

Application Number	16/00519/AS
Location	1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 Downsview Cottage, Westwell Lane, Westwell, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4LE.
Grid Reference	98860/47427
Parish Council	Westwell Parish Council
Ward	Downs West
Application Description	Recladding of existing external walls with rendered finish
Applicant	Community and Housing, Ashford Borough Council
Agent	NA
Site Area	0.67 Ha

(a) 7/- (b) Parish Council X (c) NA

Introduction

1. This application is reported to the Planning Committee because the applicant is Ashford Borough Council Housing Services.

Site and Surroundings

2. The application site comprises 9 semi-detached houses in the ownership of Ashford Borough Council. They are part of a linear form of identical dwellings of which 5 are privately owned. The site is located within the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
3. The site borders the designated Westwell Conservation Area (CA) located to the west and is just touching a very small piece of land in the north eastern corner of the front garden at No. 1. See Fig. 1.
4. The 9 properties owned by Ashford Borough Council are externally finished in precast slatted panels with an exposed aggregate finish. Of the privately owned properties Nos. 3 and 7 are externally finished with the same materials as those owned by Ashford Borough Council. Nos. 4, 13 and 14 are externally finished with a brick façade.

5. A site location plan is attached as an annex to this report.

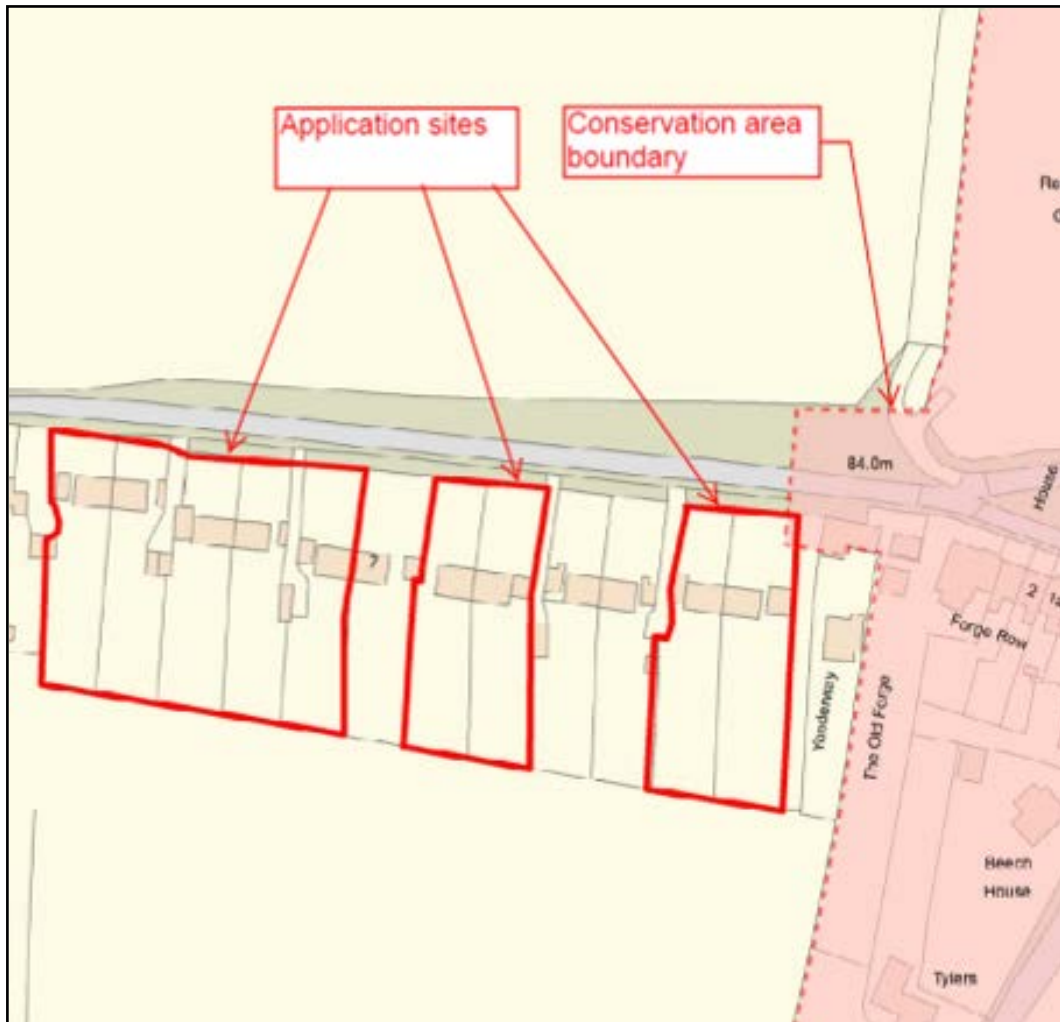


Figure 1 – site location plan



Figure 2 – Existing external finishes



Figure 3 – No. 3 and No. 4 – outside of the application site

Proposal

6. Full planning permission is sought for a change of external materials from precast concrete slatted panels with an exposed aggregate finish to plain rendering finished in an off cream colour. The objective is to facilitate a better form of insulation for the properties, prolong the life of the Council asset as well as reducing future maintenance costs. Full planning permission is required as the properties are located within an AONB.



Figure 4 - Typical proposed and existing front and rear elevations. Please note that this elevation is typical of No.8 which is attached to a privately owned dwelling whose elevation will remain cladded. The other dwellings with new render will match the attached dwelling.

Relevant Planning History

7. No relevant planning history

Consultations

Ward Members: The Ward Member (Cllr Krause) is a member of the planning committee.

Neighbours: 7 consulted; no representations received

Planning Policy

8. The Development Plan comprises the saved policies in the adopted Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000, the adopted LDF Core Strategy 2008, the adopted Ashford Town Centre Action Area Plan 2010, the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD 2010, the Urban Sites and Infrastructure DPD 2012 and the Chilmington Green AAP 2013. On 9 June 2016 the Council approved a consultation version of the Local Plan to 2030. Consultation commenced on 15 June 2016. At present the policies in this emerging plan can be accorded little or no weight.

9. The relevant policies from the Development Plan relating to this application are as follows:-

Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000

GP12 Protecting the countryside and managing change

EN16 Development in Conservation Areas

Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008

CS1 Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development and High Quality Design

CS9 Design Quality

Tenterden & Rural Sites Development Plan Document 2010

TRS17 Landscape Character & Design

Local Plan to 2030

SP1 Strategic Objectives

SP6 Promoting High Quality Design

