

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE – 20th SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

(Author: Nick Moys, Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects))

HARLING: PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, KENNINGHALL ROAD

Applicant: Heritage Developments Ltd

Reference: 3PL/2010/0596/F

DEFERRED ITEM REPORT

1. This report concerns an application for full planning permission for residential development on land off Kenninghall Road, Harling. The proposal was considered by Committee on 1st September 2010, when it was resolved to defer the application to allow further amendments to be sought in respect of the design and layout. Members indicated support for the general principle of the development.
2. Amended plans have been submitted which show the relocation of part of the proposed open space to improve surveillance, increased space for landscaping to the site perimeter, additional landscaping to car parking areas, and a revision house type design for the proposed flats on plots 23-26 and 29-32.
3. It is considered that the proposed changes address all of the concerns raised previously about house type design, integration and safety of open space areas and the need for additional landscaping to the site boundary and around parking areas. The proposal is now considered to be acceptable in design and layout terms.
4. Additional supporting information has also been submitted in the form of an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment Report. Further comments have been sought from Norfolk Landscape Archaeology.
5. **RECOMMENDATION** That planning permission is granted subject to conditions and the completion of the proposed legal agreement. Recommended conditions would include the following: external materials, landscaping, boundary treatments, access and parking, drainage, Sustainable Homes Code 4, construction management, archaeology and contamination investigation.

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(Author: Nick Moys, Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects))

HARLING: PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, KENNINGHALL ROAD

Applicant: Heritage Developments Ltd

Reference: 3PL/2010/0596/F

Summary – This report concerns a planning application for residential development on the edge of Harling. The proposal raises issues relating to planning policy and impact on the character of the surrounding area. Discussions with the applicant are on-going on these matters. A verbal recommendation will be made.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report concerns an application for full planning permission for residential development on land off Kenninghall Road, Harling. The development proposed would comprise the erection of 40 new dwellings, an area of public open space and the construction of a new access/estate road. The residential scheme would comprise 6 x 2 bedroom houses, 8 x 2 bedroom flats, 11 x 3 bedroom houses and 6 x 4-5 bedroom dwellings. All of the dwellings would be of 2 storeys. Sixteen units of affordable housing are proposed as part of the development.

The application site is located on the eastern fringe of the village of Harling. The site comprises a broadly rectangular shaped parcel of grassland extending to around 2.1 hectares. The site is adjoined by existing housing development, the local school playing field and open countryside.

The application is supported by a Design & Access Statement, Arboricultural Implications Assessment, Landscape Appraisal, Ecological Survey, Flood Risk Assessment and Contamination Land Assessment. A Section 106 Agreement has been drafted which would provide for affordable housing, the provision of open space, and contributions towards recreation, education and library services.

2. KEY DECISION

This is not a key decision.

3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The following Council priorities are relevant to this report:

- A safe and healthy environment
- A well planned place to live and work

4. CONSULTATIONS

Harling Parish Council has raised no objection in principle to the application, but does have concerns about density and the amount of open space proposed.

The Highway Authority has raised no objection, but has requested a number of detailed changes to the road and access layout.

Norfolk County Council has requested that contributions be secured towards local education (£192,526) and library services (£2,400).

The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the application subject to conditions relating to surface water drainage, contaminated land and foundation design.

Anglian Water has indicated that foul water from the development could be accommodated within the existing sewerage system.

Norfolk Landscape Archaeology has asked that further information is provided in order to enable the archaeological interest of the site to be evaluated. The site falls within an area of archaeological potential, being on or adjacent to the projected course of a roman road.

Norfolk Police have raised no objection to the application

The Council's Housing Enabling & Projects Officer is content with the overall level of affordable housing proposed, but has some concerns about the mix and phasing of the provision.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer has raised objections to the application on the grounds that the scheme would not address satisfactorily the requirements of PPS3. Particular concerns are raised that the scale of development proposed would conflict with the Council's overall spatial strategy which proposes an allocation of 50 dwellings for Harling (planning permission has already been granted for 25 dwellings). The mix of housing proposed has also been questioned.

Representations have been received from a number of local residents raising concerns about the scale of development, harm to the rural character of the area and increased traffic.

5. POLICY

At a national level, policies set out in PPS 3 *Housing*, PPS 7 *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*, and PPG 13 *Transport* are particularly relevant. The application site falls outside the defined Settlement Boundary for Harling, as set out in the Proposals Maps accompanying the adopted Core Strategy (rolled forward from the outgoing Local Plan). The Core Strategy proposes an allocation of 50 dwellings for Harling. The application site is shown as the preferred site for residential development in the Site Specifics Preferred Options consultation. Two other sites are indicated as reasonable alternatives. The following policies contained in the Core Strategy & Development Control Policies DPD are relevant: Policy CP1 (Housing), Policy CP14 (Sustainable Rural Communities), Policy DC2 (Housing), Policy DC4 (Affordable Housing), Policy DC11 (Open Space), Policy DC12 (Trees), Policy DC14 (Energy Generation and Efficiency) and Policy DC16 (Design).

