

UTT/15/1959/FUL - THAXTED

MINOR

PROPOSAL: Conversion of former children's nursery building into 7 no dwellings and the erection of a rear two storey extension comprising 2 no dwellings together with associated parking, external works and drainage

LOCATION: 25 Barnards Field, Thaxted

APPLICANT: Mr C Hockley

AGENT: Robert Crawford Associates

EXPIRY DATE: 28 August 2015, extension of time to 18 September 2015

CASE OFFICER: Karen Denmark

1. NOTATION

1.1 Outside Development Limits.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

2.1 The application site is located within the residential development known as Barnards Field. It is a former children's nursery which has now been vacated. Dwellings forming part of the Barnards Field estate are located to the east and south. Magdalene Green is located to the west and is located on lower ground. There is an agricultural field to the north, with an access to the field running along the western boundary.

2.2 The building is predominantly two storeys and constructed in a mixture of red brick and black weatherboarding, with a plain tile roof. There is a picket fence to the front and hedging to the other boundaries. There is a large car parking area associated with the former use of the building.

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 The proposal relates to the change of use of the existing building into 7 no flats, together with a two storey extension to provide an additional 2 flats. The proposed mix would be:

- Flat 1 – 1 bedroom
- Flat 2 – 1 bedroom
- Flat 3 – 2 bedroom
- Flat 4 – 1 bedroom
- Flat 5 – 2 bedroom
- Flat 6 – 1 bedroom
- Flat 7 – 1 bedroom
- Flat 8 – 2 bedroom
- Flat 9 – 2 bedroom

3.2 The layout drawing indicates that 17 car parking spaces would be provided, including 1 disabled space. There would be a communal bin store and an area for cycles. There

would be four communal areas of amenity space which would total approximately 225 square metres. In addition there are two areas of land to the front of the building totalling approximately 60 square metres. Flat 7 would also have a small terrace.

4. APPLICANT'S CASE

4.1 The application has been submitted with a Design and Access Statement, the conclusions of which are:

- The development of the application site for the conversion of the existing building and new extension would meet the aims and objectives of the NPPF in relation to the 3 strands of sustainability, and would not be in conflict with relevant local plan policies. The development of the site will provide new housing within a previously developed sustainable location whilst at the same time contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- At the same time, it would not be detrimental to the amenities of adjoining property owners or the character and appearance of the area, and addresses the reasons for refusal of the previous scheme.
- As a consequence, the Council are respectfully requested to receive this application positively, and to approve it in due course.

5. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

5.1 UTT/14/3254/FUL – Conversion of former children’s nursery building into 7 no dwellings and the erection of 3 no dwellings together with associated parking, external works and drainage. Refused on the basis of insufficient amenity space, failure to improve the character and quality of the area, and failure to secure a contribution towards affordable housing.

6. POLICIES

6.1 National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

6.2 Uttlesford District Local Plan 2005

- S7 – The Countryside
- GEN1 – Access
- GEN2 – Design
- GEN3 – Flooding
- GEN8 – Vehicle Parking Standards

7. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

7.1 To be reported.

8. CONSULTATIONS

ECC Ecology

8.1 The building in question is of modern construction style and from recent aerial and street imagery appears intact; offering very limited opportunities for roosting bats. The

surroundings also offer very little in the way of bat foraging habitat. The remainder of the site appears to comprise a car park and play area with some minor ornamental planting. None of these features are likely to provide suitable habitat for any protected species. I do not consider further ecology surveys to be necessary. Any landscaping plan should endeavour to retain the vegetation demarking the western boundary.

ECC Highways

8.2 From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority subject to conditions relating to the provision of the parking areas and cycle/powered two wheeler parking.

9. REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 Two letters of representation have been received in respect of these proposals raising the following issues:

- Concerns regarding flooding
- Overlooking from flat 7

10. APPRAISAL

The issues to consider in the determination of the application are:

- A The principle of development in this location (ULP Policy S7; NPPF)
- B Design (ULP Policy GEN2; NPPF)
- C Access (ULP Policy GEN1)
- D Parking provision (ULP Policy GEN8)
- E Flooding (ULP Policy GEN3; NPPF)

A The principle of development in this location (ULP Policy S7; NPPF)

10.1 The application site is located outside the development limits, but does form a brownfield site. Whilst Policy S7 seeks to prevent development within the countryside, it is not fully consistent with the NPPF. Policy S7 does permit development that needs to take place in the rural area and if it protects and enhances the particular character of the part of the countryside within which it is set, or there are special reasons why it needs to take place there. One of the core principles, as set out in paragraph 17 of the NPPF, is the encouragement for the effective use of previously developed land (brownfield). This is reinforced in paragraph 111 under Section 11 of the NPPF which seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

10.2 This site within Thaxted is a relatively sustainable location, with access to a primary school, doctor's surgery, shops and other facilities. In addition there is access to public transport.

