
MAIN CASE

Reference No: 15/00550/FUL

Proposal: Construction of pair semi-detached affordable housing

Site Address: Land north of Sadler Way, Stretham, Cambridgeshire, CB6 3QZ

Applicant: A J Lee Developments Ltd

Case Officer: Andrew Phillips Senior Planning Officer

Parish: Stretham

Ward:

Ward Councillor/s: Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor Charles Roberts

Date Received: 22 May 2015

**Expiry Date: 9
November 2015**

[Q102]

1.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 Members are requested to Approve this application subject to the recommended conditions below and the signing of a S106 Agreement. The conditions can be read in full in the attached Appendix 1.

1. Approved plans
2. Time limit
3. Parking/turning areas maintained free of obstruction
4. Materials
5. Tree Protection
6. Landscape Condition
7. Landscape maintenance
8. Contamination
9. Unexpected Contamination
10. Construction Times
11. Biodiversity
12. Surface water

2.0 **SUMMARY OF APPLICATION**

2.1 The full planning application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online

service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambbs.gov.uk/online-applications/>.
Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, in the application file.

- 2.2 Planning permission is being sought to erect two semi-detached affordable houses at the end of a cul-de-sac known as Sadler Way. The application was amended on the 9 September 2015 in order to revise the design and to provide a Heritage Statement.
- 2.3 This application has been called in by Cllr Bill Hunt who wants the application to benefit from debate regarding the concerns of highway safety/capacity and to allow the comments of the Parish Council to be discussed.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 On the same street:
12/00551/FUL – Erection of 8 affordable homes was approved.
13/00944/VAR – Variation of condition 17 (visibility splays) of planning permission 12/00551/FUL.

Relevant major applications bringing forward affordable housing within the village:
14/00013/FUM - New development to include: 35no. New private market housing units, 15no. new affordable CLT owned housing units, new doctor's surgery, 3no. business premises, within CLT owned units and 0.24ha extension to existing cemetery was approved.

15/00986/FUM - Proposed erection of 25 residential dwellings, public open space and associated landscaping (8 affordable units) still under consideration.

4.0 THE SITE

- 4.1 The site is located outside of the village framework, but is within the conservation area and is adjacent a Grade II* Listed Building (The Old Rectory) and is near another Grade II* Listed Building (St James Church). The two proposed dwellings are located at the end of a cul-de-sac.

5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

- 5.1 The full responses are available on the Council's web site.

Stretham Parish Council - (9 July 2015) The Council objects to the proposal on the grounds of pedestrian/road safety; specifically the access onto A1123, with limited visibility and that children use the pavement affected by this development.

It is also seeking confirmation on whether the housing will be allocated to local people.

(12 October 2015) The Parish Council is extremely concerned over the pedestrian and road safety. It also seeks confirmation that the if approved the houses would be allocated for people in the immediate area.

Conservation Officer - (5 June 2015) The site is located directly behind a Grade II* Listed Building (The Old Rectory). The Heritage Statement is insufficient and must be revised in order to assess the impact on the listed building.

(16 October 2015 The applicant has added two paragraphs to state that they do not believe there will be any impact and that the existing trees on the site of The Old Rectory provide adequate screening.

This is not sufficient, the applicant has in no way shown how they have assessed their proposal in relation to the Grade II* listed building. The introduction of the two additional properties takes the building line almost directly behind the listed building and whilst there is a number of mature trees along the rear boundary, as the owner of the Rectory has pointed out that when the trees are bare in the winter, you will get views across the site.

The setting of a listed building is not always limited by a separation distance and historically, the rectory has enjoyed an open vista from the rear of the site, the garden and potentially the first floor windows. The applicant is not proposing any additional landscaping along the boundary of the site or the boundary to The Old Rectory.

Whilst the separation distance may be considerable, the introduction of two additional units so far along the boundary of The Old Rectory will ultimately alter the relationship between the listed building and its wider setting in the landscape. The applicant has made no attempt to show how this has been considered or mitigated.

It may be that by introducing additional planting and screening that this is entirely possible but there is inadequate information provided to show if this is the case.

The Conservation Officer does not believe the applicant has provided sufficient justification for them to be able to adequately assess the impact of their proposal on the setting of the listed building. Therefore consent should not be granted from a conservation viewpoint.

Waste Strategy (ECDC) - (5 June 2015) East Cambridgeshire District Council will not enter private property to collect waste or recycling. It also states that bins will need to be purchased currently at a cost of £43 per property.

