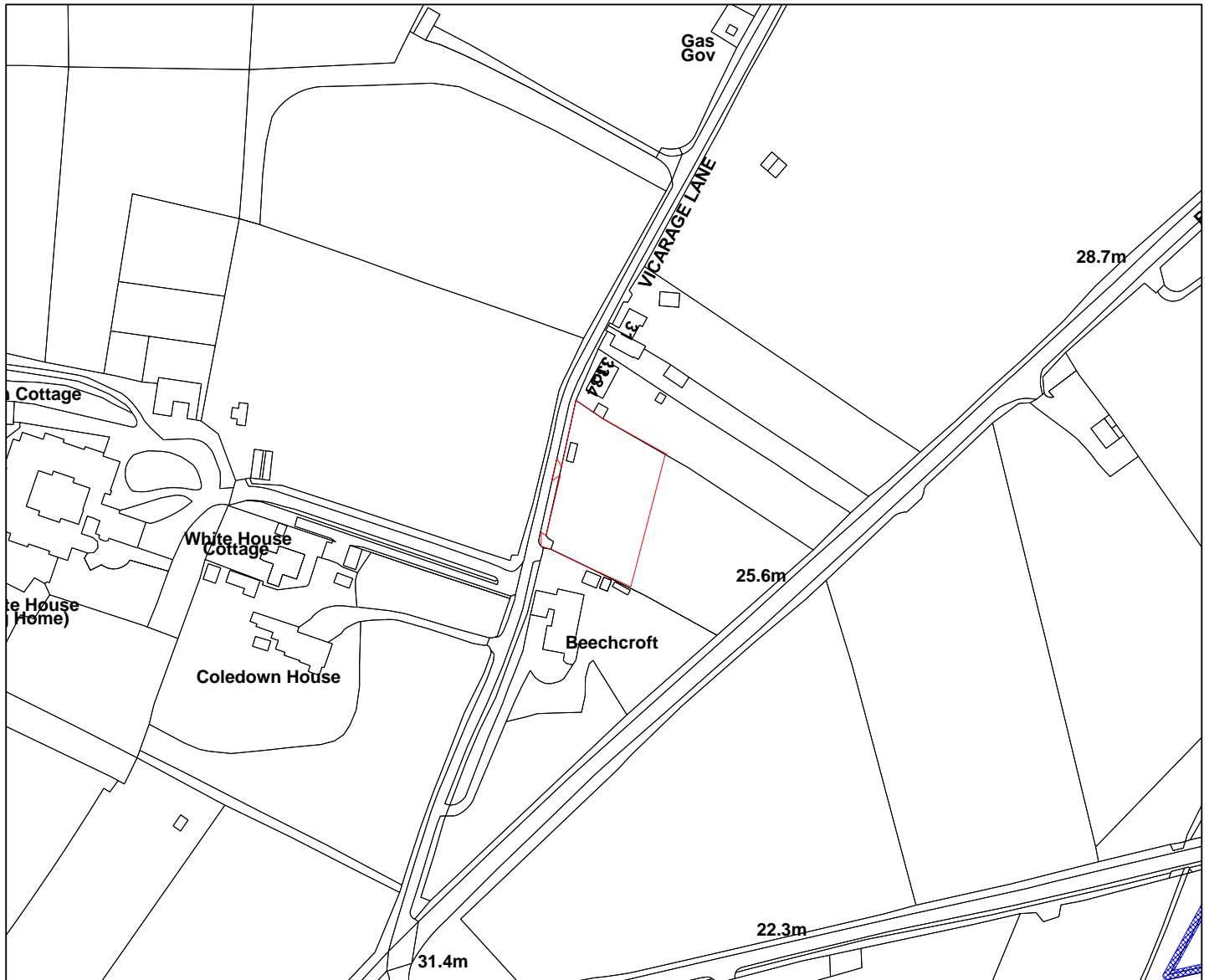


Land adj Beechcroft, Vicarage Lane, Curdridge



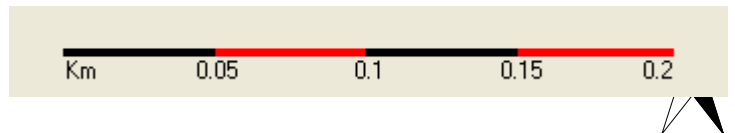
Winchester
City Council

11/00030/OUT



Legend

Scale:



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Organisation	Winchester City Council
Department	Development Services
Comments	
Date	08 April 2011
SLA Number	00018301

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Item No: 3
Case No: 11/00030/OUT / W21996/01
Proposal Description: Proposed erection of 2 no. detached dwellings; 1 no. three bedroom and 1 no. two bedroom (OUTLINE) (AMENDED DESCRIPTION)
Address: Land Adjacent Beechcroft Vicarage Lane Curdridge Hampshire
Parish, or Ward if within Winchester City: Curdridge
Applicants Name: Mr Richard Puddle
Case Officer: Mr James Jenkison
Date Valid: 19 January 2011
Site Factors:

Recommendation: Application Refused

General Comments

This application is reported to Committee because of the number of letters of support received.