10.3 The application site is an existing building which is no longer in use for the purposes for which it was constructed. It is located within a residential area and it forms previously developed land. The redevelopment of the existing building to form 7 flats would

represent a use that would be appropriate in this residential area, and would be in accordance with the sustainability principles set out in the NPPF.

- 10.4 The proposed extension would create two additional flats. Whilst this would intensify the use of the site, it is considered that this would result in the more efficient use of this brownfield site. As such, the principle of development is considered to be in accordance with Policy S7 and the NPPF.

B Design (ULP Policy GEN2; NPPF)

- 10.5 The proposed conversion of the existing former nursery building to residential would require some minor alterations to fenestration. On the west elevation there would be two new ground floor windows and 2 additional projecting windows with side glazing only. On the east elevation there would be a new window and a door changed to a window. On the south elevation a window would be relocated and on the north elevation there would be a new rooflight. Existing ramps and escape staircases would be removed. The proposed alterations are considered to be acceptable and in keeping with the character of the building.
- 10.6 The proposed two storey extension would be constructed in materials to match the existing building. The proposed scale and design of the extension is acceptable in terms of its relationship with the existing building.
- 10.7 A neighbour raised concerns regarding overlooking and this has been addressed by replacing the traditional window with a further projecting window with side glazing only. This window would essentially allow light into the room but no opportunity to overlook the property to the rear. As such the proposals would not result in loss of amenity due to overlooking. The scale of the proposed extension is acceptable and would not result in any loss of amenity due to overshadowing or overbearing.
- 10.8 In terms of amenity space, there would be a requirement for 225sqm of communal amenity area to serve the proposed dwellings. This would be provided in two areas of land to the rear of the building. In addition there would be two further areas of private amenity land serving flats 1 and 3, totalling a further 60sqm. Flat 7 would also have a small terrace. Therefore the proposals comply with the requirements for amenity space.

C Access (ULP Policy GEN1)

- 10.9 The proposals would utilise the existing access point which was designed for the previous use of the building as a nursery. ECC Highways has assessed the proposals and raise no objections.
- 10.10 Policy GEN1e) seeks to locate development in areas where it encourages movement by means other than driving a car. Thaxted has a small range of facilities, including a primary school, doctor's surgery, shops and public houses and restaurants/cafes. In addition there are two bus routes serving the village, one providing an hourly service each way to Stansted Airport and Saffron Walden. The other service operates between Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden which operates 6 times a day Monday to Friday and 3 times a day on Saturdays. As such the proposals comply with Policy GEN1.

D Parking provision (ULP Policy GEN8)

- 10.11 The proposal comprises 4 x 1 bed and 5 x 2 bed flats. This generates a requirement for 17 parking spaces, 14 for the units and 3 visitor parking spaces. The layout plan

clearly indicates the 17 spaces all at the required space sizes of 5.5m x 2.9m. Therefore the proposals comply with Policy GEN8.

E Flooding (ULP Policy GEN3; NPPF)

10.12 The application site size is less than 1ha and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment is not required to be submitted as part of the application. In addition statutory consultees are not providing advice on sites of less than 1ha.

10.13 The risk of increased flooding has been raised by representations. The site is a brownfield site and is predominantly hardstanding at the present time. The conversion of the existing building into flats would not give rise to any flood risk issues. The proposed extension would be partially located on an area of existing hardstanding. This should not give rise to significant increased risks of flooding.

10.14 The proposal incorporates the installation of permeable block paving to the car parking area together with gravel filled cellular plastic grids to the parking bays. These would enable surface water to drain slowly from the site, more in line with greenfield run off rates. Therefore the proposals are likely to improve the current situation on site and potentially reduce flood risk issues. As such the proposals are in accordance with Policy GEN3.

11. CONCLUSION

The following is a summary of the main reasons for the recommendation:

- A Whilst the site is located outside the development limits the proposal is for the reuse of an existing building and the erection of two additional flats on a brownfield site. As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of Policy S7 and the NPPF.
- B There would be no loss of residential amenity arising from the proposals. The issue of overlooking has been addressed satisfactorily. The design of the proposals is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy GEN2.
- C The access to the site is considered acceptable and no highway issues arise from the proposals. As such the proposals are in accordance with Policy GEN1.
- D The parking provision meets the required standards and is in accordance with Policy GEN8.
- E The proposals incorporate the installation of permeable paving and cellular grids to attenuate surface water flows. As such the proposals are unlikely to increase flood risk issues and are in accordance with Policy GEN3.

