

# Planning Committee

19 February 2015

**Reference:**  
**APP/14/01256**

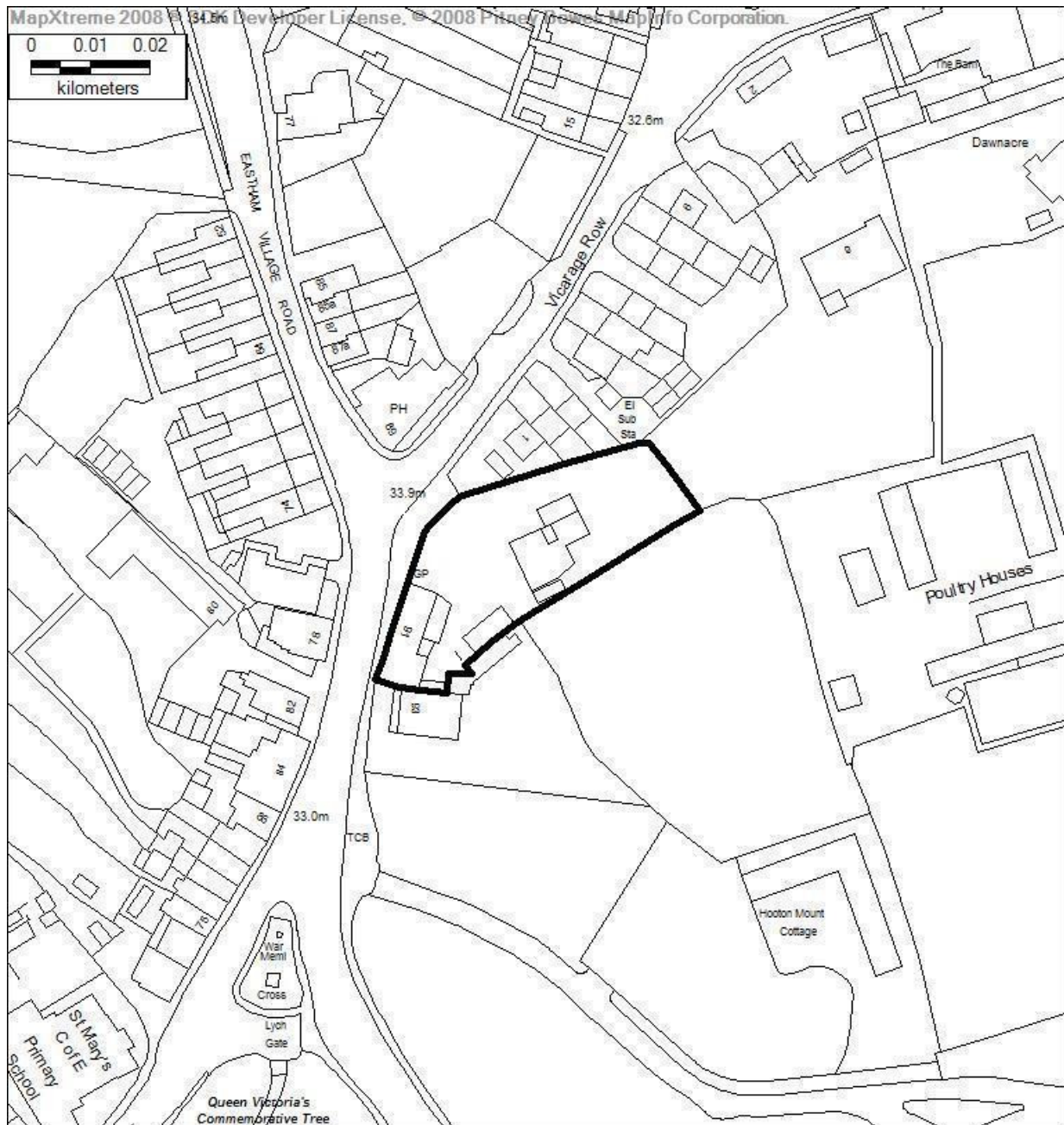
**Area Team:**  
**South Team**

**Case Officer:**  
**Mr N Williams**

**Ward:**  
**Eastham**

**Location:** 91 EASTHAM VILLAGE ROAD, EASTHAM, CH62 0AW  
**Proposal:** Conversion and extension of existing buildings into three residential dwellings with car parking  
**Applicant:** The Trustees of the Hooton Estate  
**Agent :** Fisher German LLP

## Site Plan:



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**Development Plan allocation and policies:**

Green Belt

Conservation Area (for illustrative purposes)

**Planning History:**

Location: 91, Eastham Village Road, Eastham. L62 0AW

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Retention of use as a cafe, manufacture of crafts office, and erection of a kitchen/utility extension.

Application No: APP/95/05985

Decision Date: 18/01/1996

Decision Type: Withdrawn

Location: 91, Eastham Village Road, Eastham. L62 0AW

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Retention of use of cafe, retail and manufacture of crafts and offices, refurbishment of barn, highway alterations and repositioning of access.

