

BRECKLAND COUNCIL - DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 15-10-2007

ITEM	10	RECOMMENDATION : APPROVAL
REF NO:	3PL/2007/1341/F	
LOCATION:	SWAFFHAM Land to rear of Conservative Club London Road	APPN TYPE: Full POLICY: In Settlemnt Bndry ALLOCATION: Open Space CONS AREA: Y TPO: N LB GRADE: Adjacent Grade 2
APPLICANT:	Equity Holding and Investments c/o KKM Architects 81 Maygrove Road	
AGENT:	dwa planning 6 Middlemarch Road Dereham	
PROPOSAL:	21 dwellings for retirement occupancy	

KEY ISSUES

1. Loss of bowling green
2. Layout/design
3. Residential amenity
4. Access

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

A development of 22 sheltered dwellings is proposed. The scheme would include 6 houses and 16 apartments. Access is proposed via an existing access drive onto Beech Close.

SITE AND LOCATION

The application site comprises a rectangular parcel of land, extending to 0.32 hectare, located to the rear of Swaffham Conservative Club and close to the town centre. The land was formerly used as a bowling green. The Conservative Club is a listed building. The site falls within the Swaffham Conservation Area. The site is adjoined by residential properties and a doctors' surgery.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

Planning permission for 22 retirement dwellings was refused in September 2006. Permission was refused on grounds of overdevelopment, poor access and loss of the bowling green. A subsequent appeal was dismissed in March 2007. The reasons for the dismissal of the appeal were loss of the bowling green and harm to the amenity of neighbouring property. However, the appeal inspector concluded that the access arrangements were satisfactory taking into account previous uses, and that the proposal would not result in an overdevelopment of the site.

BRECKLAND COUNCIL - DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 15-10-2007

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

PPS1, PPS3 and PPG15 are considered relevant to this application.

CONSULTATIONS

SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Objection

The comments of Swaffham Town Council are to object to this application on grounds of overdevelopment, access and lack of parking spaces and extra traffic.

HIGHWAY AUTHORITY - has objected to the application on the grounds that the development would intensify the use of a substandard access.

OPEN SPACES SOCIETY - has raised concerns about the impact of the development on an adjacent public footpath.

NORFOLK POLICE - have raised concerns about proposed car parking arrangements and footpath links.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of objection have been received from a number of local residents, raising concerns about increased traffic congestion, poor access arrangements, impact on the existing footpath, loss of amenity and loss of the bowling green.

BRECKLAND COUNCIL - DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 15-10-2007

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- * This application is presented to Development Control Committee as it is a major development.
- * The March 2007 appeal decision referred to above rejected the proposal for retirement housing on the grounds that adequate provision had not been made for a replacement recreational facility for the bowling green, and that the development would harm the amenities of neighbours. The current application seeks to overcome these objections.

LOSS OF BOWLING GREEN:

- * The proposed development would result in the loss of a disused bowling green. The bowling green ceased use some time ago due to lack of support. Given that there appears to be little, if any, local demand for a replacement bowling green, it is considered that, in this instance, a commuted sum payment to fund improved recreational facilities elsewhere in the locality would be appropriate.
- * Following discussions with the Council's Senior Leisure Manager, an offer of £40,000 has been made by the applicant (this compares to a previous offer of £15,000). Subject to further discussions with the Town Council, it is considered that this contribution could be directed towards planned improvements at the Recreation Ground.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- * The application site is surrounded by existing residential properties. Whilst the development of an enclosed urban site such as this will inevitably have some impact on neighbours, it is not considered the development will result in serious harm in this respect. Following the dismissed appeal, changes have been made to the design of the development, the arrangement of upper floor windows and boundary screening in order to address the appeal inspector's concerns about overlooking. On this basis, the proposal is now considered to be acceptable.

OTHER MATTERS

- * Considerable objection has been raised locally about the impact of the proposal on highway safety. The existing site access onto Beech Close is restricted in width and affords poor visibility for emerging vehicles. The access is immediately adjacent to a doctors' surgery and a community centre, on a section of road that suffers from parking congestion at busy times.
- * Whilst the access to the proposed development is clearly substandard, it is argued in support of the application that the proposal would not cause any worsening of traffic conditions when account is taken of existing and previous activities. The site currently has space for approximately 50-60 cars. This would be reduced by the proposal to 35 spaces - 15 spaces for the Conservative Club and 20 spaces for the new housing. In addition to the use of the car park in connection with the Conservative Club and bowling green, the car park has in the past been used informally by shoppers and parents collecting children from the nearby school. With the exception of the Conservative Club use, this use of the car park would cease if the development were to proceed. Given this situation the appeal inspector concluded that the proposal would not create any unacceptable risks to road users. In the circumstances, it is considered that it would be very difficult to sustain an objection to the proposal on highway safety grounds, notwithstanding the concerns of the Highway Authority, the Town Council and local residents.
- * In terms of design matters, it is considered that the layout and appearance of the proposed development would relate satisfactorily to its surroundings. The buildings would be of traditional design, using local materials including red brick, flint and clay pantiles. The development would be limited to 2 stories in height to respect its surroundings.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Permission

DC131

BRECKLAND COUNCIL - DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 15-10-2007

CONDITIONS

- 3007** Full Permission Time Limit (3 years)
- 3046** In accordance with submitted plans
- 3106** External materials and samples to be approved
- 3109** Flint work panel to be approved
- 3140** Prior approval of slab level
- 3304** No P.D. rights for extensions, sheds, etc
- 3405** Fencing/walls - details and implementation
- 3408** Landscaping - details and implementation
- 3406** Surfacing - details and construction
- 3712** Access and car park laid out prior to use
- 3549** Age limit for occupancy
- 3992** NOTE S106 re commuted payment for recreational prov.
- 3998** NOTE: Reasons for Approval