RECOMMENDATION – CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Conditions/reasons

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this decision.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed entirely of the matching materials details of which are shown on the schedule of materials on the planning application form unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of the appearance of the development, in accordance with Policy GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

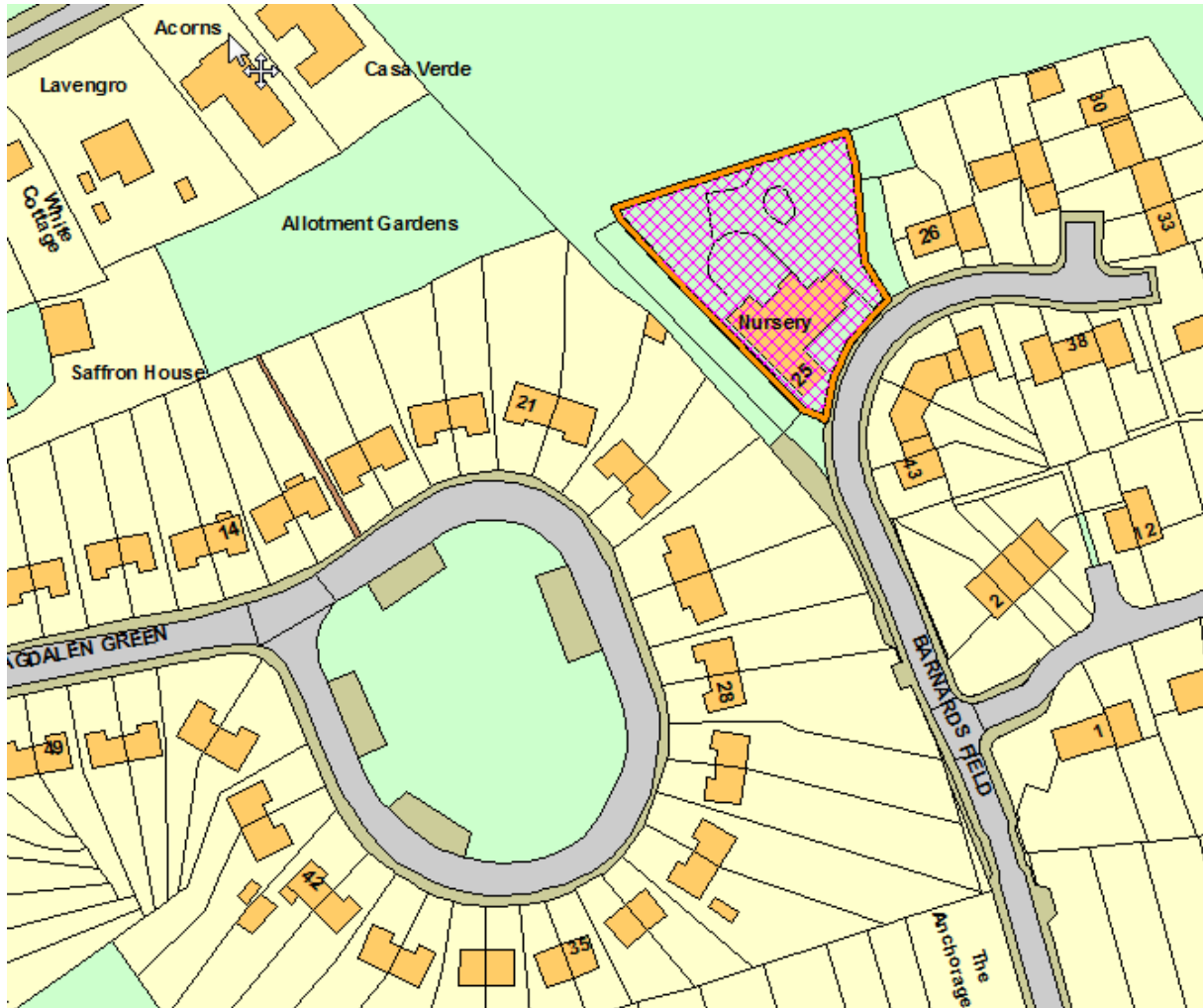
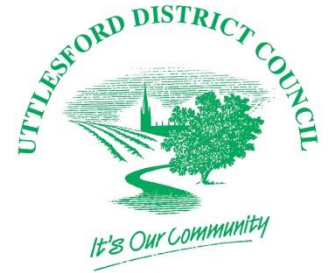
3. The proposed development shall not be occupied until such time as the vehicle parking area indicated on the approved plans, including any parking spaces for the mobility impaired, has been hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays. The vehicle parking area shall be retained in this form at all times. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that on street parking of vehicles in the adjoining streets does not occur in the interests of highway safety and that appropriate parking is provided, in accordance with Policy GEN8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

4. The cycle/powered two wheeler parking shall be provided in accordance with the EPOA Parking Standards. The approved facility shall be secure, convenient, covered and provided prior to occupation and retained at all times.

REASON: To ensure appropriate cycle parking is provided in the interest of highway safety and amenity, in accordance with Policy GEN8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan.

Application no.: UTT/15/1959/FUL
Address: 25 Barnards Field, Thaxted



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