

EHE/9592/5 – Wychwood Homes Ltd
Demolition of existing bungalow. Erection of three detached dwellings with carports. Dukes Orchard, Orchard Lane, East Hendred

1.0 **The Proposal**

- 1.1 This application seeks permission to replace an existing bungalow known as Dukes Orchard, Orchard Lane, East Hendred, with three detached dwellings with car ports. The site consists of a prominent corner plot between Orchard Lane and White Road as it enters the High Street. The existing dwelling is currently located to the western edge of the plot leaving the eastern part of the site open.
- 1.2 The proposed development consists of three detached dwellings accessed via a single site entrance to the east of that existing, and centred round a communal parking and turning area. Each unit has a separate double car port. Two of the proposed units front onto Orchard Lane, with the third facing towards the High Street located behind an existing stone and brick wall that would be retained.
- 1.3 The site layout incorporates an area of communal open land towards the outer edge of the site to help retain the open nature of this prominent corner.
- 1.4 Extracts from the application drawings are at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.5 The southern most corner of the site is within the Conservation Area, and the remainder of the site sits adjacent to it. A plan showing this is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 1.6 The application comes to Committee as the Parish Council object and more than 4 objections have been received.

2.0 **Planning History**

- 2.1 Planning permission was refused in January 1986 and again in May 1987 for a single dwelling on the southern part of the site with access onto the High Street.
- 2.2 Planning permission was refused again in July 1988 for 2 dwellings on the southern part of the site. The site plan and decision notice are attached at **Appendix 3**
- 2.3 A planning application for two dwellings fronting onto the High Street was withdrawn in August 2003.
- 2.4 A planning application for three detached houses was withdrawn in February 2006. This was a similar proposal to the current application but proposed the third unit in the middle of the site close to the boundary with adjacent dwellings.

3.0 **Planning Policies**

- 3.1 Policy H5 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan lists East Hendred as one of the larger villages capable of accommodating limited infill and minor development within the main built up area of the settlement providing the scale, density and layout are compatible with the form and character of the village, and it is not on a site which contributes positively to the character of the area.
- 3.2 Policy H10 of the Second Deposit Draft Local Plan refers to 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 HE8 of the adopted Local Plan refers to development outside but affecting the setting of a conservation area and states that development will only be permitted if there is no adverse impact on the character of the area.
- 3.5 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.

4.0 **Consultations**

- 4.1 East Hendred Parish Council objects to the application. Their comments are attached at **Appendix 4**.
- 4.2 The County Engineer has no objections subject to conditions.
- 4.3 The Conservation Officer has states that the proposal “achieves a good compromise between the need to achieve 30dph and the conservation constraints of the site, and the necessity to retain a large element of open space that contributes so significantly to this part of the Conservation Area.”
- 4.4 The Architects Advisory Panel comments that the proposal was a “very attractive scheme”.
- 4.5 The Consultant Architect comments as follows: “The changes (from the previous scheme) – primarily the re-siting of house 3 – are in my judgement improvements. Consequently I support the proposal as one which would enhance the local townscape and the setting of the conservation area.”
- 4.6 The Council’s Arboriculturalist has no objections to the removal of some of the trees on the site as they are mostly conifers.
- 4.7 7 letters of objection have been received raising the following concerns:
- The development will have a significantly greater visual impact than the existing bungalow.
 - The development will obscure views into the historic part of the village.
 - Increase in traffic
 - Loss of privacy and overshadowing caused by plot 3.
 - The dwellings will not be affordable for local people.
 - Over development of the site.
 - Lack of parking
 - Plot 1 will overlook the property opposite
 - The development will have a harmful impact on the Conservation Area.
- 4.8 1 Letter of support has been received stating the following points:
- This is a sensitive approach to development on this prominent site.
 - The scheme relates well to the historical village
 - Suggests that the trees at the north-east corner are removed and replanted with indigenous species.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