Environmental Health Officer - (16 June 2015) The Environmental Health Officer notes the road to the south is of a solid construction and not loose gravel. They request conditions relating to construction/delivery times and potential contamination.

Housing Services - (2 July 2015) Is satisfied that there is a housing need to justify this exception site proposal. The Housing Register includes 35 applicants with a local connection to Stretham and this need cannot be fully met on other sites with consent or proposed in the village, or through re-lets of existing housing. The housing types and size mix proposed is suitable having regard to the Housing Register.

Requests a S106 Agreement containing several provisions to ensure the development meets and is retained as good quality affordable housing.

Senior Housing Strategy & Enabling Officer – (23/10/15) States there is a local need for both a two and three bed property.

Tree Officer – (16 October 2015) Advises that if the application is approved, a Tree Protection Plan will be required by condition as there are substantial trees neighbouring the site, which are likely to be impacted upon by this development.

There is the opportunity for some tree planting to help assimilate the development into the local landscape. The site is surrounded by large native trees and it is considered that smaller native trees and a native hedgerow would be an advantage in this location.

It is recommended that a Yew or Hazel is located in the northwest site boundary, Hawthorn at the mid north site boundary and Holly in the northeast boundary. It is, therefore, advised that a landscape and landscape maintenance conditions are added.

Local Highways Authority - (23 June 2015) The Highways Authority has no objections in principle to this application, as there would be no significant adverse effect upon the public highway.

The proposed site benefits from an existing vehicle access on to Wilburton Road. This access currently serves multiple dwellings in this private road. It is the opinion of the Highway Authority that the addition of these two proposed dwellings would have a minimal impact on the public highway.

It requests condition to ensure that the maneuvering area shall be provided and maintained in perpetuity.

Historic England - (13 July 2015) The application should be determined in accordance with nation and local policy on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

Cllr Bill Hunt - (23 September 2015) Is aware that this application is being opposed by Stretham Parish Council and also had residents relay concerns about an additional 4 cars accessing the busy A1123 visibility/safety worries. It has also been pointed out that the access to this site does not have any footpaths and already vehicles from 8 homes drive along this only access route.

There will of course be a considerable increase in traffic along the A1123 when work on the long awaited A14 upgrade starts.

Requests that this matter be dealt with by the Planning Committee as I believe it would benefit from a wider and more varied debate that committee affords.

5.2 Neighbours

The Old Rectory, High Street, Stretham - (1 July 2015) Raises concerns in regards to the continued addition to the housing along this new street, compliance with conditions on original consent, will the houses be for local people, proximity to a Grade II* building and protection of their trees.

(5 October 2015) The occupant considers the Heritage Assessment to be brief and not sufficient quality.

Considers the existing housing along Sadlers Way to be of poor architectural merit and considers that the proposal will compound the harm.

The occupant makes reference to the Community Land Trust and questions the need for additional affordable housing in the village.

6.0 The Planning Policy Context

6.1 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

GROWTH 1	Levels of housing, employment and retail growth
GROWTH 2	Locational strategy
GROWTH 3	Infrastructure requirements
GROWTH 5	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
HOU 1	Housing mix
HOU 2	Housing density
HOU 3	Affordable housing provision
HOU 4	Affordable housing exception sites
ENV 1	Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2	Design
ENV 4	Energy and water efficiency and renewable energy in construction
ENV7	Biodiversity and geology
ENV 8	Flood risk
ENV 11	Conservation Areas
ENV 12	Listed Buildings
COM 7	Transport impact
COM 8	Parking provision

6.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

Design Guide

6.3 National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Paragraph 14

7 Requiring good design

12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

7.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application are the principle, highway safety, impacts of the proposal on residential amenity, visual appearance and on the character of this historic environment

7.2 **Principle of Development**

7.3 The Council cannot at this time prove that there is a continuous 5 year supply of housing land and therefore the application must be determined on the basis of 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' as defined by paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.4 Policy HOU 4 allows for schemes for affordable housing outside of the village framework as long as there is a required local need, that it is well connected to the village and is in keeping with the local area. With the proposal complying with element of adopted policy it is considered to be in a sustainable location.

7.5 The Parish of Stretham has 35 people on the housing register; these two dwellings will be able to accommodate some of that need. The Legal Services Manager has been requested to draw up a legal agreement to ensure that local people have priority over these dwellings if approved.

7.6 It is noted that the Community Land Trust (CLT) is proposing 23 affordable units, but it is still considered that there is a need for additional affordable homes. The provision of two affordable units weighs significantly in favour of granting this application, as it would strengthen the social sustainability of the village.

