
9. FULL APPLICATION – CONSTRUCTION OF TWO LOCAL NEEDS DWELLINGS, HEY FARM, WARDLOW (NP/DDD/0915/0881, P.790, 418085/374258, 23/02/2016/AM)

APPLICANT: MR & MRS FEWINGS

Site and Surroundings

The application site is located within the easternmost part of a strip field on the west side of the B6465 as it passes through the centre of Wardlow and within the designated Conservation Area. The land within the application site rises gently upwards away from the highway to the west.

There is an existing field gate which provides access into the field. A public footpath runs along the northern boundary of the field to the west of the site. The nearest neighbouring properties are Birley Farm to the north and Robin Hey to the south.

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of two affordable local needs dwellings on the site.

The submitted drawings show that the houses would be a pair of two storey semi-detached dwellings built from natural limestone with gritstone detailing under a pitched roof clad with natural slate. Windows and doors would be timber. The two properties would be served by a single access from the highway with a shared parking area to the front of the properties with a total of four parking spaces. The land to the rear of the buildings would be sub-divided to create two separate garden areas bounded by dry stone walls.

Each of the proposed dwellings would have three bedrooms on the first floor with living accommodation below and would have a total floor area of 87m². The submitted application states that the proposed dwellings are intended to be first occupied by the applicant's daughters.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reason.

- 1. The pattern of medieval field systems which surround Wardlow make a significant positive contribution to the historic and architectural significance of the Conservation Area and are important because they are an integral part of the close interrelationship between the built up frontage within the village and the surrounding landscape.**

The proposed development would result in the erection of two dwellings which would infill the majority of the frontage of the strip field in which they would be sited which would result in the loss of one of Wardlow's characteristic open frontages because the buildings would interrupt important, wide, long-ranging views out to and in from the surrounding countryside.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would have a harmful impact upon the significance of the designated Wardlow Conservation Area. The harm would be less than substantial harm because the development would not undermine or result in the total loss of the significance of the Conservation Area when taken as a whole.

It is recognised that the proposed development would result in some public benefit because the development would result in the provision of two units of intermediate or 'more affordable' housing which would be available to local communities in perpetuity. However, it is considered that these benefits would not outweigh the harm that has been identified.

It is therefore considered that any approval of the proposed development would represent unsustainable development contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP3, L1 and L3, saved Local Plan policies LC4 and LC5 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Key Issues

- Whether the proposed development would conserve the designated Wardlow Conservation Area and the Landscape character of the National Park.
- Whether there is a justification for the proposed affordable housing and whether the proposed housing would be of a size or type which would be likely to remain more affordable in perpetuity.

History

2014: Planning application for construction of two local needs dwellings withdrawn prior to determination.

2014: Pre-application advice given that the proposal would be acceptable in principle subject to the applicants meeting local need and siting, design and landscaping.

Consultations

Highway Authority – No objections subject to conditions to require satisfactory access, parking and turning areas to be provided and maintained throughout the development along with a bin storage and dwell area.

District Council – No response to date.

Parish Meeting – Make the following comments.

The Parish Meeting comments that the village is in a conservation area and as part of this remit infill of new properties is not permitted. It would change the linear style and layout of the village.

However, at the meeting, the Parish Meeting reports that the majority vote was to support the planning application.

PDNPA Built Environment - Object to the application and make the following comments.

“One of the most significant historic features of Wardlow Conservation Area is the distinctive and extensive medieval open field system which surrounds the village, with the medieval strip fields defined by later drystone boundary walls. These fields extend right into the centre of the linear settlement, creating large open frontages between the buildings, which are arranged singly or in loose groupings, and allowing open, long-ranging views to the countryside beyond. The Wardlow Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the special relationship between the surrounding landscape and the village: “The openness of the settlement combines with the terrain to give an almost constant awareness of the surrounding landscape. Consequently the field system is much more obviously an integral part of the visual character of the village.” The open fields and the

countryside that surround them, therefore, make a significant contribution to the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The Appraisal concludes that further infilling of the existing open frontages would not be appropriate.”