Application No: APP/96/05111

Decision Date: 15/11/1996

Decision Type: Refuse

Location: Heritage Demolition, 91 Eastham Village Road, Eastham, Wirral, L62 0AW

Application Type: Conservation Area Consent

Proposal: Existing front sandstone wall to be reduced in height to 900mm.

Application No: CON/98/06972

Decision Date: 31/03/1999

Decision Type: Refuse

Location: Heritage Demolition, 91 Eastham Village Road, Eastham, Wirral, L62 0AW

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Change of use to an office (to be used for administration of business for Heritage Demolition Limited).

Application No: APP/98/06810

Decision Date: 08/01/1999

Decision Type: Refuse

Location: 91 Eastham Village Road, Eastham, Wirral, CH62 0AW

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Change of use from vacant building to office use

Application No: APP/03/05267

Decision Date: 21/05/2003

Decision Type: Approve

Location: 91 EASTHAM VILLAGE ROAD, EASTHAM, CH62 0AW

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Change of use of part of building to chiropody clinic.

Application No: APP/10/00244

Decision Date: 20/04/2010

Decision Type: Approve

Location: 91 EASTHAM VILLAGE ROAD, EASTHAM

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Change of use of existing/vacant coffee shop and offices premises to two residential units, and demolition of the existing building to the rear and erection of three dwellings

Application No: APP/14/00412

Decision Date: 19/05/2014

Decision Type: Withdrawn

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

### REPRESENTATIONS

Having regard to the Council's Guidance for Publicity on Planning Applications, 19 notifications were sent to adjoining properties and a site notice was displayed near the site. At the time of writing, there had been one objection received from the occupiers of 1 Vicarage Row, objecting on the grounds of the impact on the Green Belt, the impact on the Conservation Area and the impact on residential amenity in terms of the new building appearing obtrusive and harmfully prominent in outlook from habitable windows.

Councillor Gilchrist objects to the application on the basis that the extensions to the sandstone building are not sensitive to the size and scale of the original building and the original building is 'drowned' by the extensions.

### CONSULTATIONS

**Head of Environment & Regulation (Pollution Control Division)** - No objection

**Head of Environment & Regulation (Traffic and Transportation Division)** - No objection

### **Director's Comments:**

Consideration of this application was deferred at Planning Committee on 20 January 2015 to allow for a formal Members Site Visit to take place.

### **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Councillor Mitchell requested that the application be taken out of delegation having regards to the tight parameters of the site and the potential effects of the development would have on neighbours.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The application is for the conversion and extension of existing buildings into three residential dwellings.

The proposal involves the conversion of the existing farmhouse-barn which fronts onto Eastham Village Road, from commercial use into two dwellings. The existing sandstone building which is set within the site will also be extended to create a further dwelling.

A previous application (APP/14/00412) for the conversion of the farmhouse-barn and the demolition of the sandstone and erection of three new dwellings was withdrawn.

### **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

The principle of the development is acceptable subject to relevant policy guidelines.

### **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The application site consists of a large farmhouse-barn which fronts onto Eastham Village Road, with a large sandstone building to the rear set within a large area of hard standing. The surrounding area contains a mix of uses, both residential and commercial.

### **POLICY CONTEXT**

The proposal is subject to Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policy GB2: Guidelines for Development in the Green Belt, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt, with exceptions to this including the 'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.'

The application site is considered to be a previously developed site, given that there are existing buildings on the site together with extensive hard standing. The new structures are only extensions to the existing sandstone building and will enable this building to be fully retained and utilised as one new

dwelling, with the large majority of the development involving the retention of existing structures. The provision within the NPPF of 'limited infilling' and 'redevelopment' of sites would indicate that new structures/extensions are not automatically to be considered as having a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt simply because they may be larger than an original structure. In this instance, the site is located within the centre of a rural village, and given that the proposed extensions are not considered to be excessive, the development will have limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt. As such, the proposal complies with Paragraph 89 of the NPPF and would not constitute inappropriate development.

As the application is within Eastham Village Conservation Area, it is also subject to UDP Policy CH2: Development Affecting Conservation Areas and CH10: Eastham Village Conservation Area.

Development Management Policies in the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton are also applicable. Policy WM8 requires development to incorporate measures for achieving efficient use of resources. Policy WM9 also requires development to provide measures for waste collection and recycling.

## **APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES**

### Conversion of farmhouse-barn

An archaeological report has been submitted with the scheme which details the history of the two buildings. The original stone-built wing to the north of this farmhouse-barn building is C17th in origin, widened and rebuilt in the C18th, and with later C18th/C19th additions in brick, in the manner of other farms and houses within Eastham. As such, this building is an important and key building located at the heart of the conservation area, and its retention and conversion is to be welcomed.

There will be no new openings created in this building, with all existing openings utilised on the front, side and rear elevations. There will be some minor alterations to the side elevation, where an existing external staircase will be removed and an existing full-length glass door will be converted into a traditional window, with timber panelling below. Some of these windows will be replaced, and a condition will ensure that the materials used are satisfactory and in keeping with the surrounding area.