The applicant requested that the application description be amended from a four bedroom and three bedroom dwelling to a three bedroom and two bedroom dwelling.

Site Description

The site comprises the top part of a field of approximately 0.49 hectares. The field slopes downwards from Vicarage Lane to Botley Road and is bounded by hedgerows on all sides. There are no trees within the majority of the hedgerows along the west, south and east boundaries, affording extensive views over the site ensuring the site makes a strong contribution to rural character of Vicarage Lane and Botley Road. There is a small workshed set behind the hedgerow along Vicarage Lane, but which can only be glimpsed from Botley Road. The access, located at the south west corner of the site adjacent to the boundary with Beechcroft, is overgrown and there is no discernable hardstanding on the site.

Vicarage Lane is a typical country lane without footways or streetlamps and is predominantly enclosed by dense hedgerows. To the south of the application site is Beechcroft, which comprises the headquarters of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and which, along with the substantial residential plots on the opposite side of Vicarage Lane to the south-west, this sporadic development pattern promotes the rural character of the lane due to their extensive grounds and dense, mature boundary treatment, which gives this southern part of Vicarage Lane something of a woodland appearance. Beyond these properties the application site, along with the large fields on the north side of Vicarage Lane contributes further to the open rural character of the Lane, which is assisted by the tree screen along the sites north boundary, which screens views on a small housing group (31-34 Vicarage Lane) beyond.

31-34 Vicarage Lane form two pairs of semi-detached houses (33 and 34 have been combined to form a single dwelling) set close and parallel to the Lane, and the modest size of the dwellings, the design and materials and their setting amongst fields (including

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the application site) maintains the impression of a rural locality. These properties also have deep rear gardens that extend to Botley Road. Botley Road here also has a strong rural character due to the fields, hedgerows and trees and the absence of any substantial development.

This rural character differs significantly from the more developed parts of Curdrige where long rows of houses exist along stretches of the rural lanes and which are identified in the Village Design Statement.

Proposal

The proposal is an outline planning application for one 3-bedroom and one 2-bedroom dwelling. Approval is being sought only for layout and access, however, illustrative elevation plans have been submitted giving an indication that 2-storey dwellings are proposed. The smaller dwelling shows a footprint of approximately 7 x 9 metres (indicating an overall floor area of approximately 126 square metres) and the larger dwelling is proposed to have a footprint of approximately 144 square metres (indicating an overall floor area of approximately 263 square metres).

The dwellings will have separate accesses and plot 2 will have a suburban layout, with a double garage in front of the dwelling fronting a forecourt. Plot 1 will be set back approximately 7 metres from Vicarage Lane and Plot 2 will be set back approximately 10 metres. The hedgerow along Vicarage Lane is proposed to be removed and a new hedgerow planted deeper within the plot. Individual pedestrian footpaths are proposed to extend down the depth of the site to connect with Botley Road.

Relevant Planning History

An application for residential development in the 1960's was refused and there have been no further planning applications for this site prior to the submission of this application.

Consultations

Engineers: Drainage: A public foul sewer is available for the disposal of foul water. Storm water must be disposed of in a sustainable way using SUDS principals. Drainage condition recommended.

Engineers: Highways: raised no objection to the proposal and requested that if permission is to be granted for the development, a financial contribution should be made towards Hampshire County Councils Transport Contributions Policy. The current rate for 2 or 3 bed units is £3745 and the total contribution required would be £7490.

HCC Ecology: considered that the application was supported by a competent ecological survey report and accurately represents the current conditions on the application site. The survey identified the presence of suitable reptile habitat and historical records of slow worms on the application site, though no formal reptile survey has been undertaken due to the time of year so it has not been possible to assess actual population sizes. However the nature and scale of habitats on site indicates that it is likely that any population will be small. The reptile mitigation strategy set out in paragraph 4.8.3 is acceptable as are the other recommendations in the survey report, particularly regarding the vegetation

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(paragraph 4.3.3), breeding birds (paragraph 4.7.3) and badgers (paragraph 4.4.3). Open trenches should either be covered at night or a means of escape placed in the trench (e.g. an inclined board) to avoid any wildlife becoming trapped during construction period. Conditions recommended.

