

Agenda Item 60.

ITEM NO: 60

Development Management Ref No	No weeks on day of committee	Parish	Ward	Listed by:
161328	9/8	Ruscombe	Remenham, Wargrave and Ruscombe	Scheme of Delegation

Applicant	Wokingham Housing Limited		
Location	Land adjacent to 9 Middlefields, Ruscombe	Postcode	RG10 9DG
Proposal	Full application for the proposed erection of 2no two bedroom semi-detached dwellings with associated parking		
Type	Full		
PS Category	13		
Officer	Graham Vaughan		

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on 12 th October 2016
REPORT PREPARED BY	Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

The application site is within a modest development location in Ruscombe. The site was formerly used for the garaging of vehicles and whilst the garages have been removed, the area is still used as an informal parking area and therefore consists primarily of hard standing. The surrounding area is residential but there are some local shopping facilities within walking distance from the site.

The application is for full permission for the redevelopment of the site to erect a two storey building comprising of two x two bed units. The building picks up on the design elements of existing properties in the street with a two storey form, gable end roof and similar materials. Parking would be provided to the front of the building and amenity space to the rear.

The proposal would utilise brownfield land and provide two units toward the housing stock. No harmful impact would occur on residential amenity due to the orientation of the building. Although the site would not be used for informal parking, a parking survey has demonstrated there is sufficient capacity on the local highway network to accommodate further on street parking and therefore no objection is raised in highway terms. As such, it is considered all other aspects would be satisfactorily mitigated through the use of conditions and therefore, the scheme is compliant with the development plan and is recommended for conditional approval.

The application is before Planning Committee as it is submitted by Wokingham Housing Limited on behalf of the Council.

PLANNING STATUS

- Modest development location
- Groundwater zone 2 and 3
- Wind turbine safeguarding zone
- Sand and gravel extraction
- Contaminated land consultation zone

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:

A. Conditions and informatives:

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2. This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered '2158 06A' and '2158 07A' received by the local planning authority on 12th August 2016. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.
3. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building/s shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.
Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.
Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3
4. Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted, and any existing trees or shrubs to be retained.
Planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s).
Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting (or within a period of 5 years of the occupation of the buildings in the case of retained trees and shrubs) die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species or otherwise as approved in writing by the local planning authority.
Reason: To ensure adequate planting in the interests of visual amenity.
Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 (and TB06 for garden development)
5. No development shall take place until a measured survey of the site and a plan prepared to scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and proposed finished ground levels in relation to a fixed datum point) and finished floor levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the building

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding buildings and landscape. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

6. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:
- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
 - ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
 - iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
 - iv) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
 - v) wheel washing facilities,
 - vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
 - vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

7. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted details of secure and covered bicycle storage/ parking facilities for the occupants of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle storage/ parking shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the development hereby permitted, and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

8. No part of the building hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking spaces shall be permanently retained and remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times

Reason: To ensure adequate on-site parking provision in the interests of highway safety, convenience and amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP6 and MDD Local Plan policy CC07

9. No building shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been surfaced with a permeable and bonded material across the entire width of the access for a distance of 4.8 metres measured from the carriageway edge.

Reason: To avoid spillage of loose material onto the highway, in the interests of road safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6.

10. No part of the building hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the bin storage has been provided in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The bin storage spaces shall be permanently retained and remain available for the storage of bins at all times

Reason: In order to ensure that secure bin storage facilities are provided in the interests of residential and visual amenity. Relevant policy: NPPF; Core Strategy

policies CP1, CP3.

11. The existing vehicular access(es) to the site shall be stopped up and abandoned, and the footway and/or verge crossings shall be re-instated within one month of the completion of the new access(es) in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.
12. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Any subsequent investigation/remedial/protective works deemed necessary by the LPA shall be carried out to agreed timescales and approved by the LPA in writing. If no contamination is encountered during the development, a letter confirming this fact shall be submitted to the LPA upon completion of the development.
Reason: To ensure any contamination on the site is remedied to protect the existing/proposed occupants of the application site and adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP3
13. No additional windows or similar openings shall be constructed in the first floor level or above in the north west or south east elevations of the building hereby permitted except for any which may be shown on the approved drawings.
Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3
14. The windows of the development hereby permitted shown on the approved drawings to be fitted with obscured glass shall be permanently so-retained. The window shall be non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the finished floor level of the room in which the window is installed and shall be permanently so-retained.
Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3
15. No works related to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 13.00pm on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority
Reason: To safeguard amenity of neighbouring properties. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3

Informatives:

1. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. As an affordable housing development a claim for relief can be made. This is a matter for the developer. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement

of development. For more information see - <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/cil-processes/>.

2. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx. 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.
3. Any works/ events carried out by or on behalf of the developer affecting either a public highway or a prospectively maintainable highway (as defined under s.87 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)), shall be co-ordinated and licensed as required under NRSWA and the Traffic Management Act 2004 in order to minimise disruption to both pedestrian and vehicular users of the highway.