“The proposals, at a location where the fossilised medieval strip fields extend out to both east and west on either side of the road, would result in the loss of one of the settlement’s uniquely characteristic open frontages and would remove an important open, wide, long-ranging view to the surrounding countryside. This would adversely affect the significance of the Wardlow Conservation Area, negatively impacting on the characteristically loose form and open character of the village, and on its close interrelationship with the surrounding landscape. Approval of development on this site could also set a precedent for future infill developments of the settlement’s important open frontages.”

The Authority’s Conservation Officer then goes on to make specific comments in relation to the design and siting of the proposed dwelling and makes recommendations for amendments in the event that planning permission is granted for the development.

PDNPA Archaeology – Make the following comments.

“The above planning proposal is accompanied by the results of an archaeological evaluation, carried out by Archaeological Research Services; this follows a survey of the earthworks within the proposal area which is reproduced as an appendix to the evaluation report.

The site is within the Wardlow Conservation Area, and forms the eastern part of a long narrow field likely to represent fossilisation of the medieval strip fields to the west of the village. The rear part of the site falls within an entry on SHINE (Natural England’s heritage inventory) for the medieval strip field system and post-medieval lead mining remains (White Rake West) of ‘medium’ significance.

Earthworks visible within the site include an east-west trackway probably associated with lead mining remains further west, a dew pond visible on late 19th century mapping. Other features thought to be possible house platforms were examined during evaluation trenching and found to be level platforms naturally occurring in the landscape and possibly accentuated by the adjacent trackway; another feature was found to be material relating to the construction of a septic tank for an adjacent property. No archaeologically significant finds or features were identified.

The site does not therefore appear to contain below-ground archaeology significant enough to preclude development, although the development will certainly cut across the east-west trackway and dewpond, and may also encounter unrecorded evidence associated with lead mining and/or settlement. In the event that the proposal gains planning consent, these remains should be recorded through a conditioned scheme of archaeological monitoring during the development groundworks and in line with para 141 of the Framework.

The proposal will also cause a degree of harm to historic landscape and consequently to the significance of the Conservation Area - through the conversion of the eastern part of the long narrow strip field to housing and domestic curtilage. Infill development here will contribute to erosion of the discontinuous nature of the settlement along both sides of the village by which the historic landscape can be glimpsed between the existing houses and farms. In granting consent for the proposals the local planning authority must therefore be satisfied that these harms are outweighed by public benefits paras 132, 134 and 135 of the Framework.”

Representations

Four representations have been received from local residents (along with updates based upon amended plans and information submitted by the agent). All four letters object to the proposed

development. The reasons given are summarised below, the letters can be read in full on the Authority's website.

- The site lies within the Conservation Area and previous planning applications have been refused on infill impact. If this application is approved then this will set a precedent for further applications for infill within the village, which the National Park Authority would find difficulty in refusing.
- Reference should be given to the Authority's decision to refuse application NP/DDD/1004/1080 (a development on a different site within the village). The application site is as, if not more important than that site.
- Consideration should be given to alternative sites which would not have a harmful impact upon the Conservation Area such as whether or not there would be scope to convert any existing buildings at Hey Farm to affordable housing.
- Question the accuracy of submitted plans and information.
- Question discrepancies between the original case made for the proposed affordable housing and amended information.
- Question whether students should be considered as having a need for affordable housing given this is a temporary situation where income will be artificially low for this period.
- Consider that the proposed dwellings are too luxurious to be considered to be affordable local need housing.
- The position of the building as shown on the amended plan would result in the gable of the building facing directly towards the gable end of Robin Hey. This would have a serious overbearing impact upon the main kitchen window of that property.
- Due to the levels of the site, the northern gable of the proposed dwellings would be raised excessively and will appear too tall and be overbearing to Birley Farm which is a one and a half storey dwelling.
- The drive and side windows of Robin Hey will overlook and overbear the front gardens of the proposed dwellings.
- The proposed dwellings would be located over Robin Hey's septic tank. No information has been submitted to illustrate whether or not the land would be classified as contaminated.
- Proposed reed bed soak away may result in potential air pollution, excessive insect activity and freezing and flooding in winter months,
- No detailed information has been submitted in regard to foul and surface water drainage and treatment.
- No information has been provided in regard to the power lines which pass over the site and any requirements to alter this line as part of the development.
- Lack of information provided on proposed materials and architectural design details.