Whilst there are a number of commercial premises fronting onto Eastham Village Road, there are also a number of residential properties and therefore the use of this building for residential purposes will not harm the character of the area, nor in fact the general vitality of the village.

### Conversion and extension of sandstone building

The proposal for the existing sandstone building will see it extended fairly substantially, but leaves the original building more or less intact and acting as the focal point of the development. Whilst the extensions will change the scale of this building, this in itself is not considered to be unacceptable - the building is set within a large area of hard standing, and the extensions are designed sensitively so as to compliment the original building. The result will be a new dwelling which retains an original sandstone building as its focal point, whilst also making good use of the site without appearing as an overdevelopment or harmful to the overall character of the conservation area.

The extension of this building will be on hard standing and will therefore not result in the loss of any green space. The provision of a landscaping scheme for the new development should, in fact, result in this site becoming and therefore having a more positive impact on the character of the conservation area compared to the current situation.

The distance from the rear of 1 Vicarage Row to the proposed dwelling is approximately 13 metres in places, which is below the normal requirement of 14 metres from a habitable window to a blank elevation (which the proposed dwelling will effectively be at first-floor level). However, the neighbouring property is directly facing the original sandstone building. The main wall of this original building is only being increased in height by approximately 0.2m, with a pitched roof above it which slopes further away from the neighbouring property. As such, although 1 Vicarage Row is only approximately 13 metres from the proposed building, the limited additions above the existing structure will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of the neighbouring property - and in any case, the roof sloping away from this property results in the majority of these additions complying with the required 14 metres separation distance. The proposed structure simply being visible from this property does not

automatically mean that it will have an overbearing impact on the neighbouring property.

Whilst there are some habitable windows on the rear of the other properties of Village Mews, these properties are all a minimum of 14 metres from the proposed dwelling. The only window at first-floor level on the proposed dwelling is a small bedroom window which will be obscurely glazed. There are also two existing porthole openings in the existing sandstone building - it is proposed that these will be filled in, but the condition ensures that if they are retained as openings, then they too will be obscurely glazed. This will ensure that there is no overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

There is a distance of approximately 10 metres to the north east boundary, with this boundary also containing dense tree screening. There is a paddock to the south east, and there will therefore be no loss of residential amenity from windows looking in this direction.

Overall, it is considered that the conversion and extension of these historic buildings will help to preserve and enhance Eastham Village Conservation Area, and will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policies HS4, CH2 and CH10 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **SEPARATION DISTANCES**

Separation distances are discussed in more detail above.

#### **HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS**

There are two off-street parking spaces provided for each dwelling. This is not considered to result in any adverse highway implications.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES**

There are no Environmental/Sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

#### **HEALTH ISSUES**

There are no health implications relating to this application.

#### **CONCLUSION**

It is considered that the conversion and extension of these historic buildings will help to preserve and enhance Eastham Village Conservation Area, and will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policies HS4, CH2 and CH10 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **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:-

The conversion and extension of these historic buildings will help to preserve and enhance Eastham Village Conservation Area, and will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policies HS4, CH2 and CH10 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Recommended Decision:**                      **Approve**

#### **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. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL samples of the 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 and CH2 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

3. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL full details of the proposed windows including materials and sections at a scale of 1:10 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 Policies HS4 and CH2 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 6th October 2014 and listed as follows: 23605-07; 23605-08B; and 8859/1A

**Reason:** For the avoidance of doubt and to define the permission.

5. BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT HEREBY PERMITTED IS FIRST OCCUPIED the first-floor window serving Bedroom 3 on the front (north-facing) elevation, and the two existing porthole windows in the existing sandstone building, shall be glazed with obscure glass only and shall be non-opening. The windows shall be permanently maintained with obscure glazing at all times thereafter.

**Reason:** In the interest of residential amenity

6. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL section drawings of floor and acoustic insulation between the first and second floors of the barn facing the main road (showing that the timber framing will remain exposed) shall be submitted to and approved in writing. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

**Reason:** To protect the historical integrity of the building

7. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL a full scheme of soft and hard landscaping (including boundary treatment) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation of any dwelling hereby approved

**Reason:** In the interests of amenity

8. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL a Site Waste Management Plan, confirming how demolition and construction waste will be recovered and re-used on the site or at other sites, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Plan shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure that the proposed development would include the re-use of limited resources, and to ensure that the amount of waste for landfill is reduced to accord with policy WM8 of the Waste Local Plan.

9. PRIOR TO THE FIRST OCCUPATION OF THE DWELLINGS arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse, and vehicle access thereto, shall be made within the curtilage of the site, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure a satisfactory appearance and adequate standards of hygiene and refuse collection, having regard to policies WM8 and WM9 of the Waste Local Plan.

**Further Notes for Committee:**

**Last Comments By:** 19/11/2014 14:44:14

**Expiry Date:** 01/12/2014