

MAR/5011/4 – Cranbourne Homes Ltd

Demolition of existing bungalow and outbuildings. Erection of 4 x 4 bedroom dwellings, access, car parking and landscaping. CotSDale, Abingdon Road, Marcham, OX13 6PX.

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of CotSDale, a large single storey dwelling set within a spacious plot, and the erection of 4 x 4 bed dwellings with associated parking (3 or 4 spaces for each unit) and a new access.
- 1.2 The site is located on the north side of the A415, Abingdon Road, on the corner of Howard Cornish Road, a suburban development, which runs along the western boundary of the site. To the east of the site lies a small lane leading to Hyde Farm House and the Hyde Farm Nursery. The site lies within the built up area of the village.
- 1.3 The proposed dwellings are arranged around an internal courtyard with a new vehicular access onto Howard Cornish Road.
- 1.4 The plans have been amended to take account of comments raised by the County Engineer and to correct a drafting error. A copy of the revised plans showing the location of the proposal, its design and layout together with the design statement are attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.5 The application comes to Committee because a number of objection letters have been received and the views of Marcham Parish Council differ from the recommendation.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 Previous planning history on the site has related to domestic extensions to the existing dwelling in 1980, 1983 and in 1991. In May 1993, retrospective planning permission was granted for erection of a boundary wall.

3.0 Planning Policies

- 3.1 *Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011*
Policy GS5 (making efficient use of land and buildings) seeks to promote the efficient re-use of previously developed / unused land and buildings within settlements (provided there is no conflict with other policies in the Local Plan).
- 3.2 Policy H11 (development in the larger villages) enables new housing development within the built-up area of Marcham, provided the scale, layout, mass and design of the dwellings would not materially harm the form, structure, or character of the village, and the proposal does not involve the loss of facilities important to the local community (i.e. informal public open space).
- 3.3 Policies DC1, DC5, DC6, DC8, DC9 and DC14 (quality of new development) are relevant and seek to ensure that all new development is of a high standard of design / landscaping; does not cause harm to the amenity of neighbours; suitable social and physical infrastructure exists for the development or can be provided; the development is acceptable in terms of highway safety; and it will not result in adverse surface water run off.
- 3.4 PPS3, "Housing", is also relevant and reiterates the key objective of developing previously developed sites within urban areas, where suitable, ahead of greenfield sites and making the most effective and efficient use of land. It also comments on the importance of design, in that proposed development should complement neighbouring buildings and the local area in terms of scale, density, layout and access. Paragraph 12 of PPS3 confirms that good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, whilst Paragraph 13 goes on to state that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities

for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.

4.0 **Consultations**

4.1 Marcham Parish Council has objected to the application and their comments are attached at **Appendix 2**.

4.2 County Engineer – no objections, subject to the existing accesses being closed, an amended plan to make the proposed access more informally engineered for the low number of dwellings proposed and to provide a rumble strip, and a financial contribution towards the improvement of nearby bus stops.

4.3 County Archaeologist – no objections, subject to an informative saying that any archaeological finds during development should be notified to the County Archaeological service.

4.4 Drainage Engineer – there is a foul sewer that runs south to north through the site which will affect plots 2 and 3. As such, the applicant will need consent from Thames Water to build over this. Otherwise no objections, subject to conditions.

4.5 Thames Water – With regard to water infrastructure, we have no objection. There are public sewers crossing this site. No building works will be permitted within 3m of the sewer without Thames Water's approval. The applicant will need to submit a building over / diversion application form.

4.6 Environmental Health – no objections.

4.7 4 letters of objection have been received, which can be summarised as follows:

- There is an increasing amount of development in Marcham, much of which puts added pressure on Howard Cornish Road and the junction with Abingdon Road, where there have been a number of accidents. This will add to increased traffic to the detriment of highway safety.
- The proposed access is adjacent to a bus stop.
- Parking provision is inadequate, and will lead to parking on Howard Cornish Road.
- Two storey dwellings with high pitched roofs, so close to the road are out of keeping with the spacious and rural character of this part of the village.
- The courtyard arrangement and the size of the dwellings are incongruous, unsympathetic, and would create an unacceptable street scene in relation to neighbouring buildings.
- The height of the buildings is a huge increase over the existing bungalow. Previous permissions for dwellings on this side of the village have been restricted to single storey (i.e. Hyde Farm Bungalow & Hyde Farm Nursery Bungalow). The site is a sensitive one on the approach into the village and any development should be much lower than that proposed.
- The site adjoins the Grade II* listed Hyde Farm House. The proposed development will have an impact on the setting of this listed building.
- The removal of the existing garage will leave a gap in the stone wall on the north east corner of the site. This should be replaced with an extension of the existing stone wall, northwards.
- The development will overlook Hellensbourne, and nos. 89 and 90 Howard Cornish Road.
- A public sewer runs through the site. The proposed development will build right over it.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 The main issues in this case are considered to be 1) the principle of the development in this location, 2) the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, 3) the impact of the proposal on neighbouring properties, and 4) the safety of the access and parking arrangements.

