

KBA/19343 – Sovereign Housing Association

Construction of 6 affordable houses with new access. Land opposite Appleby House, Oxford Road, Kingston Bagpuize

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 This application is for affordable houses outside the built limits of Kingston Bagpuize and has been advanced under the “rural exceptions” policy. A survey of housing needs in Kingston Bagpuize-with-Southmoor was conducted in 2003 with the co-operation of the Parish Council. This identified a need for a total of 12 dwellings of varying sizes. In May 2005, Committee granted planning permission for 6 affordable flats on land behind 19 and 20 Latton Close (ref KBA/19003). This new application is for the remaining 6 units, a mixture of 4 x 2-bed and 2 x 3-bed houses.
- 1.2 The application site lies off Oxford Road at the east end of the village and adjoins a recent housing development by Pye Homes. Extracts from the application drawings are in **Appendix 1**. A new vehicular access would be formed from Oxford Road. The proposal includes a new electricity sub-station to serve the development.
- 1.3 The application comes to Committee because more than 4 objection letters have been received.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 In 1993, planning permission was refused in outline on this site for the construction of a 32-bed residential home for the elderly (ref KBA/13141-X). The reason for refusal was that the site lies outside the built limit of the village

3.0 Planning Policies

- 3.1 Policy H9 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan and Policy H17 of the Second Deposit Draft Local Plan 2011 deal with affordable housing on rural exception sites. They state that planning permission may be granted subject to the following caveats:-
- The need for the housing has been firmly established in consultation with the Parish Council and the development meets the need in terms of size and mix of units
 - The site is small, lies within or immediately adjacent to the existing built-up area of the village, does not harm its character or setting, and is acceptable in terms of its proximity to facilities
 - Secure arrangements exist to ensure the affordable housing remains available to meet need in the long term
- 3.2 Policies D1, D2 and D3 of the adopted Local Plan (and Policies DC1, DC5 and DC9 of the Second Deposit Draft Local Plan) require all new development to be acceptable in terms of design, impact on neighbours and highway safety.

4.0 Consultations

- 4.1 Kingston Bagpuize-with-Southmoor Parish Council – do not object but request the following issues be given consideration:- “The proposed parking provision within the site is inadequate and will lead to parking in Oxford Road. The proposed electricity sub-station will be unsightly both to residents and users of Oxford Road and should be re-sited to the rear. There is no justification for the removal of the Sycamore tree. The proposed close-boarded fencing between sections of stone wall will be unsightly and should be replaced with stone wall.”
- 4.2 Local Residents – 7 local households have submitted written objections to the application. The grounds for objection can be summarised as follows:-

1. Additional traffic will add to existing congestion caused by existing traffic to Millennium Green and Bowls Club, causing danger
2. Danger caused by extra traffic at junction of Oxford Road with A415
3. There will be problems from additional on-street parking
4. This will set a precedent for further development outside the village
5. Harm to the character of the area
6. Noise and loss of amenities for neighbours
7. The site is too remote from local services (the school and shop)
8. Pedestrian links to the rest of the village are poor
9. Noise, disturbance and traffic congestion during construction
10. Loss of property value
11. The housing will not remain affordable

4.3 County Engineer – no objections subject to conditions.

4.4 Assistant Director (Housing) – supports the application.

4.5 Arboricultural Officer – no objections subject to conditions.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 Members need to consider the following issues. First, the acceptability of the site for affordable housing; second, the design and appearance of the proposed development; third, the effect of the proposal on neighbours; and fourthly, access and parking.

5.2 With regard to the first issue, Officers have examined the application in light of the policies on rural exception housing in the adopted and emerging local plans. The proposal has emerged from a survey of housing need in the village and is supported in principle by the Parish Council. The proposal represents development on a field that currently lies outside the built-up limit of the village, but this can be acceptable under the terms of the exception policy. The site is relatively small and lies next to the existing built up area of the village. In this case, Officers consider the visual harm to the village is acceptable when weighed against the need for the housing. It is clear that the exception policy does not set a precedent for the development of market housing in this location, and that future occupation of the houses can be restricted to ensure the housing remains affordable in the long term.

5.3 Officers also consider the site is acceptable in terms of proximity to facilities. Kingston Bagpuize has a school and shops. A footpath link to connect to the adjoining Pye's development is proposed as part of the scheme. Members will need to carefully consider these issues, but overall Officers consider the proposal does qualify under the exception policy.

5.4 In terms of design and appearance, Officers consider the proposed houses have been designed to reflect their rural setting, including features such as narrow spans and steep pitched roofs. The proposed materials are artificial stone and plain tiles, similar to the recent Pye development next door. Officers do share the concerns of the Parish Council about the prominent location of the electricity sub-station, which would harm the appearance of the area, and the quality of the suggested boundary treatment on Oxford Road. These issues were the subject of discussion with the applicants at the time of writing the report, and an oral update on these matters will be made at the Meeting.

5.5 The proposal includes landscaping on the north and east boundaries to help soften the impact of the new housing. An existing Sycamore tree is to be replaced by new planting. Although the Parish Council query the loss of the tree, the Council's Arboricultural Officer has no objection, provided appropriate planting is used in the landscaping. This can be controlled via condition.

5.6 Turning to impact on neighbours, the layout of the proposed houses means that the nearest neighbours would not suffer harm from overlooking. The flank walls of Plots 3 and 4 would lie

at least 14 metres from neighbouring dwellings to the west, and the principal elevations of Plots 1 - 3 would be at least 30 metres from neighbouring dwellings to the south. These distances exceed the Council's minimum standards. Given the distances involved, there is no reason to expect that existing neighbours will suffer from harmful noise or other disturbance from the development.

- 5.7 Regarding highway safety, the proposed vehicular access meets the necessary standards. Parking is shown at 2 spaces per dwelling, which meets the Council's adopted maximum standard for 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings. Consequently, there are no grounds for anticipating additional on-street parking. For these reasons, the County Engineer has no objections to the scheme.
- 5.8 Of the other objections made, loss of property value is not a material consideration. Noise and disturbance during construction can be controlled via alternative environmental health legislation.

6.0 **Recommendation**

- 6.1 *Subject to satisfactory progress on the issues of the location of the electricity sub-station and the nature of the boundary treatment on Oxford Road, it is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair subject to conditions including an occupancy restriction, materials, architectural detailing, landscaping, boundary treatment, access and parking, and the design and location of the electricity sub-station*