- Potential impact of proposed parking area, septic tank and soakaways upon the root protection area of the mature ash tree and cherry tree located on the southern boundary of the site within the curtilage of Robin Hey.

Main Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. It is considered Policy LH1 of the Local Plan and Policy HC1 of the Core Strategy provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. This is because policies HC1 and LH1 set out the relevant criteria for assessing proposals for newly built houses to meet local need.

There is no conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and the more recently published National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) with regard to the issues that are raised. This is because the Framework supports the use of rural exception for affordable housing in small rural communities that would not normally be made available for the provision of open market housing.

The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance forms one of the 12 core planning principles within the Framework. Paragraph 132 states that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset and that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Paragraph 115 in the Framework states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks along with the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Development Plan Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP3, HC1, L1 and L3

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC5, LC15, LC16, LH1, LH2, LT11 and LT18

HC1 says that exceptionally, new housing can be accepted where the proposals would address eligible local needs and would be for homes that remain affordable with occupation restricted to local people in perpetuity. The provisions of HC1 are supported by policy LH1 of the Local Plan, which gives more detailed criteria to assess an application for a newly-built housing, which is intended to be affordable and meet local need.

LH1 states exceptionally residential development will be permitted either as a newly built dwelling in or on the edge of Local Plan settlements provided:

- i. there is a proven need for the dwelling; and
- ii. the need cannot be met within the existing housing stock; and
- iii. the intended occupants meet the requirements of the National Park Authority's local occupancy criteria (policy LH2); and
- iv. the dwelling will be affordable by size and type to local people on low or moderate incomes and will remain so in perpetuity; and
- v. the requirements of Policy LC4 are complied with.

Local Plan policy LC4(a) says where development is acceptable in principle, it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that respects, conserves and where possible it enhances the landscape, built environment and other valued characteristics of the area. Local Plan policy LC4(b) goes on to say, particular attention will be paid to scale, form, mass and orientation in relation to existing buildings, settlement form and character, landscape features and the wider landscape setting.

Local Plan policy LC4 is now also supported by the more recently adopted policy GSP3 in the Core Strategy which says development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings that are subject to the development proposal. GSP3 goes on to say, amongst other things, particular attention will be paid to:

- A. impact on the character and setting of buildings
- B. scale of development appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park
- C. siting, landscaping and building materials
- D. design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide

In determining this case, it is highly relevant to the application of LC4 and GSP3 that the application site is within the Wardlow Conservation Area. In these respects, policies LC5 and LC6 of the Local Plan, and policy L3 of the Core Strategy are relevant.

LC5 seeks to ensure that development conserves and enhances the National Park's historic built environment and address development that would affect the special qualities of a designated Conservation Area and its setting. L3 also seeks to ensure the National Park's historic built environment is conserved and enhanced for future generations and says that other than in exceptional circumstances development will not be permitted where it is likely to cause harm to the significance of any cultural heritage asset.

Wider Policy Context

The Authority's adopted Supplementary Planning Document entitled 'Meeting the local need for affordable housing in the Peak District National Park (July 2003) is relevant and provides more detailed policy in regard to affordable housing within the National Park. The Authority's adopted design guide is also relevant in regard to detailed design guidance.

The adopted Wardlow Conservation Area appraisal is also a relevant material consideration.

Assessment

Need and Affordability

The application proposes two affordable houses to meet a local need which would be sited within Wardlow which is a named settlement in the Core Strategy (DS1). It is therefore considered that the proposals are acceptable in principle and would warrant approval if the application met the requirements of the five criteria set out in LH1 first taking account of whether there is a proof of need.

