

Planning Committee

6th March 2012

Reference:
APP/11/01514

Area Team:
North Team

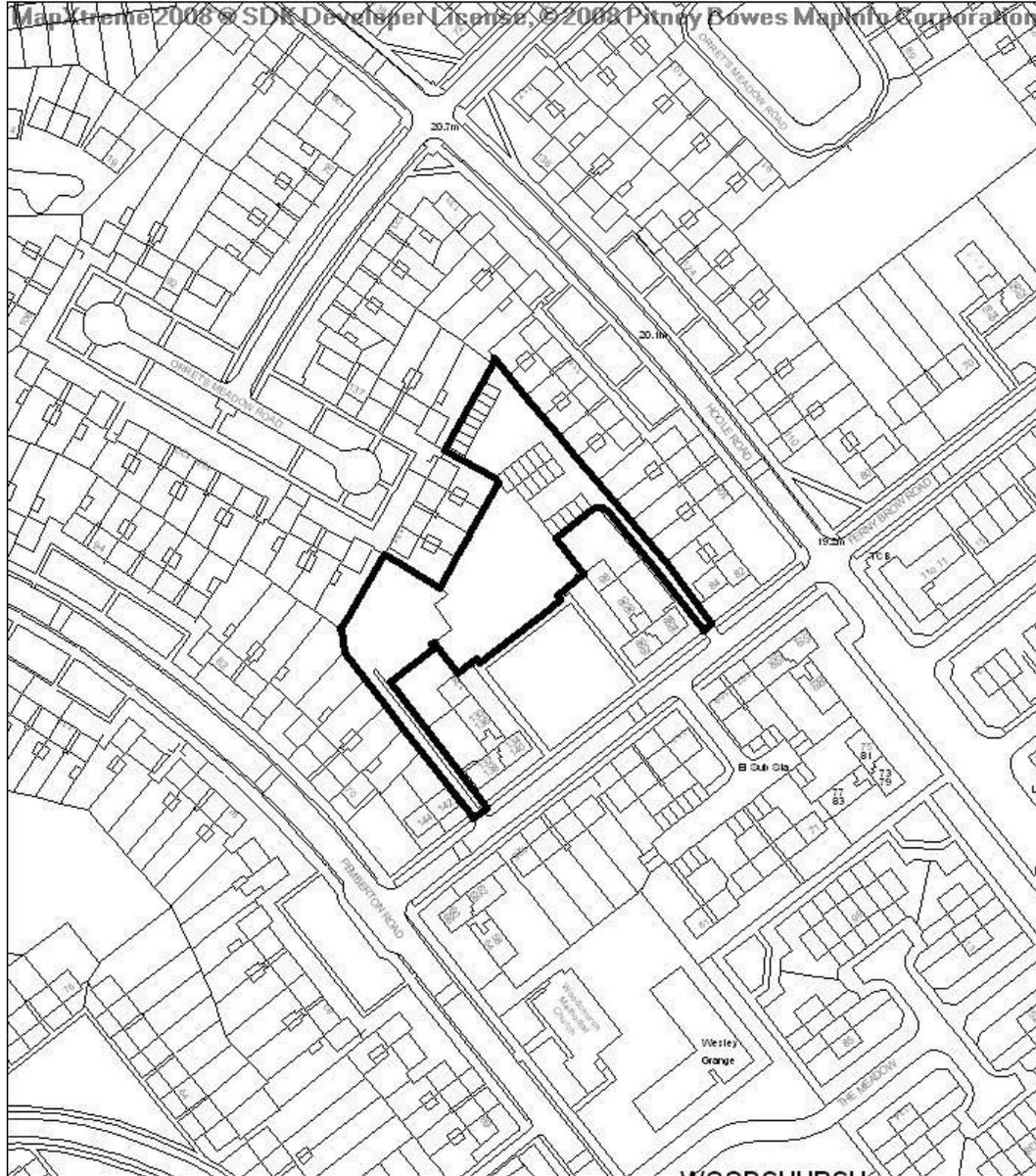
Case Officer:
Mrs S Day

Ward:
Upton

Location: Unused Land, FERNY BROW ROAD, WOODCHURCH, CH49 8EH
Proposal: Erection of 16no. flats (1,2,& 3 bedrooms) including parking and associated landscaping

Applicant: Wirral Partnership Homes
Agent : Michael Dyson Associates

Site Plan:



Development Plan Designation:

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

There is no planning history relating to this site.