Arboricultural Officer: considered that the protection measures specified in the submitted report will be sufficient to reduce the affects on the retained trees to a minimum. Conditions recommended.

Representations:

Curdrige Parish Council raised no objection to the proposal and is supportive of smaller dwellings but was concerned about the access to the site and that Vicarage Lane has become a very busy road.

1 letter received objecting to the application for the following reasons:

- Boundary treatment will not provide adequate privacy for 33-34 Vicarage Lane and should be reinforced.

6 letters of support received.

- Proposal will be in keeping with the area.

1 letter received confirming presence of slow worms and grass snakes.

Letter received from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (Beechcroft) noting that plot 2 would be adjacent to their working yard where there is wood chipping and vehicular use activity, including sometimes in the weekends and evenings.

Relevant Planning Policy:

South East Plan 2009:

CC6, H3, SH6

Winchester District Local Plan Review

DP3, DP4, DP9, CE5, RT4, H5, H7

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS 3 Housing

PPS 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Other Planning guidance

Curdrige Village Design Statement –Vicarage Lane is not listed as having ribbon housing development.

Planning Considerations

Principle of development

The site is located in the countryside, where there is a presumption against new residential development. The proposal would therefore be contrary to PPS7 if there are

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no exceptional circumstances that would justify residential development in the countryside here. Policy H4 of the Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006 and its associated supplementary planning document (SPD) 'Implementation of Local Plan Infilling Policy' allows in some exceptional circumstances the infilling of plots within built up frontages of dwellings in the countryside.

Policy H4 and supplementary document 'Implementation of Local Plan Infilling Policy (SPD), Design, layout and appearance, Impact on the character of the locality

The proximity of the railway station and petrol service station at Botley means that the site is able to meet the test of Criterion 1 of the SPD with the private footpaths for the proposed dwellings exiting onto Botley Road where there is a formed footpath.

Criterion 2 seeks to restrict infilling to those locations that have a 'continuously built up frontage' such as ribbon development and the Curdridge Village Design Statement sets out where those continuously built up frontages are located, and has correctly omitted Vicarage Lane from this list. The expectation of Criterion 2 is that infill development occurs where there is continuous frontage onto a street of a long row of dwellings which already have a discernable building presence. Vicarage Lane maintains a very rural appearance and whilst there is development on either side of the field, one side of which comprises residential development, it is not considered to form a continuously built up frontage, but rather sporadic residential development interspersed with fields. Frontage development of a continuously built up nature is more evident along Chapel Lane. Furthermore, the combined width of 33 and 34 Vicarage Lane is approximately 20 metres (though this pair of dwellings has been amalgamated), 32 to 34 approximately 30 metres (average of 10-15 metres) and 31-34 approximately 60 metres (average of 15-20 metres). With a width of approximately 60 metres the width of the field is substantially greater than twice the width of the typical nearby dwelling plots. The proposal would therefore consolidate sporadic development to form ribbon development, significantly detracting from the rural character of the locality and does not meet the test of Criterion 2.

The existing hedgerow makes an important contribution to the character of Vicarage Lane particularly as a result of its continuous unbroken nature, its complete removal, to provide sightlines and additional access to the site will further undermine the rural character of the locality. Whilst a replacement hedge is proposed it will take time to mature and will be required to have a noticeable breakage for an additional access. The site itself also provides an important breakage between built development that maintains the rural character of Vicarage Lane and the proposed development would suburbanise the open views over the site and create an urban appearance incongruous with its countryside setting. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Criterion 6 and 7 of the SPD and policies DP3, DP4 and CE5 of the Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006.

Furthermore, the layout and size of the proposed buildings is not considered to respond positively to that appearance and variety of the local environment, which has a character of modest building forms fronting the road and garages located in rear gardens with access along the side garden. The proposed dwellings are also very large and the streetscene drawing submitted does not account for the landslope that will result in taller buildings which will be very visually evident, not just from Vicarage Lane but also from Botley Road and would be detrimental to the character of the locality.

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Policy H5, Provision of affordable housing

As the site exceeds 0.17 hectares in size the affordable housing criteria of Policy H5 would have to be met at a rate of 30% provision. In cases where an affordable housing unit is not provided on the site, or where the rate results in a fraction of a whole unit then financial contributions would be expected to be provided. Delineating a red line around a small portion of the site does not result in the proposal being excluded from this policy requirement. The character of nearby residential plots, apart from being much narrower is to have deep back gardens extending to Botley Road and the proposal similarly provides for back gardens extending to Botley Road and involves extending footpaths for each property from the dwellings to Botley Road in order for the dwellings to meet Criterion 1 of the SPD. It would therefore be reasonable to expect a contribution to affordable housing provision in this instance.