7.7 **Highway Safety**

7.8 The two dwellings are located at the end of a cul-de-sac (private road). The private road connects onto the public highway of Wilburton Road (A1123).

7.9 The Local Highways Authority has stated that there is no significant harm to the users of the public highway, with no evidence to suggest otherwise it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on this ground. The requested condition from the Local Highways Authority to ensure that parking, as shown on the plans, remains is considered reasonable in order to prevent potential future on street parking.

7.10 The increase in potentially four to eight traffic movements a day is unlikely to have any noticeable impact upon the traffic flow along the A1123. The A14 upgrade is part of a different planning application and it would be unreasonable to judge this individual application against this strategic road improvement. The difference that two dwellings would make on the A14 improvement project would not be noticeable.

7.11 The private road of Sadlers Way has an unorthodox layout, with a tarmac surfaced road and private footpaths connecting the houses together. There is no footpath that connects the houses to Wilburton Road and for this reason the road is considered closest to a shared surface road. A shared surface working on the

principle that neither pedestrians nor drivers know who has priority (both parties moving with a degree of caution and slowly) and that you know your neighbours and the likelihood of children playing on the street. A shared surface road generally has a maximum of around 12 – 15 dwellings using it, the provision of 10 dwellings in total would accord with this level. There is some danger with this current layout as drivers might consider they have the greater priority. However, as the vast majority of the users of this road will know the situation the current risk is considered to be minor. The addition of two more dwellings is not considered to provide a detrimental risk to the users of this private highway.

- 7.12** The proposed dwellings have two parking spaces each and the scheme maintains two parking spaces for plot 6 (existing dwelling adjacent the site now known as 13 Sadler Way). The proposed sheds are considered to be adequate for the potential secure storage of cycles.
- 7.13** A surface water condition should be added to ensure no water drains off the site and onto the roadway.
- 7.14** The proposed development does not raise any significant increase in risk to the users of the public highway.
- 7.15** **Residential Amenity**
- 7.16** The back to back distance between the proposed dwelling and The Old Rectory is approximately 70 metres. It is considered at this distance that there will be no detrimental impact upon the residential amenity to the dwelling of The Old Rectory. The proposed two dwellings are located approximately 8 metres away from the boundary of The Old Rectory, at this distance there will be overlooking to the bottom end of the garden for The Old Rectory. However, by virtue of the size of the garden of The Old Rectory the harm is considered to be minor.
- 7.17** The Environmental Health Team has not identified any likely contamination on site but it is current standard practice to add conditions on relating to potential contamination.
- 7.18** The requested condition regarding construction times is noted and accepted in order to protect nearby residents from construction work at anti-social times.
- 7.19** By virtue of the design and siting of the proposed dwellings it is not considered to have any other detrimental impact to any other nearby neighbour.
- 7.20** **Visual Appearance and Impact on the Historic Environment**
- 7.21** The proposed design is in keeping with the character of Sadlers Way and for this reason the proposed design is considered to preserve the visual appearance of the local area. The proposed dwellings also, that unlike other properties on the street, do not have blank elevations at the end of the vista; this is considered to be a slight enhancement in design.

- 7.22 The Old Rectory and St James Church are both Grade II* Listed Buildings and any proposal near these properties should preserve their historic setting. Great weight should be given to these assets conservation.
- 7.23 The creation of the two dwellings in this location will change the historic outlook from The Old Rectory over rural fields and mature trees, though it will have no noticeable impact upon public views to The Old Rectory. The harm is considered to be less than significant and for this reason the public benefits must be duly considered.
- 7.24 The main public benefit is considered to be that the proposal adds to the number of affordable units within the village and will therefore help the social sustainability of the area.
- 7.25 The comments of the Tree Officer are noted and accepted. The additional trees will help increase the biodiversity of the local area and help mitigate the impact upon the view from The Old Rectory. This will ensure that there is sufficient landscaping as sought by the Conservation Officer. The biodiversity can be further improved by the addition of an ecological enhancement condition.
- 7.26 It is considered that the positives outweigh the harm to the listed building and for this reason it is not considered reasonable to refuse the application on these grounds.
- 7.27 Summary**
- 7.28 It is considered that there is no significant harm from the proposal and the need for the affordable housing outweighs the potential harm from the proposal.
- 8.0 APPENDICES
- 8.1 Appendix 1 - Conditions

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
15/00550/FUL	Andrew Phillips Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Andrew Phillips Senior Planning Officer 01353 616359 andrew.phillips@eastcambs.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework -
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 -
<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20April%202015%20-%20front%20cover%20and%20inside%20front%20cover.pdf>