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:**REPRESENTATIONS**

Having regard to the Council's Guidance on Publicity for Applications, 22 notifications were sent to adjoining properties. A site notice was also displayed. Representations have been received in one e-mail on behalf of 117, 19 and 1212 Hoole Road and 145 Orrets Meadow Road on the following grounds:

1. Demolition of rented garaging facilities is proposed, which will result in parking difficulties, particularly on Hoole Road, which is a congested and dangerous road.
2. Loss of access and the blocking off of rear access gates - established easement rights would be lost.

Merseyside Campaign for Cycling - Object to lack of secure cycle parking.

CONSULTATIONS

The Director of Technical Services (Traffic Management Division) - no objections

The Director of Law, HR & Asset Management (Pollution Control Division) - no objection

Director's Comments:**REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

This application seeks permission for the erection of 16 flats which is defined as Major Development and is therefore required to be considered by Planning Committee.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal relates to the erection of a two and three storey building containing 16 flats. An existing garage court will be demolished to provide parking and landscaped areas. The site has been cleared for some time but was previously occupied by a 14 bed care home for the elderly.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The application site lies within an area designated for primarily residential uses in the Unitary Development Plan, but is outside of the identified Housing regeneration priority areas. RSS Policy LCR4 requires plans and strategies for this area to ensure provision for housing development addresses barriers to affordability and to meet identified local need. This is supported by the Interim Planning Policy 'New Housing Development' that sets out criteria which enables local need to be considered for residential schemes outside the regeneration priority areas. If these criteria are satisfied, the proposal would be acceptable in principle subject to UDP Policies HS4 'Criteria for New Housing Development', HSG2 'Affordable Housing' and Supplementary Planning Document SPD2 'Designing for Self Contained Flat Development and Conversions'.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site consists of a brownfield site to the northern side of Ferny Brow Road. The site is set back from the road by some distance with a grassed open space to the south of the site. To the east and west of this open space are terraces of two storey dwellings which front the open space. Vehicular access is existing and currently serves two garage courts to the east and western boundaries of the site. The majority of these garages are no longer in use. There is little landscaping in the area with the exception of a couple trees and grass.

POLICY CONTEXT

The proposal is for the erection of flats and is assessed primarily against the following policies:

Wirral Unitary Development Plan

Policy HS4 - Criteria for new housing development. This requires that the proposal in general terms must relate well to adjacent properties and not result in a detrimental change in the area or to the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Policy TR9 - Sets out the requirement for off street parking provision within new development and road safety and traffic management considerations.

Policy GR5 - This policy establishes the requirement for new developments to make a positive visual statement through new landscaping and the protection of existing landscape features.

Supplementary Planning Document 2: Designing for Self-Contained Flat Developments and Conversions. This establishes more specifically the considerations that should be applied to new build flats in terms of design, amenity space and parking.

Interim Planning Policy for New Housing development - directs new residential development to the Regeneration Priority Areas. Residential development would only be acceptable if it satisfies the following criteria:-

- i) The proposal will not harm regeneration in adjoining areas
- ii) The proposal will not harm the character of the adjoining area
- iii) That the proposal will assist the regeneration of the site
- iv) The proposal will meet an identified local housing need

Regional Policy

RSS policies set out the housing supply requirements for Wirral, whilst addressing the need for affordable housing provision and the re-use of brownfield sites. Specifically Policy DP4 suggests a sequential approach to site selection, with existing buildings and previously used land being chosen before Greenfield sites.

Policy LCR4 addresses the need for affordable housing across the Borough

National Policy

PPS3 - Housing. Sets out the requirement at a national level for high quality well designed housing that provides a mix of housing type and tenure in a sustainable form.

The proposals use a sequentially preferable site to provide 100% affordable housing. Although outside the Regeneration Priority areas the site lies within a ward where the need for affordable housing has been identified through Wirral's SHMA. The design of the building addresses the criteria of Policy HS4 and SPG2 and results in the positive regeneration of this vacant site.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The proposed development takes the form of a two and three storey building which contains 16 affordable flats. The building will be sited to the north of the open space on Ferny Brow Road forming a three sided u-shaped development with the existing properties. The site was previously occupied by a care home in a similar position.