The application proposes two dwelling. In these circumstances LH1 (i) says that the need for the dwelling will be judged by reference to an up to date housing needs survey prepared by or in consultation with the district council as housing authority. However the agent has submitted detailed information related to the circumstances of both named first occupants

The two named occupants are the applicant's daughters, both of whom are currently students due to finish their education in the near future. Both of the named occupants have lived in Wardlow for at least ten years out of the previous twenty and both occupants are intending to form separate households for the first time. The applicant has undertaken a property search, which indicates that there are no suitable affordable or market properties on the market or available through home options either within the parish or within adjoining parishes.

Given the detailed search evidence that has been provided and further searches by Officers it is considered that there is sufficient proof to evidence the need for the proposed dwellings and that both of the dwellings would be occupied by a person with a local qualification. The lack of an up-to-date housing need survey in these circumstances is not considered to present sufficient reason to refuse the application. It is therefore considered that there is sufficient proof of need to allow the application to be considered in compliance with the first three criteria of LH1 and LH2.

The application proposes a pair of semi-detached houses, with a shared access, parking and turning area to the front and separate gardens to the rear. Both of the dwellings would have three bedrooms and a total floor space of 87m² which is within what the Authority's guidelines allow for an affordable dwelling for five people. Estimated build costs have been submitted which are also within the parameters the Authority sets for affordable homes. The completed value of each house, subject to an occupancy restriction, is estimated to be approximately £135,000. Officers do question whether this estimate is too low, however it is clear that the value of the houses would be substantially lower than average house prices in the village and within the surrounding area.

The applicant has indicated a willingness to enter into the Authority's standard legal agreement, which would mean that the named first occupants would occupy the houses for at least the first three years following completion. The legal agreement would also mean that subsequent occupants would also have to be from the local area, or have strong local connections. Each time the property is sold or let to a new occupant, the value of the property would be assessed independently, taking into account the restriction to ensure that the property is offered at an appropriate discount compared to its value on the open market.

It is therefore concluded that because the proposed dwellings would be more affordable and occupancy of the dwelling would be prioritised for people with a local qualification, the current application does not conflict with the fourth criteria of LH1.

Therefore the key issue in this case is considered to be whether the proposed development complies with the fifth criteria of LH1, and therefore also complies with LC4 and GSP3 and whether the development would conserve the Conservation Area and the National Park's Landscape in accordance with policies LC5, L1 and L3.

Impact of the proposed development

The siting of the proposed development is a key issue raised by the Authority's Conservation Officer and Archaeologist and also by the Parish Council and in letters of representation.

The application site is located within the designated Wardlow Conservation Area where the Authority must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the area when making planning decisions. The proposed dwellings would be sited adjacent to the highway within the lower part of a medieval strip field which runs away from the highway to the west.

Concerns have been raised that the siting of the proposed dwellings would result in the loss of one of the villages characteristic open frontages and would remove an important, wide, long-ranging view out into the surrounding countryside and that this change would have an adverse impact upon the significance of the Wardlow Conservation Area, negatively impacting upon the

loose form and open character of the village and its close interrelationship with the surrounding landscape.

The Wardlow Conservation Area appraisal (the appraisal) is a material consideration in the assessment of these concerns. The appraisal says that *“the Old Portway, an ancient trackway that ran through the Peak District, passed through Wardlow and that the present day B6465 follows part of its length. Portway tracks are thought to have been routes linking areas of principal settlement so the presence of the Portway suggests that the Wardlow area was important in the early medieval and perhaps prehistoric period, if only as a through route. It is thought to have continued in use as a pack horse route through the Medieval period when it was known as Castlegate or Derbygate, a major route from Hope to Bakewell.”*

“The fields around the village indicate the location of the large infields of the Medieval period. The date of origin of the ridge and furrow in the area could be as early as the 8th or 9th century AD, which would give a potentially early date of origin for the village. The precise date of enclosure of the fields and access tracks around Wardlow is unknown but evidence elsewhere in the Peak would suggest that it probably started in the 14th or 15th centuries. The last of the open Medieval strips were enclosed by the Great and Little Longstone Enclosure Award in 1824.”