Policy H7, Housing mix and density

Policy H7 requires that 50% of dwellings proposed are smaller 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings of less than 75 square metres and the current proposal would be considered to be contrary to this policy as both dwellings are significantly above this threshold. It is not considered that there is justification for exceptions to this policy, particularly in rural areas, where there is a need to maintain the mix of smaller and larger dwellings.

Impact on neighbouring properties

The arboricultural impact assessment indicates that the proposal would not require the removal of any trees, maintaining the landscape screen along the north boundary. 33/34 Vicarage Lane has a double garage adjacent to the side boundary and with effective boundary treatment the proposal would not materially harm the amenities of this property. This neighbouring property also has planning permission to demolish the existing double garage and replace it with a long single storey structure along the side boundary.

There is a potential reverse sensitivity issue in relation to Beechcroft, where the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust has a service yard for their activities adjacent to the south boundary of the site, which includes woodchipping. So this would be likely to pose an unneighbourly adverse impact upon the amenities of the occupiers of plot 2 of the proposed development.

Ecology

The applicant has provided a competent ecological survey that includes mitigation measures that would be able to be conditioned.

Highways/Parking/ Transport Contributions

The highways engineer considered that the replacement of the hedgerow with another hedgerow further back within the site would allow for acceptable visibility sightlines and raised no objection to the proposal. There are a number of transport improvement schemes scheduled for Curdridge, including a pedestrian crossing at Station Hill and a pedestrian/cycle route along the disused railway. The financial contributions of £7490 for transport purposes is therefore considered to be appropriate in accordance with

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Policy DP9. The applicant has expressed a willingness to enter into a legal agreement to secure this amount, however, where the application to be refused, a refusal reason would need to be maintained to ensure that if the decision were appealed there is an appropriate safeguard in place to secure the provision.

Open space

Under the provisions of policy RT.4 all new residential development is required to make appropriate provision for public open space in the form of children's play space and sports space in accord with the Council's adopted Open Space Strategy. Where it is not possible to meet such requirement on site policy RT.4 provides for financial contributions towards enhancing off site facilities to be made in accordance with the provisions of the Council's adopted Open Space Funding System. The calculation in this instance is £3,838 for the 2010-2011 year. There are nearby sports grounds and play facilities that the contribution will contribute to in terms of identified improvement schemes as set out in the open space strategy. The applicant has expressed a willingness to enter into a legal agreement to secure this amount, however, where the application to be refused, a refusal reason would need to be maintained to ensure that if the decision were appealed there is an appropriate safeguard in place to secure the provision.

Planning Obligations/Agreements

In seeking the planning obligation(s) and/or financial contributions for open space, transport contributions and affordable housing, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to the tests laid down in Circular 05/2005 which requires the obligations to be necessary; relevant to planning; directly related to the proposed development; fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects.

Recommendation

Application Refused for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposal is contrary to policies H3 and SH.6 of the South East Plan and Policy H.5 (iii) of the Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006 in that it fails to make adequate provision for affordable housing and would therefore be detrimental to the objectives of the Development Plan and PPS3 to ensure that appropriate provision of affordable housing is achieved within relevant residential developments.
- 2 The development comprises new residential dwellings in the countryside for which there is no over-riding justification contrary to PPS7 and is detrimental to the locality because it would suburbanise the countryside here and be visually injurious to its rural character contrary to PPS7 and policies DP3, DP4, CE5 and H4 of the Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006, supplementary planning document 'Implementation of Infilling Policy' and Policy CC6 of the South East Plan 2009.
- 3 The proposal is contrary to Policy RT4 of the Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006 in that it fails to make adequate provision for public recreational open space to the required standard, and would therefore be detrimental to the amenities of the area.
- 4 The proposal is contrary to Policy DP.9 of the Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006 in that it fails to make adequate provision for improvements to transport and the highway network, in accordance with Hampshire County Council's Transport Contributions Policy 2007, such provision being required in order to mitigate for the

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additional transport needs and burden imposed on the existing network arising from this development.

5 The proposed development is contrary to policy H7 of the Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006 in that it fails to include a range of dwelling types and sizes, with at least 50% of the properties provided as small 1 or 2 bedroom units of less than 75 square metres.

Informatives:

The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following development plan policies and proposals:-

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review: CC6, H3, SH6

Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006: DP3, DP4, DP9, CE5, H5, H7, RT4.