Any such works or events, and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site must be co-ordinated by the developer in liaison with the Borough's Street Works team (0118 974 6302). This must take place AT LEAST three months in advance of the intended works to ensure effective co-ordination with other works so as to minimise disruption.

4. The Head of Technical Services at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham [0118 9746000] should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any work is carried out within the highway (including verges and footways). This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access or works.

PLANNING HISTORY

- F/2014/1808 - Proposed erection of 2no 3 bedroom semi-detached dwellings with associated parking **withdrawn** on 30th October 2014
- F/2015/0100 - Proposed erection of 2 x 2 bedroom semi-detached dwellings with associated parking **withdrawn** on 19th June 2015

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area	0.03 hectares
Existing units	0
Proposed units	2
Existing parking spaces	Approximately 12 (Former garages have been removed)
Proposed parking spaces	4 (2 per dwelling)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Thames Water	No objection subject to informative (1)
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions (6 - 11)
WBC Biodiversity	No comments received
WBC Tree and Landscape	No objection subject to condition (4)
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to condition (12)
WBC Waste Services	No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Ruscombe Parish Council: No comments received

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours: Six letters of objection received with regards to the following:

- Loss of parking in an already congested area
- Loss of privacy and light
- More on street parking would make it difficult for emergency vehicles to pass
- Increased noise from houses

APPLICANTS POINTS

- Development provides affordable housing
- Uses brownfield land

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP4	Infrastructure Requirements
	CP5	Housing mix, density and affordability
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits
	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC04	Sustainable Design and Construction
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB05	Housing Mix
	TB07	Internal Space standards
	TB21	Landscape Character
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	BDG	Borough Design Guide – Section 4
		DCLG – National Internal Space Standards

PLANNING ISSUES

Description of Development:

1. The scheme is for erection of a pair of semi-detached property comprising of two x two bedroom dwellings. Each property would be 6.4 metres in width, 7.5 metres in length and would have a gable roof with a ridge height of 7.7 metres and an eaves height of 5.0 metres. Windows would be provided on all elevations however the side elevations would contain smaller windows to serve the stairs and hallways only.

2. Internally, the properties would mirror each other with the main door providing access to a toilet, storage and stairs and then an open plan living/kitchen/dining area on the ground floor. On the first floor, two bedrooms as well a bathroom would be provided. There would be ground floor access to the rear amenity space and two parking spaces per dwelling would be provided to the front interspersed with some soft landscaping.
3. Two previous applications for similar type of development were withdrawn due to concerns regarding design and lack of information in terms of the impact on parking.

Principle of Development:

4. The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
5. The site is located within a modest development location and within a settlement boundary and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

Character of the Area:

6. The character of the area is defined by semi-detached or terraced properties set forward in long, narrow plots with a slightly staggered building line. Each dwelling is two storeys with a dual pitched roof and gable ends. The properties have an area of amenity space to the front of the property and a driveway leading to a detached single storey garages set marginally behind the front elevation of the dwellings. At the end of the road, two areas of garages are located as well as parking and access for bungalows. The detailing on the properties includes canopy porches in the centre of the dwelling (although it is acknowledged some of these porches have been 'filled in'), brick walls with hung tile cladding at first floor at the front and similar sized windows with two at first floor and one at ground floor. It is noted that the adjacent street Pennfields (which is also adjacent to the application site) contains properties with similar detailing albeit in a terraced format. The site itself was formerly used for the garaging of vehicles and whilst the garages have been removed, the area is still used as an informal parking area. Currently just the parking spaces remain however it is noted there is a stepped level difference with the land rising to the north west.
7. The proposal is for the erection of a pair of semi-detached properties set back from the road by car parking spaces and some landscaping. In this sense, the scheme could be considered to physically integrate into the general character of the area. Properties on Middlefields are set on a staggered building line of which

the proposal would reflect but would be set at an angle and further forward of 9 and 10 Middlefields. Due to the staggered building line, it is acknowledged that there is an expectation in the street to see the gable ends of the properties. In this respect, the orientation of the dwelling is not considered to be overly harmful to the street scene. Whilst there is a level difference between the site and the street, the ridge height of the proposal would be approximately a metre higher than neighbouring properties which is not considered to be harmful.

8. The properties would be set forward in their plot and, whilst the gardens would not be as long as other gardens in the area (ranging from 11 to 18 metres approximately), the gardens would be of a suitable depth to reflect the character of the area and spaces around buildings. The area to the front of the properties would differ from the character of the area in that existing dwellings have a garden in front of them and parking to the side. However, complete replication is not always necessary with infill schemes and indeed given the size of the site and the fact both parking and landscaping would be proposed, the scheme is not considered to have a harmful impact in this respect.
9. In terms of the visual integration into the street scene, the proposal would have a dual pitched roof with gable ends, a similar ridge and eaves height and would replicate the fenestration detailing that can be seen in the street scene. As a result, it is considered the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area.

