

Reference: 12/00599/OUT

Date Submitted: 24th August 2012

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Watchorn

Location: Belvoir House 17 Blacksmiths End Stathern LE14 4EZ

Proposal: Outline planning application for two 2 bedroomed dwellings and one 3 bedroomed dwelling.



Introduction:-

The site comprises of a large detached property with attached garage at the western end of Blacksmith End. To the north lies open countryside to the south and west similar modern detached properties. The property lies within the village envelope.

The proposal is to demolish the existing dwelling and redevelop the site with a three bedroomed detached property to the front of the site and to the rear fronting the lane would be two detached properties linked by carports. The three bedroomed property would be accessed from the lane with a pedestrian access only to the main street. The application is in 'outline' with all reserved matters reserved. However, amended plans have been submitted..which illustrate how three dwellings could be accommodated on the site.

It is considered that the main issue relating to the application is:

- **The form and character of the development and its impact upon the adjoining area**

The application is required to be considered by the Committee as it represents competing policy objectives.

Relevant History:-

None.

Planning Policies:-

The National Planning Policy Framework was published 27th March and replaced the previous collection of PPS. It introduces a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ meaning:

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; *or*
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

The NPPF offers direction on the relative weight of the content in comparison to existing Local Plan policy and advises that **whilst the NPPF does not automatically render older policies obsolete, where they are in conflict, the NPPF should prevail.** It also offers advice on the weight to be given to ‘emerging’ policy (i.e the LDF) depending on its stage of preparation, extent of unresolved (disputed) issues and compatibility with the NPPF.

It also establishes 12 planning principles against which proposals should be judged. Relevant to this application are those to:

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes (etc) that the country needs
- Always seek to ensure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving communities within it
- Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

Adopted Melton Local Plan (Saved Policies)

The saved policies OS1 and BE1 allows for development within the village envelope provided that:

- the form, character and appearance of the settlement are not adversely affected,
- the form, size, scale, mass, materials and architectural detailing of the development is in keeping with the character of the locality;
- the development would not cause undue loss of residential privacy, outlook and amenities as enjoyed by occupants of existing dwellings in the vicinity; and
- satisfactory access and parking provision can be made available.

Policy H6 allows for groups or single plots as infill development in rural villages.

The Melton LDF Core Strategy (Submission) Development Plan document:

The CS Seeks to focus development in Melton Mowbray with a small balance (20%) in the surrounding Borough, with expectations to produce mixed, integrated housing developments and meet local needs by addressing identified imbalances in housing stock in all locations.

There are a number of policy objectives contained within the Core Strategy which apply to this proposal and will attract some weight given its close reflection to the NPPF.

CS3 Sustainable Villages:

To qualify as a sustainable village there will have to be at least three public services available to support new housing development. Somerby has been identified as a sustainable village and therefore is capable of supporting new infill development.

CS4 Making Effective use of Land: Supports the use of brownfield land which will assist in meeting the target of 50% of development on brownfield land by 2026.

CS5 Strategic Housing: Seeks to manage the delivery of homes to provide a balanced housing market taking into account local needs. Promoting accessible design and apply Lifetime Homes Standards

where appropriate to ensure new dwellings are flexible and able to meet the housing of a wider section of society, including people with disabilities and older people.

CS12 Better Design: Seeks to ensure that the design of all development makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. New development should integrate successfully into established settlements or rural areas without harming their character, appearance or setting. It also promotes the most effective use of land having regards to the form, pattern, scale and character of the area, provide safe environments whilst protecting residential amenity; and protect important heritage assets located within the Borough.

Consultations:-

Consultation reply	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
Highway Authority: No objection, .	The proposal would generate some additional traffic associated with the new dwelling, however as noted by the Highways Officer, the changes to the existing access are considered to be a highways gain. The proposals include parking to the required standard. The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on highway safety.
Stathern Parish Council: The plans , although for outline approval only have been amended twice and the Parish have objected consistently on the grounds of over-intensive development compared to the size of neighbouring properties garden areas will be reduced, parking areas reduced and increased traffic on a narrow road.	It is noted that the Parish Council object in principle to the development. However the dwellings will all have adequate garden areas around the houses, adequate parking provision and members should note that the Highways Authority has no objections to the latest amended plans.

