

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE 11 AUGUST 2008

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER

(Author: James Stone, Senior Planning Officer)

ASHILL: GOOSE GREEN

PROPOSAL: SEVEN RESIDENTIAL UNITS IN 3 BLOCKS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS AND CAR PARKING

APPLICANT: Peddars Way Housing Association

REFERENCE: 3PL/2008/0214/F

Summary – This report concerns a planning application by the housing association for the development of 7 affordable houses on 0.16ha of land at Goose Green Ashill. An area of formalised parking is also to be provided for existing occupants of properties that abut the Green. It is recommended that conditional planning permission be granted.

1. Introduction

The application site falls within the village Settlement Boundary and the scheme is considered to be in general conformity with the requirements of saved policy HOU.4 of the Breckland District Local Plan. The development will however require the felling of a Black Poplar which is the subject of a recently served Tree Preservation Order. In addition a number of local residents have raised concerns in respect of loss of trees and other matters. Whilst the loss of the protected tree is regrettable it is considered that on balance the benefits resulting from the development should outweigh its continued protection. No significant harm will result to neighbouring amenity.

Consultations

NCC Highways have raised no objection subject to conditions relating to vehicular access, on-site parking/turning and the landscaping layout for the car park on The Green.

The Council's tree and countryside officer would prefer the Black Poplar tree to remain but stated that if planning permission is granted a condition should be used to ensure the provision of 2 semi-mature trees on The Green in substitution.

Ashill Parish Council have expressed concerns regarding the narrow access to the site and wanted the plans to be corrected to show the correct size and layout of lay-by parking to the front of the present cottages on The Green.

The Council's contaminated land officer has no objection to the proposal subject to a desk study/site investigation condition and a precautionary condition.

There have been six letters of objection from local residents, of which one letter had 4 signatories. The objections relate to overdevelopment, the loss of garden land and protected trees at the rear of several properties along Goose Green along with loss of privacy, insufficient access to the site, inadequate on-site turning and increased traffic. Concerns were also raised regarding the design of the new properties, a lack of facilities in the village and the inadequate size of local schools to provide sufficient spaces for an increasing population. Furthermore, the issue of contamination on land

to the rear of Goose Green was raised along with questions surrounding the ability of the local drainage system to cope with a new residential development. It should also be noted that questions have been raised about the accuracy of the plans with regard to neighbouring boundaries.

Policy

Relevant national planning policies are set out in PPS 1 *delivering Sustainable Development*, PPS 3 *Housing* and PPS 7 *Rural Areas*.

Saved Local Plan Policy HOU.4 is directly relevant to the proposed development and states that ' WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES OF THE VILLAGES IDENTIFIED IN APPENDIX 2 FOR INDIVIDUAL DWELLINGS OR SMALL GROUPS OF HOUSES, PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR INDIVIDUAL DWELLINGS OR SMALL GROUPS OF HOUSES WHICH WILL ENHANCE THE FORM AND CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE AND ITS SETTING.'

Saved Local Plan Policy TRA.5 is also of relevance and states that development should not be approved if it would be detrimental to highway safety or local residential amenity.

Assessment

The principle of residential development is acceptable on the proposed site as it lies within the settlement boundary of Ashill. The scheme provides adequate defensible amenity space for future occupiers as well as sufficient parking spaces for future residents. Furthermore, the lack of parking for the affordable cottages that lie adjacent to The Green will be addressed by the provision of a visitor parking scheme that would provide 6 spaces. Bollards and landscaping would ensure that the remaining green is protected from further encroachment by vehicles. The Norfolk County Council Highways officer has not objected to the access to the proposed scheme or to increased traffic levels in the locality.

The houses are of a scale and height that would not be out of character with the surrounding area. The dwellings are not located in a prominent position as they would be set back from Goose Green by approximately 30 metres. The proposed houses would be two-storey, gable-ended, properties and would therefore be sympathetic to the design of the adjacent cottages along Goose Green. A condition will ensure that all facing materials are agreed prior to the commencement of development in order to safeguard the visual amenity of the area.

The proposal would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of the surrounding area and would be located at a sufficient distance from neighbouring properties to avoid any overshadowing issues. No significant overlooking will result to neighbouring properties and where necessary obscured glazing will be used. Additionally, a further condition would ensure that the permission of the Local Planning Authority would have to be sought before any further windows could be installed in this elevation at first floor level. It should also be noted that the proposal would leave the existing cottages along Goose Green with adequate rear gardens.

The proposal would involve the loss of a Black Poplar tree. Although this tree has recently been made the subject of a TPO it is not located in a prominent location and is barely visible from the adjacent highway. However, to mitigate the loss of this tree a condition would ensure that 2 semi-mature trees would be planted on The Green.

The proposal would provide much needed affordable housing for the village of Ashill. The housing needs survey (2003) identified that 59 affordable units were required in the parish of Ashill over the next 5 years. This is also underpinned by the district wide housing need survey (2007) which showed an annual need of 100 affordable units within the sub-ward, of which Ashill is a part. It should be noted that Ashill benefits from numerous local services including a public house, a primary school and a post office.

Issues surrounding contamination of the site were raised by numerous local residents. This issue will be addressed by the completion of a desk study/site investigation.

Conclusion

The proposal would provide much needed affordable housing in the village of Ashill, whilst the loss of the Black Poplar being offset by a planting scheme on The Green. The proposal would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding properties and would provide satisfactory living accommodation for future occupiers.

Recommendation

It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions (to include matters relating to design, parking, access, landscaping, contamination and residential amenity).