Residential Amenities:

10. Due to the separation distance to neighbouring properties (16.6 metres to Pennfields and 11 metres to 9 Middlefields), it is considered no harmful loss of light or overbearing impact on the properties would occur as a result of the proposal. There would be some loss of light to the rear of the rear gardens of the terraces on Pennfields however this is not considered to be detrimentally harmful to the extent the application should be refused on this basis.
11. The proposal would accord with the advice in the Borough Design Guide regarding separation distances and the configuration of the rooms has resulted in the windows for non-habitable rooms being located on the side elevations. As such, no harmful overlooking impact would occur subject to conditions 13 and 14.

Access and Movement:

12. The site previously had garages on it but these have since been removed with the resultant space still used for parking. The proposal would result in the loss of this parking which is used by local residents and as a result, a parking survey has been submitted. The survey was undertaken using the 'Lambeth methodology' which is a recognised method for such surveys. It was undertaken at 4 am mid-week and noted the location of cars and where there was provision on the highway network for any further parking (taking into account location of driveways). The survey concludes that of the 79 spaces available in the area there are 36 available equating to 46%. Even taking into account the parking that occurs on the grass verge around Pennfields, it is considered the survey demonstrates that there is sufficient capacity within the immediate highway network to accommodate the parking that currently occurs on the site.

13. The Highways Officer has considered the survey and raises no objection to the methodology or the results. As such, there is no highways objection to the loss of the parking currently occurring on the site. In terms of the proposal itself, two spaces for each dwelling would be provided and this meets the parking standards. The spaces would be of a sufficient size and accessed directly from the highway and this is considered acceptable.

Flooding and Drainage:

14. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding) and is not considered to be at a significant risk from flooding. Additionally, the site is covered in hard standing and the introduction of soft landscaping would improve permeability across the site. As such, no harmful impact is considered to occur.

Landscape and Trees:

15. The area is residential in character and although trees are present in the street scene they are not a defining characteristic. The site comprises primarily of hard standing and therefore provides little amenity value. As a result, the establishment of a garden to the rear and some landscaping to the front would have a positive impact. Furthermore, although a tree at the edge of the site would be removed, it could be replaced as part of the landscaping to the front. As such, it is considered subject to details required by condition (4), no harmful impact would occur.

Environmental Health:

16. No known contamination issues exist on or in close proximity to the site however the site is used for the parking of vehicles and this could potentially lead to some contamination from oil spills. As such, and due to the residential use of the proposal, the Environmental Health Officer requires a condition for further work in the event contamination is discovered (12).

Amenity Space for future occupiers:

17. The Borough Design Guide states that new dwellings should have a minimum of 11 metres useable garden space. The proposal would provide gardens with a depth of 10.0 metres. Whilst this does not meet the 11 metre guideline, the gardens would be 8.0 metres in width resulting in a roughly rectangular space that would receive daylight and could be used for typical garden activities. As a result, the proposed gardens meet the requirements of the Borough Design Guide in all other respects and therefore, on balance, the proposal is acceptable.

18. It is also noted that if the garden depth were to be increased, it is likely another aspect of the scheme would be compromised e.g. parking provision or internal space standards. Given that the impact of this minor shortfall is relatively low, it is considered acceptable in this instance, on balance.

Internal Space Standards:

19. Internal space standards are set nationally. For dwellings of this type, the minimum requirement is 79m². The proposal meets the requirement for this being 84m² for both dwellings. Therefore no harmful impact would occur.

Ecology:

20. As no buildings would need to be demolished and the site is used for the parking of vehicles, no harmful impact on biodiversity is considered to occur.

Sustainable Design/Construction:

21. Due to the replacement of the Code for Sustainable Homes with national standards in building regulations, the proposal is not required to meet Code 4 in line with Policy CC04 of the MDD. However, the policy does require that all development should incorporate suitable waste management facilities including on-site recycling. It is considered that sufficient internal and external storage could be provided to accommodate this.

Community Infrastructure Levy, Affordable Housing and Special Protection Area (SPA):

22. **Community Infrastructure Levy:** As the proposal is for new residential floor space, it would be a CIL liable development. CIL is charged at a rate of £365 per square metre.

23. **Affordable Housing:** The proposal does not exceed the threshold required for the provision of affordable housing as per Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy. However, it is acknowledged that the applicant intends to provide both dwellings as affordable units.

24. **SPA:** The site is not within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and therefore there is no requirement to mitigate against any impact on this.

CONCLUSION

The application is considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact on the character of the area, neighbouring properties and future occupiers. The parking that would be lost as part of the proposal would be successfully accommodated within the existing highway network and therefore is considered acceptable. Given the current use of the site, the proposal is considered to have a positive impact on the area and would be beneficial in terms of affordable housing provision. As such, the proposal is recommended for conditional approval.

CONTACT DETAILS

Service	Telephone	Email
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