Representations:

A site notice was posted and the application was advertised in the press. Neighbouring properties were also notified of the proposal. As a result three objections have been received.

Representation Objection/Concerns	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
Concerned at loss of view from landing room window.	The objection relates to 15 Blacksmiths End to the south of the site. The window in question is a landing window and it is not usual to protect the view from a non habitable room.
Shading caused by new 3 bedroomed property to landscaping on their driveway	The proposed dwelling would be to the north of the number 15 with the majority of the dwelling at least 5 metres from the boundary therefore not considered to be a reason for refusal.
Over-intensive form of development out of character with area.	The area has a very mixed character with development not conforming to any established building lines and being built at different times with no strong inherent character. The siting of the 3 bedroomed property to the front of the site will be similar to Number 20 Blacksmiths End on the opposite side of the road and in effect creates a “gateway “ into the village from the north. This allows room to the rear to provide two further dwellings with adequate amenity and parking space.
Lack of parking for the development.	The plans have been amended by the applicant and the Highways Authority has no objections to the revisions.
Development at 7 Blacksmiths End was refused on similar grounds of out of character with the immediate area.	The plot of land at No. 7 was a backland site and concerns were raised with regard to it being a precedent for further development of this nature. This proposal is quite different as all properties

	have a road frontage.
Would impact upon the views and privacy of adjoining residents.	The 2 bedroomed dwellings are sited adjacent to the gable of 15 Blacksmiths End and inevitably they will affect the views from a landing window but none of the other principle windows will be affected. It is considered that there will be no undue impact upon residential amenities as currently enjoyed by the neighbouring residents due to the siting of the dwellings and the separation distance involved.
Currently there are 14 homes for sale in the village including smaller properties.	David Couttie Associates conducted a Housing Market Analysis for Melton Borough Council (Housing Stock Analysis 2006-2011; 2006) which clearly demonstrated that there is a surplus of larger private market homes and a significant lack of smaller sized properties within Melton Borough. Future development has therefore to address the imbalance of stock type and size, both by tenure and location to create a more sustainable and balanced housing market. This will require a bias in favour of small units to address both the current shortfall and future demographic and household formation change which will result in an increase in small households and downsizing of dwellings.

Other material considerations

Consideration	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
Compliance (or otherwise) with adopted local plan policies . Policies OS1 and BE 1 require that developments are in keeping with their surroundings in terms of scale and layout etc.	The proposal would result in a dwelling standing forward of its immediate neighbours on Blacksmiths End. However, the area has a very mixed character with development not conforming to any established building lines and being built at different times with no strong coherent character. It is considered that this proposal could enhance the area by creating a sense of enclosure.
Influence of the NPPF	As stated above, the development is considered to accord with the applicable Local Plan policies. In this instance, the policies are not considered to conflict with the NPPF and as such there is no requirement to balance the regimes against one another.

Conclusion

The site lies outside the conservation area within the village envelope in a residential area which is of a very mixed character with primarily modern housing. The development affords the opportunity to utilise a large plot of land and provide an innovative solution to provide additional housing. The siting of the dwelling close to the highway will frame the approach to the village from the north and allow for a further two dwellings without detracting from the overall character of the area.

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its siting, parking and access arrangements and to have no significant adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. As such, it is considered to be in accordance with the objectives of the applicable development plan policies and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION: Permit, subject to the following conditions:

1. Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission and the development to which this permission relates shall begin not later than the expiration of two years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.
2. No development shall commence on the site until approval of the details of the "layout, scale, external appearance of the building(s), and access of the site" (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority.
3. No development shall start on site until representative samples of the materials to be used in the construction of all external surfaces have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
4. The parking and turning facilities shall be constructed and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the dwelling they serve, and shall remain free for use for this purpose on a permanent basis thereafter.

The reasons for the conditions are:-

1. To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The application is in outline only.
3. To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control over the external appearance as no details have been submitted.
4. To ensure adequate parking facilities are provided.

Officer to contact: Mr P Green

Date: 20th November 2012