ENV3 Landscape Character & Design

ENV14 Conservation Areas

10. The following are also material to the determination of this application:-

Government Advice

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

11. Members should note that the determination must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A significant material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF says that less weight should be given to the policies above if they are in conflict with the NPPF.

Assessment

12. The main issues for consideration are:
 - Visual Amenity
 - Residential Amenity

Visual Amenity

13. The proposed change of the external materials to a light coloured render, whilst being a different elevation treatment to some of the private dwellings within this frontage, is not unusual within a rural setting and would not be out of character with the context of the site. In turn, it will improve the thermal efficiency of these properties. The development would preserve the character of the CA and would not result in harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding designated landscape. .

Residential Amenity

14. Given the nature of the development proposed there would be no impact upon the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties.

Human Rights Issues

15. I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the "Assessment" section above and the Recommendation below represent an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy his land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties).

Working with the applicant

16. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner as explained in the note to the applicant included in the recommendation below.

Conclusion

The reason for the planning application is to improve the thermal efficiency of the Council's stock of housing as well as prolonging their life and reducing maintenance costs. The development would not result in any visual harm or impact upon nearby neighbours. There have been no objections to the development. For these reasons I therefore recommend that the application is approved as it accords with the relevant Development Plan policies and there are no overriding material considerations to suggest otherwise.

Recommendation

Permit

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details of external materials specified in the application which shall not be varied without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

3. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed in the section of this decision notice headed Plans/Documents Approved by this decision, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approval and to ensure the quality of development indicated on the approved plans is achieved in practice.

4. The development approved shall be made available for inspection, at a reasonable time, by the local Planning authority to ascertain whether a breach of planning control may have occurred on the land (as a result of departure from the plans hereby approved and the specific terms of this permission/consent/approval).

Reason: In the interests of ensuring the proper planning of the locality, the protection of amenity and the environment, securing high quality development through adherence to the terms of planning approvals and to ensure community confidence in the operation of the planning system.

Working with the Applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;

- offering a pre-application advice service,
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application
- where possible suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- informing applicants/agents of any likely recommendation of refusal prior to a decision and,
- by adhering to the requirements of the Development Management Customer Charter.

