

Planning Committee

Wednesday the 8th December 2021 at 7.00pm

Update Report for the Committee

The following notes and attached papers will be referred to at the meeting and will provide updated information to the Committee to reflect changes in circumstances and officer advice since the reports on the agenda were prepared

3. Requests for Deferral/Withdrawal

None

4. Schedule of Applications

- (a) **20/00711/AS** – Swanton House, Elwick Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1NN - Demolition of existing building and erection of two buildings comprising 34 apartments with associated access, parking and landscaping.

AMENDMENTS

Lift overruns

The applicant has revised the elevations to show the lift overruns to both Blocks as per the extract below.



These are identical and from the drawings provided would be approximately 2800mm x 2400mm x 300mm high. The fine details of the material for the overruns can be the subject of a planning condition.

Rainwater goods

The applicant's agent confirms that external rainwater goods would be necessary and that the elevations have been update to show these with the following comment made by the applicant's architects;-

'The previous design lent itself to internal rainwater pipes given the flat roof construction and the overall aesthetic, however given the design changes within this revised application both aesthetically and form we require external rainwater pipes to ensure all roofing elements are adequately drained.'

We have strategically placed the rainwater pipes on the elevations to ensure they aren't too onerous on the overall aesthetics and the intention is to have concealed rainwater gullies rather than the standard hopper detail within the metal cladded gables where possible, so elevationally all that can be seen is the downpipe'.

The image below combines extracts from the updated elevations for Block 1 to show these details (circled in red). A similar approach is taken by the applicant for Block 2. The fine details of rainwater goods can be the subject of a planning condition.



Privacy Screens

The applicant confirms that the intention is to include a privacy screen to deal with the inter-looking matter I have raised in relation to Block 1 facing Elwick Road and also in a similar instance at Block 2 facing to the Memorial Gardens. Updated plans have been received showing this as the annotated extract below (with use of shading to help bring the screen out in the image) shows. The fine details of the screens can be the subject of a planning condition.



RESPONSES

The applicant's agent has provided the following response to the points made by the CACF and one resident;-

Adequacy of sewage system?

"The applicant is well aware of the sewage issue in North Street as the company has 2 blocks of flats in the road, one of which was directly affected. The applicant does not believe that the problem is due to flat development overusing an existing inadequate sewage system as claimed by the CACF as the development wouldn't have been able to connect to the existing system if that was the case. Southern Water stated that the issue was due to a broken pipe and the applicant has no reason to disbelieve them."

Power supply sufficient to manage charging of the proposed x 25 active chargers?

"The M&E Consultants have provided the following response;

"The UKPN budget estimate quote is for a 400A TPN supply which could facilitate EV charging to all 27 car parking bays.

The electrical load assessment provided demonstrates this. The complete EV charging system would require load monitoring to ensure the system is not overloaded, and to limit charge equally to each used charging station, at peak times. This is good design practice when dealing with a high volume of spaces.

We deem the 27No. EV charging stations could all be charged at the same time with load management, and would reasonably facilitate a good to full charge overnight in accordance with the HM Gov guidance document Electric Vehicle Charging in Residential and Non-Residential Buildings."

Future proofing in respect of climate change

"A Better Choice for Property Development Limited takes very seriously the issues surrounding climate change and wherever possible will seek to reduce its carbon footprint both in the building of its development schemes and in their subsequent use.

In this instance the applicant and the project team are exploring the limited alternative options for providing heating and hot water to the scheme and no decisions have yet been made. However, it should be borne in mind that this is not the simple exercise that many believe. For example, electric heating will not achieve the required EPC's, solar/photovoltaic systems will not have the capacity nor provide an economic payback, combi boilers still use gas, air source heat pumps require large unsightly external heat exchange units to be placed all over the building etc.

However, with regards to demolition, these days this is now very carefully controlled and monitored with all materials being separated and reused where possible."

On-site concierge & entrance lobbies

"A development of this size wouldn't warrant an on-site concierge. Entrance lobby areas will be key entry/video entry for residents only. Strict controls will be in place through the Tenancy Agreement and rigorously enforced in terms of what can be stored/kept on balconies. Likewise, window dressing for all windows will be provided by the Property Company."

Architecture

"In relation to architecture, this is very much a subjective area and whilst the proposed development is within the Conservation Area, it would be very remiss for the architecture to not address the wider area. The CACF will recall that Planning Committee Members expressed a number of differing views as regards what would be appropriate for the site with some preferring an even more modernist approach in keeping with developments further up Elwick Road whilst others wished to see a more traditional development. Clearly, it is never possible to satisfy everyone. However, we do believe that the amended design encapsulates the design comments from both committee members and from you as the Planning Officer."

Materials

“A white or cream render for the buildings would be a very harsh contrast and detrimental to the Conservation Area, would not work across the site and would very quickly become discoloured as evidenced in many instances across Ashford Town Centre. We also disagree with the comment relating to brick colour choice. There are examples of both yellow and red brick within the Conservation Area. The building on the corner of Church Road/Elwick Road (see below) is a good example of the use of yellow bricks in the Conservation Area.”



The Cedars, Church Road

(b) 21/00306/AS - Former Goods Yard, Bramble Lane, Wye, Kent – Erection of 9 houses

One additional objection has been received from a local resident concerned that the scheme doesn't blend in with the village and would block views of the Downs.

In para. 29(c) of the report, reference is made to a 'Grampian-style' pre-commencement condition to ensure that the necessary agreements are reached between the applicant and Network Rail over whose land the access passes. This is also referenced as recommended condition no.7.

Officers now recommend that the proposed condition should relate to the submission of details for approval showing satisfactory access through Station CP, and thereafter implement it as approved before occupation of any dwellings.

(c) 21/00973/AS – Greenluck Farm, Harris Lane, High Halden TN26 3HN - Creation of an access track

Late representation from KCC Biodiversity as follows:

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states “development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists”. As the entire area is ancient woodland, we would not support this application in its current format (i.e., without any ecological information and a compensation plan (if the LPA finds this development to be acceptable)) and have reported the activities in this woodland to the Forestry Commission - it is unclear what is going on at this site but activity has increased since the early 2000s according to the aerial imagery available to us.

We highlight that ancient woodland is irreplaceable and even if no trees are being felled, the soil (and associated root systems) are protected. We do not recommend that this application is approved until further information has been provided.

Officer Response: Three pre-commencement conditions are recommended concerning: Full Landscaping Survey & Arboricultural Assessment; Materials to be Approved; and Full Details of Construction and Excavation

One additional representation from a local resident has been received which objects on the grounds that:-

- 1. This is not a working farm. Has the committee any copies of annual accounts, records of sale or purchase of livestock or crops?*
- 2. The granting of wider access may lead to installation of temporary buildings which then may be used to apply for full planning permission.*
- 3. The number of objections should indicate to the committee that locally this is seen as a poor attempt to erect housing in a field.*

Officer response: These are not material considerations before the Planning Committee in the consideration of this application. Any subsequent activities or proposals would be dealt with on their own merits at the time.

However, in light of concerns raised by the Parish Council and local residents, officers consider that an additional condition should be recommended for inclusion if the Committee resolves to grant planning permission. This would seek:-

- i) Restriction of the use of the access track to vehicles associated with the agricultural use of the farm.
- (d) 21/01173/AS - Land north of Stumble Holme, Kingsford Street, Mersham, Kent -**
Erection of 5 no residential dwellings with associated access, parking, landscaping and amenity space.

No update.

