

## **LBA/19367 – Heathcourt Properties Ltd.**

### **Erection of a three bedroom dwelling with associated parking. Porlock, Gramps Hill, Letcombe Bassett**

#### **1.0 The Proposal**

- 1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a three bedroom dwelling on land adjacent to Porlock, Gramps Hill, Letcombe Bassett. Porlock is a semi detached property with a shared access to the front and a garden running to the side and rear.
- 1.2 The proposed dwelling would be located within the side garden of the existing property, with a shared parking area to the front for both the existing and proposed dwellings.
- 1.3 The site lies within the Letcombe Bassett Conservation Area and the AONB. The village hall adjacent to the site is Grade II Listed.
- 1.4 Extracts from the application plans are at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.5 The application comes to Committee as the Parish Council objects.

#### **2.0 Planning History**

- 2.1 There is no planning history relating to this site.

#### **3.0 Planning Policies**

- 3.1 Policy H6 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan enables the development of one or two dwellings within the main built up area of the village providing it is not on a site which contributes positively to the form, structure and character of the settlement.
- 3.2 Policy H11 of the Second Deposit Draft Local Plan covers the same issues.
- 3.3 Policy HE1 of the adopted Local Plan refers to new development in Conservation Areas and states that it should preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area having regard to the existing buildings, historic street pattern, settlement form, and open spaces.
- 3.4 Policy HE1 of the Second Deposit Draft Local Plan refers to development within, and affecting the setting of, Conservation Areas. Development should preserve or enhance the established character of the area and will only be permitted on sites which do not make a positive contribution to the special interest of the area, and views within the area would not be damaged.
- 3.5 Policy C2 of the adopted Local Plan refers to development within the AONB and states that it will only be permitted if the natural beauty of the landscape is conserved or enhanced.
- 3.6 Policy NE6 of the Second Deposit Draft Local Plan covers the same issues.
- 3.7 Policy He15 of the adopted Local plan and Policy HE5 of the emerging Local Plan relate to the setting of Listed Buildings and that they should be preserved.
- 3.8 Policies D1, D2 and D3 of the adopted Local Plan refer to the general design of development, the impact on neighbouring properties, and whether there is adequate access, parking and turning provision.
- 3.9 The same issues are covered by Policies DC1, DC5 and DC9 of the emerging Local Plan.

#### 4.0 **Consultations**

- 4.1 Letcombe Bassett Parish Council objects to the application raising a number of concerns. Their full comments are attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 4.2 The County Engineer has no objections subject to conditions relating to visibility splays at the entrance and to ensure there is sufficient parking for both dwellings.
- 4.3 3 letters of objection have been received from local residents raising the following concerns:
- i) The proposed dwelling would result in loss of privacy and overshadowing of neighbouring properties.
  - ii) The proposed dwelling would affect the setting of the village hall which is an historic building.
  - iii) The proposal would set a precedent for building within other neighbouring gardens.
  - iv) There is no direct access or frontage onto a road.
  - v) The proposed parking would have an urban appearance.
  - vi) There is claimed to be no legal right of access to the site.
  - iv) The plans are not correct.

#### 5.0 **Officer Comments**

- 5.1 The main issues to consider in determining this application are; i) Whether the principle of development in this location is acceptable; ii) Whether the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character of the area, particularly the Conservation Area and the AONB; iii) Whether the setting of the adjacent listed building would be harmed; iv) Whether the proposed dwelling and parking area would have a harmful impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties; and v) Whether the access and parking arrangements are acceptable in highway safety terms.
- 5.2 Policy H6 of the adopted Local Plan and H11 of the emerging Local Plan enable small scale residential developments of 1 or 2 dwellings on sites within the main built up area of the village which do not contribute positively to the character of the settlement. This site sits behind the village hall and is surrounded on all other sides by existing properties and their gardens. There are no views into the site from public vantage points and the site is part of the curtilage of Porlock. Your Officers, therefore, do not consider that the site contributes positively to the character of the area and it is clearly within main built up area of the village. The principle of the development, therefore, is considered acceptable.
- 5.3 The site lies within the Conservation Area and AONB, therefore the proposed development has to be assessed against adopted Policies HE1 and C2 and emerging Policies HE1 and NE6 which refer to development in conservation areas and within the AONB. As stated above the site is well contained and obscured from any wider views in the area. The proposed dwelling is a modest sized 3 bedroom property built of brick and clay tiles. A condition is recommended requiring material samples to be submitted to ensure appropriate quality materials are used. Your Officers, therefore, consider that the development would preserve the existing character of the conservation area and would not have a harmful impact on the character of the wider landscape within the AONB.
- 5.4 In relation to the proposed parking area at the front of the existing property, Officers consider that this is sufficiently screened from the road by existing vegetation and, if surfaced in an appropriate material, will not harm the character of the area. A condition is recommended requiring details of the surface material.
- 5.5 The village hall which lies to the south west of the application site is a Grade II listed building set within the middle of the site. The proposed dwelling would be situated behind the hall

approximately 12 metres away and would not therefore impinge either on views of this building from the road or its more general setting.

- 5.6 Concern has been expressed by one of the neighbouring properties to the north west of the site due to the impact of the proposed dwelling on their residential amenity in terms of overlooking and overshadowing. The proposed dwelling would be located well within the plot, and it is not considered that it would have an unduly harmful impact on adjoining properties. The rear garden of the property to the north west (Wellands) bounds the rear of the plot, although the proposed dwelling is set between 9 and 10 metres from this boundary. The neighbouring dwelling itself is located to the front of the plot and will not therefore be affected.
- 5.7 The village hall bounds the south west boundary and part of the garden area of Doverhay bounds the north east edge of the site, although not the main private garden area which sits to the immediate rear of this dwelling. Despite this, there are no windows proposed in either flank walls of the proposed dwelling. The flank wall of the existing dwelling adjoins the south east boundary of the site and sits 11 metres away from the proposed dwelling, which would also be at a lower level due to the slightly sloping nature of the site.
- 5.8 The occupant of the adjoining dwelling, Doverhay, has questioned the red line area shown on the application plan and the ownership of the land. This is being clarified and a revised plan has been requested. An update on this issue will be provided at the Meeting.
- 5.9 The County Engineer has raised no objections to the proposed access and parking area, subject to a condition requiring appropriate visibility to be maintained at the access with Gramps Hill. Officers accept that the parking arrangement with a pedestrian access to the proposed dwelling is unusual, however this is no reason to refuse permission.

#### 6.0 **Recommendation**

*It is recommended that, subject to the land ownership issue being clarified, planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL1 – Time Limit*
2. *MC2 – Material Samples to be submitted*
3. *RE7- Submission of Boundary Details*
4. *RE8 – Submission of Drainage Details(Surface Water and Foul)*
5. *HY10 – Visibility (Access)*
6. *LS2 – Implementation of Landscaping Scheme (No existing trees)*
7. *RE21 – Floor/Slab Levels*
8. *Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of the surface treatment to be used on the proposed parking and turning area shown on plan reference HPL/PA/101 shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the District Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out using the approved materials.*
9. *Notwithstanding the provision of the Town and Country Planning General permitted Development order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order) no windows shall be inserted in the north east elevation of the dwelling hereby approved.*