In this instance

- the application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.
- The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant had the opportunity to speak to the committee and promote the application.

Background Papers

All papers referred to in this report are currently published on the Ashford Borough Council web site (www.ashford.gov.uk). Those papers relating specifically to this application may be found on the [View applications on line](#) pages under planning application reference 16/00519/AS.

Contact Officer: Natalie Adams

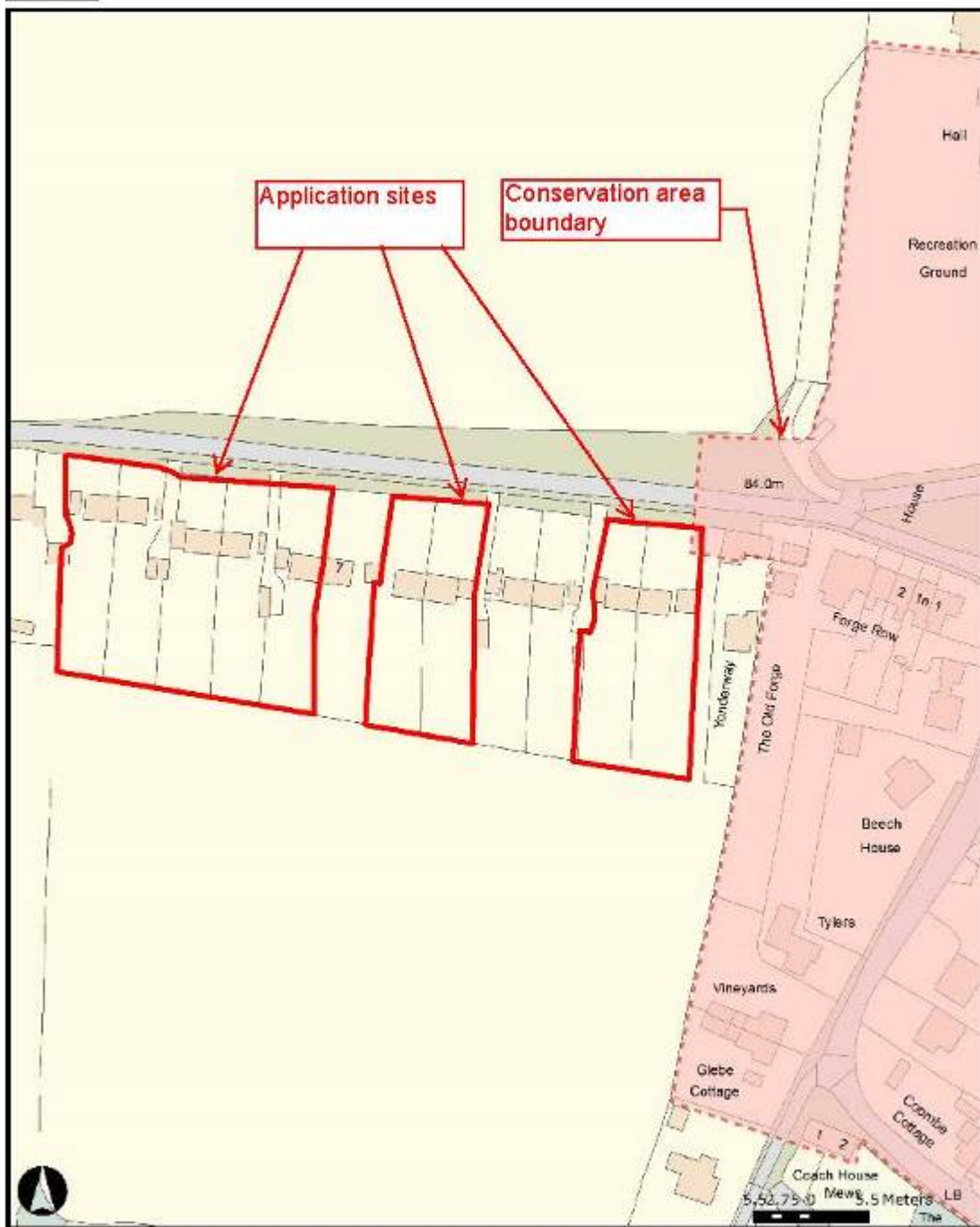
Telephone: (01233) 330742

Email: natalie.adams@ashford.gov.uk

Annex 1



Ashford Borough Council



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