

EHE/19767 – Sweetcroft Homes Ltd

Erection of 2 dwellings with associated access. Land adjacent to Sheard Studio, Newbury Road, East Hendred

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 This application proposes the erection of two detached dwellings within the front garden area of Sheard Studio, a two storey detached dwelling. Both proposed dwellings are 4 bedroom houses with integral garages. The two dwellings and Sheard Studio would share a single point of access off Newbury Road. The application drawings are at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The houses are similar to those which have already been allowed on appeal. However, they include an extension to each property, which represents a 10% increase in the size of the dwellings. For plot 2 this extended space would house an enlarged drawing room and for plot 1 it would house a ground floor family room with an en-suite to a first floor bedroom. It is also proposed that the overall ridge height be reduced by 0.6m.
- 1.3 The previous scheme involved the removal of a number of trees. The current proposal includes the removal of 3 further trees - a pine, a plum and a small tree towards the centre of the site.
- 1.4 The site is within East Hendred Conservation Area and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.5 The application comes before Committee as the Parish Council objects.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 Applications for minor works to Sheard Studio were permitted in 1983, 1991 and 1994.
- 2.2 Planning permission was refused in January 2004 for two dwellings on this site. However, planning permission was granted on appeal in October 2004. The application drawings and appeal decision are at **Appendix 2**.

3.0 Planning Policies

- 3.1 Policy H11 of the adopted Local Plan allows for new housing development within the main built-up area of East Hendred provided the scale, layout, mass and design of the dwellings would not harm the form, structure or character of the settlement.
- 3.2 Policy DC1 states that development will be permitted provided it is of a high quality design and the layout, scale, height, detailing and relationship to other buildings and spaces do not adversely affect the character of the area.
- 3.3 Policy HE1 states that development within a conservation area must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.
- 3.4 Policy NE6 states that within the North Wessex Downs AONB development will only be permitted if the natural beauty of the landscape will be conserved or enhanced.

4.0 Consultations

- 4.1 The Parish Council object to the proposal. Their comments are at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.2 Comments have been received from 9 neighbours. These relate to the following:

- The houses are too large for the plots
- The layout, bulk, and design are not in keeping with the character of the area. Timber cladding is not in keeping.
- Concerns about builders storing materials on the road and damaging the verges and hedges
- Some trees have already been removed and work has started
- Concerns about loss of trees
- The design and access statement does not comply with best practice.
- If allowed, permitted development rights should be removed.
- The District Council should make the same decision as they did for the previous application.

4.3 The Council's Arboricultural Officer has no objection to the proposal.

4.4 The County Engineer has no objections subject to conditions.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 Given that an extant permission exists for two dwellings on this site, the main issues for consideration are whether the changes to the dwellings result in a harmful impact on neighbouring properties and whether the design of the enlarged houses is acceptable.

5.2 The proposed extensions represent a 10% increase in the volume of the houses. It is important to note that once the approved houses were built and occupied the extensions could be built without permission as they would fall within the definition of 'Permitted Development'. The two additional elements to the houses are at the rear of the plots and would not be widely visible from vantage points within the conservation area. The proportions and design of the extensions are in keeping with those of the approved dwellings. As such, your Officers consider the visual impact of the additional accommodation to be acceptable and that the resultant houses would not be harmful to the conservation area. House number 1 is a minimum of 13.1m away from its nearest neighbour, Lavender House, and house number 2 is a minimum of 12.5m from Monks Court and a minimum of 25m from Sheard Studio. Given these distances, it is not considered that the larger houses would have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties. It is considered appropriate, however, to remove permitted development rights to ensure that any further enlargements to the properties would require planning permission.

5.3 Comments have been made about the design and materials of the houses and the principle of accommodating 2 houses on this site. However these were issues which were considered by the appeal Inspector and found to be acceptable. As such, your Officers consider these matters to be acceptable.

5.4 The proposal involves the removal of a further 3 trees. The Arboricultural Officer states that these trees are not worthy of retention. However, it is recommended that a landscaping condition be imposed which would help to soften the appearance of the new development.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *It is recommended that the application be approved subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL1 Time Limit – Full Application*
2. *MC2 Submission of Materials (samples)*

3. *LS4 Implementation of Landscaping scheme (incorporating existing trees) – to be submitted.*
4. *HY3 Access in accordance with specified plan*
5. *RE14 Garage Accommodation*
6. *RE2 Restriction on extensions and alterations to dwellings*