- 5.2 On the first issue, Marcham is identified in the Local Plan as a larger village that can accommodate new housing development providing the layout, mass and design would not harm the character of the area. PPS 3 'Housing' also makes it a priority to use previously developed land for new housing. Furthermore, PPS3 encourages the use of innovative approaches to achieve higher densities within existing settlements. The principle of a development in the manner proposed is therefore considered an acceptable and appropriate form of development in this location.
- 5.3 Regarding the second issue, the development in the form proposed is not considered to be out of keeping with the locality. Your Officers also consider that the proposal does not affect the setting of the Hyde Farm House listed building, which is located approximately 70m to the north-east of the site.
- 5.4 The design of the dwellings takes reference from the various styles that are prevalent in Marcham, namely strong gables and steep pitches. The changes in ridge heights over the garages, also adds variety to the development, complementing the varied roof heights that are found throughout the village. In terms of heights, the dwellings measure 8.5m to ridge. However, this is not considered by Officers to be harmful given the dwellings have low eaves heights and the site is relatively well screened. As such, the increase in height is largely seen as roofing in the street scene. Furthermore, the orientation of the plot around a courtyard layout is not harmful to the established settlement pattern found in Howard Cornish Road.
- 5.5 The development is not considered to be an overdevelopment of the site. Adequate garden / amenity space exists to the rear of each dwelling, and each dwelling is set within a reasonably sized plot. Whilst plots 1 and 4 are closer to Howard Cornish Road than the existing dwelling, they are still set back from the road frontage and do not appear congested in the street scene. In respect of the relationship with Abingdon Road, plots 3 and 4 are no further forward than the dwelling, Hellensbourne, to the west.
- 5.6 Turning to the third issue, the impact on neighbouring properties, it is considered that no undue harm would be caused to those properties opposite the site in Howard Cornish Road given that this is the public side of these dwellings where amenity is expected to be less than that of the private spaces to the rear. The relationship between the new dwellings within the site is also acceptable and plots 2 and 3 have been designed to protect the privacy and amenity of Hyde Farm Bungalow, which lies to the east.
- 5.7 In respect of the relationship of plot 2 to no 89 Howard Cornish Road, the upper floor bedrooms of plot 2 will overlook the end of the rear garden to this property. However, there is an existing 3m high garage building on the immediate southern boundary to this property which will be removed as part of this scheme. This will undoubtedly increase the light to this property. Furthermore, the siting of plot 2, 13m from the boundary is not considered to be so harmful to warrant refusal in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy, and will not cause any undue overshadowing or loss of light to this property. Consequently your Officers consider this relationship to be acceptable.
- 5.8 On the issue of parking and access, the proposed arrangements are considered acceptable. The parking shows 3 or 4 spaces for each dwelling, and there is sufficient space to turn around and leave the site in a forward gear. The plans have been amended in respect of the access in the light of comments made by the County Engineer so it is now proposed to be more informally designed, as encouraged by current Government Guidance. Adequate visibility can be achieved at the new access to ensure pedestrian and highway safety. The County Engineer raises no objection to the proposal. A financial contribution is also being sought for public transport infrastructure improvements in order to upgrade the nearby bus stop.
- 5.9 In respect of the drainage sewer that runs through the site, your Officers understand that the applicants have been in discussions with Thames Water and, as a result of these discussions,

it is proposed that the sewer is realigned to run through the car ports of the development. There are no other drainage issues arising from this development.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *That authority to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions is delegated to the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) in consultation with the Committee Chair in order to allow the completion of a S106 Agreement to secure the required financial contribution for highways infrastructure.*

1. *TL1 – Time Limit*
2. *MC2 – Sample Materials*
3. *RE8 – Submission of drainage details*
4. *RE7 – Submission of boundary details.*
5. *RE22 – Slab levels*
6. *RE14 – garage to be retained*
7. *HY25 - Car parking layout in accordance with specified plan*
8. *HY3 – Access in accordance with specified plan*
9. *HY8 – Closure of existing accesses as specified*
10. *LS4 – Submission of landscaping scheme*