The surrounding properties are predominantly two storey brick and render although the wider area has a mix of heights including tower blocks. The proposed building has two-storey wings on either side of a central three-storey element. This provides a transition from the adjacent two storey dwellings with a central focal point. The buildings front elevation faces the open space to the south in common with the adjacent buildings. The rear of the building is accessed from the parking area and more private amenity space.

The proposed materials are mainly brick and cladding to fit in with the surrounding area. In addition timber cladding is proposed for parts of the upper elevations to add a more distinctive and contemporary detail to the building.

The proposed parking areas are to the north of the building where the existing garages are currently located. The demolition of the garages will enable a more open and safer landscaped parking area which will be adjacent to the amenity area for the flats. Access to the parking area will use the existing gated access roads from Ferny Brow Road but will become safer by the use of a one way access and egress system.

Four residents have expressed concern that they will lose their garages. The applicant has advised that these tenants are already under notice to leave and alternative provision will be made.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

The proposed building is in excess of 35 metres from the buildings to the east and west, which is well in excess of the 14 metre requirement. The closest buildings at the head of Orrets Meadow Road will have their rear elevations facing the rear elevation of the development. The buildings are set at an angle and the distance between elevations ranges from 21 metres up to 29 metres. As such there is no significant loss of amenity or privacy anticipated. It is considered that the required separation distances, set out in Supplementary Planning Document 2 are achieved.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

The proposed changes to the access road and parking areas do not raise any highway safety concerns. In order to ensure a satisfactory development, conditions are suggested which require the submission of signage details for the one way system and for the provision of dropped kerbs.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

The building is of a modern construction and will be built to achieve a Sustainable Homes rating.

HEALTH ISSUES

There are no health implications relating to this application.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development represents the re-use of a brownfield site to provide 16 affordable homes which accords with the advice in PPS3. The design and siting of the building is of a scale which fits in with the surrounding uses without resulting in a loss of amenity for existing properties. The development includes parking, landscaping and amenity space to a standard which satisfies the relevant UDP policies.

Whilst the development is not in a regeneration priority area identified for new residential development, the re-use of a previously developed site and the need for affordable housing in this area weigh in favour of the development.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

It is considered that the proposed development would address the need for affordable housing in this location with a building which has been designed to integrate into the surrounding area. The proposals represent a positive improvement to the appearance of the area which complies with local and national planning policies.

Recommended Approve
Decision:

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Before any construction commences, samples of the facing and roof materials to be used in the external construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved materials shall then be used in the construction of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy HS4 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

3. The proposed landscaping shall be completed before the accommodation hereby approved is occupied. Any trees and shrubs planted in accordance with the landscaping scheme which, within 5 years of planting are removed, dying, seriously damaged or become diseased shall be replaced by trees and shrubs of similar species and size to those originally planted in the first available planting season.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance and that the proposed development enhances the visual amenity of the locality.

4. Before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto site, a 1 metre high fence or other barrier as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, shall be erected around the outer limit of the crown spread of all trees, hedges or woodlands shown to be retained on the approved plan. Such fencing shall be maintained in a satisfactory manner until the development is completed. During the period of construction, no material shall be stored, fires started or trenches dug within these enclosed areas without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent damage to the trees/ hedges in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy GR5 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

5. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, details of the signage relating to the one way vehicular access shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The signs shall be erected before the flats are occupied in accordance with the agreed details and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

6. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, details of the dropped kerbs at both vehicle entrance and exit shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The kerbs shall be installed before the flats are occupied in accordance with the agreed details and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

7. Prior to the commencement of development, a scheme for the provision of affordable housing to be provided, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the occupancy criteria to be used in determining the identity of prospective and successive occupier of the affordable housing and the means by which such occupancy can be enforced. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full and maintained in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to comply with the Interim Planning Policy for New Housing Development.

8. No part of the development shall be brought into use until space and facilities for cycle parking of a type and in a location previously submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority have been provided and these facilities shall be permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to accord with Policy TR12 in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

9. No development shall commence until details of the proposed measures to be incorporated within the buildings to achieve 10% of the predicted energy requirements of the site from renewable sources have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, unless it has previously been demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and operated as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of minimising the demand for energy from non-renewable sources in accordance with RSS Policy EM18.

Last Comments By: 10/02/2012 10:15:24

Expiry Date: 20/03/2012