6. ASSESSMENT

The principal issues raised by the application concern: i) planning policy matters and ii) likely effects on the character of the area.

Policy

The application site lies outside the Settlement Boundary for Harling, and accordingly the proposal would conflict with Core Strategy Policies DC2 and CP14, and countryside protection policies set out in PPS 7. Whilst the application site has been identified in the Site Specifics Preferred Options consultation as a preferred site for

development, given the stage that this proposal has reached in the LDF process, and bearing in mind the mixed local response to its proposed allocation, it is considered that only limited weight can be given to this factor.

Notwithstanding the conflict with current local policy, the proposed development must also be assessed against national planning policy for housing. PPS 3 states that where a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land cannot be demonstrated, favourable consideration should be given to housing proposals if they address satisfactorily the criteria set out in PPS 3, particularly those contained in paragraph 69. These criteria relate to matters such as design quality, housing mix, environmental sustainability, the suitability of the site for housing and the effective use of land efficiently. Proposals are also required not to undermine wider policy objectives.

The proposal would address satisfactorily a number of the criteria set out in PPS 3 paragraph 69. The development would be closely related physically to the existing built form of the town, and would be within easy reach of the village centre and local facilities/services. Subject to appropriate landscaping, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in a significant visual intrusion into the rural setting of the village. With the exception of elements of the proposed affordable housing, it is considered that the layout and design of the scheme is generally well conceived, and subject to some minor design modifications, would create a high quality residential development. It is considered that satisfactory access to the development can be achieved and that the proposal would not result in significant traffic problems elsewhere. On site open space is proposed in accordance with the requirements of Policy DC11, together with a financial contribution to improve off-site sports facilities. The development would be constructed to meet Code 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, exceeding the requirements of Policy DC14.

To set against these positive factors, the proposals do give rise to concerns about the overall scale of development proposed in Harling and potential conflicts with overall spatial vision for the area. Permission has already been granted for 25 dwellings outside the Settlement Boundary on land off Lopham Road. In combination with these approvals, the current application would exceed the proposed 50 dwelling allocation by some margin. Whilst the 50 dwelling allocation is seen as a ceiling on the level of new development, it is considered nevertheless that some reduction in the scale of the current proposal would be necessary in order to achieve broad consistency with the Core Strategy. In its current form the proposal conflicts with the spatial vision for the area and would therefore not qualify for favourable consideration under PPS3.

Discussions with the applicant on policy matters are on-going. In addition, further information is required in relation to archaeological interests in order to enable the suitability of the site for development to be assessed. Further consideration of certain detailed aspects of the proposals in relation to layout, architectural design, housing mix and open space provision would also be beneficial. Discussions with the applicant on these matters are underway.

Subject to a reduction in the overall scale of the proposed development, it is considered that, given the current housing land supply shortfall, the balance of arguments would, in principle, favour the proposed development.

Impact on local character

Whilst the proposal would extend the built footprint of the village into open countryside, it is not considered that the development would have a significantly

adverse effect on the rural setting of this part of Harling. Views into the site are limited by a combination of existing hedgerows, nearby development and the surrounding landform. The main impact of the development would be experience from the Kenninghall Road. The development would be visible on the approach to the village, but, seen in the context of a patchwork of small fields and softened by existing landscape features, the landscape impact would not be significant. Additional landscaping and reinforcement of existing boundaries would help to further assimilate the development into the wider rural landscape. Closer to, the visual effects would naturally be greater, but would again be mitigated to an extent by the retention of existing hedging and replacement planting where highway works would require hedge removal. The construction of a new access and footway would alter the existing street scene, but these features would not be out of keeping with the general pattern of existing development nearby.

The proposed houses would be traditional in architectural style and detailing, and arranged to create varied and attractive street scenes. External materials would reflect those used elsewhere in the locality, including red brickwork, coloured render, timber boarding, clay pantiles and slates. The relatively low housing density proposed (20 DPH) would give the development a relatively spacious feel, reflecting the edge of village location and the general character of the locality. The proposed grouping of houses around a central open space would provide a focal point for the development and would help to create a strong sense of place. Amendments to the detailed design of the proposal are being sought in order to secure a consistently high standard of architecture and to ensure that car parking areas and the affordable housing are fully integrated into the scheme.

Other matters

Concerns have been raised locally about the impact of the development on highway safety. Reference is made to increased congestion on Kenninghall Road, particularly at school times. However, given the current usage of this road and the extent of existing development which it serves, it is not considered that the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on traffic conditions. The Highway Authority has not raised any concerns about the capacity of the surrounding road network.

Further information has been requested in response to the concerns raised by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology.

7. RECOMMENDATION

To follow.