- 5.1 The main issues to consider in determining this application are; i) the principle of development on the site; ii) the design of the proposal and its impact on the setting of the conservation area; iii) the impact of the development on the amenities of neighbouring properties; and iv) parking and access considerations.
- 5.2 The site is clearly within the main built up area of the village, therefore the issue to consider with regard to the principle of development on the site, is whether the current character of the site and its prominence in the street scene should preclude any further development here.
- 5.3 Clearly, the site makes an important contribution to the character of the village in this location. However, it is considered that some limited development could be accommodated within the site without detriment to this character. The proposed layout has been designed so that as you enter the village from White Road, the most prominent part of the site on the corner will be retained as a landscaped open space. The proposed dwellings on Orchard Lane would be set far enough into the site so as not to appear prominent from the main road. The third unit would be seen in a separate context, fronting onto the High Street, and includes the retention of the frontage wall.
- 5.4 The design of the proposed dwellings with the use of brick and weather boarding includes some local design features, and in your Officers view would not appear out of keeping with the surrounding range of property styles. The scheme has support from the Architects Panel, Consultant Architect and Conservation Officer. It is therefore considered that the low density nature of the development, with the incorporation of additional planting and the use of good quality materials, would ensure that the setting of the Conservation Area is not adversely affected.
- 5.5 Concern has been raised by neighbouring properties in relation to the impact of plots 1 and 3 on their residential amenity. Although plot 1 sits close to the road and faces the property opposite (Namanga), the road lies between the two properties and there is a line of vegetation along the neighbour's boundary. Despite this, there are 3 first floor windows on plot 1 facing the road. The two closest windows serve a bathroom and stairwell which are not main habitable rooms. The third serves a bedroom, however, this would be only slightly under the design guidance recommended distance of 21 metres away from the nearest main window of the neighbour. Furthermore the relationship of these two units is not unusual along this part of Orchard Lane.
- 5.6 The flank elevation of plot 3 is located more than 12 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property (Pound Cottage) and is set at an angle. It is not, therefore, considered that the proposed dwelling would have a harmful impact on this neighbour in terms of overlooking or overshadowing.
- 5.7 Plot 2 lies adjacent to the boundary with Wyatts, the neighbouring bungalow. There is one dormer window facing this side which serves a bathroom. A condition is recommended requiring this to be obscure glazed.
- 5.8 The Country Engineer has raised no objection to the proposed new access and parking provision, subject to conditions relating to details of visibility and turning. Refusal on highway safety grounds, therefore, could not be justified.
- 5.9 The previous refusals relate to the southern most part of the site in the Conservation Area. The most recent of these for 2 dwellings (see Appendix 3) was refused due to the design, impact on the Conservation Area and lack of amenity space. Your Officers consider that the current scheme has sufficient amenity space and is sympathetic to the Conservation Area in terms of design and layout and, therefore, the previous reasons for refusal have been overcome.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL1 – Time Limit*
2. *MC2 – Submission of Material Samples*
3. *RE7 – Submission of Boundary Details*
4. *RE8 – Submission of Drainage Details*
5. *LS2 – Implementation of landscaping scheme*
6. *Prior to the first use or occupation of the development hereby permitted, and at all times thereafter, the proposed first floor window(s) on the west elevation of plot 2 shall be glazed with obscured glass only and shall be top-hung only. Thereafter and notwithstanding the provision of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order) no additional windows shall be inserted in the north elevation(s) of plot 2 of the development without the prior grant of planning permission.*
7. *The proposed rooflight(s) on the west elevation of plot 2 shall be constructed with the bottom sill being at a height of not less than 1.7m above the finished floor level of the room in which they are fitted, and shall be so maintained and not lowered without the prior grant of planning permission.*
8. *HY10 – Visibility*
9. *HY29 – No surface Water Drainage to the Highway*
10. *Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of the proposed surface material to be used on the access, parking and turning areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the District Planning Authority. The first 5 metres of the access shall be constructed in a bound material. The development shall only be carried out using the approved surface materials.*
11. *No development shall commence on site until the applicant has been responsible for organising an archaeological watching brief to be maintained during the period of construction/during any ground works taking place on site. The watching brief shall be carried out in accordance with a written specification and by a professional archaeological organisation that has first been agreed in writing by the District Planning Authority.*