

Application 10/00247/F	No:	Ward: Bicester West	Date 01/03/2010	Valid:
Applicant:	Charter Community Housing/Sanctuary Group			
Site Address:	Land adjacent to 45 George St, Bicester			

Proposal: Demolition of three garage blocks and erection of 4 No. dwellings (as amended by plans received 30/03/10)

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site is a garage site on the corner of George St and Market End Way. At present the site has 18 pre-fabricated flat-roofed concrete garages.
- 1.2 Proposal is for the demolition of the garage blocks and replacement with 4 affordable houses in two semi-detached pairs; being two 3-bed units and two 2-bed units. Parking is provided to the front and garden spaces to the rear.
- 1.3 The dwellings are proposed in brick under tile, with materials, detailing and style drawing on the character of the context of the development.
- 1.4 The application is submitted to the Committee for determination as this Council has an interest in the land.

2. Application Publicity

- 2.1 The application has been advertised by way of site notices, press notice and neighbour letters. The final date for comments was 09 April 2009.
- 2.2 Two letters were received;
 - the residents of 45 George St, raising concerns of disposal of possible asbestos waste, overlooking, over-development and parking provision.
 - The residents of 4 Market End Way (to the rear of the site), raising concerns over parking and loss of privacy.

3. Consultations

- 3.1 Bicester Town Council – no objections
- 3.2 Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy (Urban Design) – agrees with the principle of replacing the garaging with dwellings, but had concerns over the original designs, some of which have been addressed in the amended drawings
- 3.3 Housing Strategy Officer – seeks to ensure that the housing is retained as affordable housing

- 3.4 OCC Highways Liaison Officer – no objections subject to conditions set out below
- 3.5 Thames Water – no objections

4. Relevant Planning Policies

- 4.1 National Policy Guidance:
 - PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
 - PPS3 – Housing
 - PPG13 - Transport
- 4.2 Regional Policy in the South East Plan 2009:
 - Policy T4 - Parking
 - Policy BE1 - Management for an urban renaissance
 - Policy H5 - Housing Design and Density
- 4.3 Local Policy in the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996:
 - Policy C28 - Layout, design and external appearance of new development
 - Policy C30 - Design of new residential development
- 4.4 Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2004:
 - Policy H1a - Location of new housing
 - Policy H11 - Windfalls (Bicester)
 - Policy TR1 - Transport and development
 - Policy TR11 - Parking
 - Policy D1 - Urban Design Objectives
 - Policy D3 - Local Distinctiveness

5. Appraisal

- 5.1 Due to the location and nature of the site and proposal, it is necessary to consider the impact of the proposal on parking arrangements (both for current tenants of the garage and future tenants of the dwellings), the impact of the proposal on the character of the area, and the impact of the proposal on the amenity of local residents.
- 5.2 Addressing firstly the issue of the parking provision which will be lost from the garage sites, the applicants have demonstrated that the garages are currently underused and that the level of use continues to decline. In the documentation submitted with the application, they have identified that there are currently 7 tenants in this site and that there are 10 vacant garages in other sites in the area.
- 5.3 The proposed dwellings are provided with two spaces per 3-bed unit and one space per 2-bed unit. The number of spaces shown is satisfactory for a development of this size in this location. The proximity of the site to the town and to public transport links adds to the acceptability in this regard. The County Council are also satisfied with this provision.

- 5.4 Turning to the impact of the proposal on the established character of the area, the proposal is considered to be appropriate within the context. The street-scene is mixed; with bungalows to the rear, inter/post war housing opposite and to the North, and newer seventies/eighties housing to the South.
- 5.5 The design of the dwellings take cues from the development surrounding the site; the ridge heights, building widths, roof pitches and detailing all reflect features in the surrounding area as well as the requirements of HCA funding for the project. In addition, the semi-detached form and set-back from the road follows the established style and building line. This ensures that whilst the development does not copy any of the surrounding mixed styles, it is appropriately designed and detailed within the context. This also addresses the comments of the Urban Designer, reported above.
- 5.6 Whilst it is accepted that the distance from the rear of the proposed development is slightly less than is commonly sought (17m against 22m), it is considered that this is acceptable in this case. The intervening screening, sheds, fencing and general arrangement of the site is considered to mitigate any potential harm.
- 5.7 On balance, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its impact on neighbouring properties and amenity.
- 5.8 The location of the proposal, and the orientation of the scheme will not otherwise cause any loss of amenity due to loss of light, privacy or other detrimental effect on public or private amenity.

6. Recommendation

Approval, subject to conditions set out below:

- 1) SC 1_4A (Time limit – 3 years)
- 2) Except where otherwise stipulated by conditions attached to this permission, the development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the following plans and details:
 - 2005/1033/P02
 - 2005/1033/P03
 - 2005/1033/P04
 - 2005/1033/P05A
 - 2005/1033/P06A
 - 2005/1033/P08
 - EH Smith 'Brindled Red Sandfaced' bricks and Russell 'Peat Brown' roof tiles in accordance with the samples submitted with the application.

Reason - For the avoidance of doubt, to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority and to comply with Policies C4 and BE6 of the South East Plan 2009.

- 3) That prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved the proposed means of access between the land and the highway shall be formed, laid out and constructed strictly in accordance with the specification of the means of access

attached hereto, and that all ancillary works therein specified shall be undertaken in accordance with the said specification.

Reason - In the interests of highway safety and to comply with Government advice contained in PPG13: Transport.

- 4) That before the development is first occupied, the parking and manoeuvring areas shall be provided in accordance with the plan hereby approved and shall be constructed, laid out, surfaced, drained and completed in accordance with specification details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development, and shall be retained unobstructed except for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles at all times thereafter.

Reason - In the interests of highway safety and to comply with Government advice contained in PPG13: Transport.

- 5) SC 6_2AA (Permitted development restriction – no extensions/structures in the curtilage)
- 6) SC 6_3AA (Permitted development restriction – no new windows or openings)
- 7) SC 6_1AA (Permitted development restriction – no fences/enclosures to front)

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION AND RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

The Council, as the local planning authority, has determined this application in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Incorporating and adhering to the above conditions, the development is considered to be acceptable on its planning merits as the proposed development is of a design, size and style that is appropriate and will not unduly impact on neighbouring properties. The development proposes sufficient car parking and would therefore not harm highway safety. As such the proposal is in accordance with saved policies C28 and C30 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan, policies H11, TR11, D1, D2 and D3 of the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan and policies T4 and BE1 of The South East Plan and guidance contained within PPS1: Delivering sustainable development and PPG13: Transport. For the reasons given above³ and having regard to all other matters raised including third party representations, the Council considers that the application should be approved and planning permission granted subject to appropriate conditions as set out above.

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