parking and garden provision. With regard to Listed Buildings policies CN05 and CN06 seek proposal that do not adversely impact on the character or setting of Listed Buildings.

34. In terms of site layout the siting of the plots proposed makes the best use of the site area. In particular the position of plot two adjacent to the barn groups built form and this plot fronts the access into the site. Plot one is orientated such that it would be glimpsed from the street scene and provides an appropriate vista when entering the site.

35. The position of the two buildings is also appropriate in relation to the principal listed building Mill House, which is adjacent to the site to the south east. The siting proposed does not impinge on the primary views to from or of this building and as such is acceptable as it would not impact on the character or setting of the listed building.

### **Design and external appearance**

36. The key policies pertinent to the consideration of the design elements of the proposals are ENV3 of the Structure Plan and HS30 and CN01 of the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 2 (Second Deposit Draft). These policies seek well-designed layouts that provide an appropriate scale, density, form, parking and garden provision.

37. The properties proposed would have heights of 7.7m (Plot 1) and 7.4m (Plot 2) to the ridge height. Both properties are two storey but the built form is broken down with both dwellings being formed from two or more elements. The front elevations are treated with small pitch roof dormers that articulate the roof, roof pitches are 50 degrees and window and other detailing in of an appropriate vernacular approach.
38. The applicant proposes materials of brick, feather edged weatherboard, clay tiles and pantiles, slates and the detail of these can be controlled through the submission of samples by condition.
39. Overall the design and external appearance of the two dwellings and garages proposed is considered to be acceptable and accord with the policies of the development plan.

### **Landscaping**

40. Policy CN01 of the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.2 (2006) seeks development to retain and incorporate existing site features and propose appropriate hard and soft landscaping.
41. The submission includes frontage planting around the new dwellings and garages and a belt of five trees along the south boundary. In the west area of the site landscape features are being retained and four trees are to be removed along the north boundary. The plan does not include detail of species and density of planting and the applicant has been asked to provide further information on these issues to update members at the committee meeting.

### **Relationship to adjoining dwellings**

42. The key policies to consider are ENV3 of the Suffolk Structure Plan 2001 and policies HS01, HS36 and CN01 of the Babergh Local Plan, Alteration No.2 (2006). These state that housing developments will normally be granted planning permission provided they have no materially adverse effects on residential amenity or the environment.
43. The positioning, orientation and internal layout of the proposed dwellings is such that the submission cannot be resisted on the basis of loss of amenity to neighbouring residential properties through loss of light or overlooking. The closest neighbour is the dwelling Mill House and this is 34m from Plot 2 and 45m from Plot 1 and the new dwellings will be located to the north of this property.
44. There are a number of issues raised within the observations that require comment. Issues regarding boundary ownership, legal rights over drive re surfacing and making good of the party wall of the garage to Mill House are civil issues that fall outside of the remit of the planning process. The issue of drainage is picked up through condition 5 of the outline permissions, which requires the details of drainage for the new dwellings to be submitted before development commences. The treatment of the south site boundary with a fence is not inappropriate however the applicant has been asked to consider a hedge for the stretch of the boundary up to the new planting and to consider deleting the proposed gates that open onto Mill Houses property. Members will be updated on these issues verbally.

## RECOMMENDATION

- A. Subject to the submission of satisfactory landscaping details that the Head of Planning (Control) be authorised to approve the reserved matters , subject to the following conditions –
- Samples of materials to be submitted.

Otherwise:

- B. Withhold approval (as may be appropriate) – Insufficient detail of landscaping scheme.

## DECISION

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