The appraisal goes on to characterise the landscape setting of Wardlow and makes the following summary:

- *“that the surviving medieval field system and access tracks that surround the village are an important part of the history of its development and contribute significantly to its character.”*
- *“The built environment of Wardlow and Wardlow Mires is characterised by a mixture of farmsteads, detached dwellings in generous curtilages and small groups of cottages. Although there is a broad range of building types, the consistent feature is the use of limestone as the main building material. In 17th and early 18th century buildings the limestone is rock faced rubble and in later buildings of the 18th and 19th centuries it is squared and brought to courses. Flush gritstone dressings to openings are common throughout all periods. Welsh blue slate and Derbyshire stone slates are the traditional roof coverings.”*
- *“The linear form of Wardlow and the open frontages within the village are important aspects of its character.”*
- *“Trees and walls make a significant contribution to the character of the village”*

Following on from this summary the appraisal concludes with guiding principles and says (amongst other things) that *“further infilling along existing frontages would not be appropriate because open frontages are an important part of the character and are necessary to maintain the loose form of the village and its close interrelationship with the surrounding landscape. Equally any increase in the density of development to extend the built area behind the existing built up frontage would not be appropriate as it would alter the historic form of the settlement in the context of the wider landscape setting. Any such development may also require the alteration of the historic field boundaries. Such boundaries make a strong visual contribution to the character of the village and are a significant element in the history of the settlement.”*

Having assessed the Conservation Area appraisal it is considered clear that the pattern of medieval field systems which surround Wardlow make a significant positive contribution to the historic and architectural significance of the Conservation Area. It is also clear that the strip fields which run up to the main road are also important because they are an integral part of the close interrelationship between the built up frontage within the village and the surrounding landscape

because the fields allow views out from the village which are framed by built development along with allowing views in and through the village from the surrounding landscape.

The proposed development would result in the erection of two dwellings which would infill the majority of frontage of the strip field in which they would be sited. Officers consider that the proposed dwellings would result in the loss of one of Wardlow's characteristic open frontages and that the mass of the buildings would interrupt important, wide, long-ranging views out to and in from the surrounding countryside.

Having had regard to the views raised in consultation responses and representations along with the Conservation Area appraisal which explicitly states that further infilling along existing frontages within the village would not be appropriate it is considered that the proposed development would have an adverse impact upon the historic and aesthetic significance of the Wardlow Conservation Area by negatively impacting upon the characteristically loose form and open character of the village and its close relationship with the surrounding landscape.

In coming to this conclusion Officers have taken into account that the development would leave some of the frontage open and that there would be glimpsed views from the footpath and the highway within the village up and out to the west through this gap. However it is noted that the existing frontage combined with an adjacent frontage on the east side of the highway form a significant open break which allows views not only out but through the village which can be fully appreciated approaching the village on the footpaths. The proposed development would result in the closure of these open views.

The appraisal also identifies that it is likely that the fields around Wardlow will have archaeological significance which could be affected by development. The application is supported by report following an archaeological survey of the site. Earthworks visible within the site include an east-west trackway probably associated with lead mining remains further west, a dew pond visible on late 19th century mapping. Other features thought to be possible house platforms were examined during evaluation trenching and found to be level platforms naturally occurring in the landscape and possibly accentuated by the adjacent trackway; another feature was found to be material relating to the construction of a septic tank for an adjacent property. No archaeologically significant finds or features were identified in the survey.

Officers therefore agree with the Authority's Archaeologist that the site does not therefore appear to contain significant. However the development will cut across the east-west trackway and dewpond, and may also encounter unrecorded evidence associated with lead mining and/or settlement. Officers therefore consider that if permission is granted that a condition should be imposed to require a scheme of archaeological monitoring during the development groundworks and in accordance with LC15 and LC16 and paragraph 141 of the Framework.

Design

Despite the concerns that have been raised above in regard to the siting of the proposed dwelling, the Authority's Conservation Officer has made recommendations for amendments to the design of the dwelling in the event that planning permission is granted. Officers have sought amendments which have now been submitted.

The design of the proposed dwellings is considered to be in accordance with the local characteristics identified in the Conservation Area appraisal and the Authority's design guide. The proposed dwellings would have a traditional massing and horizontal form under pitched roofs. The walls of the building would be clad with random limestone with gritstone quoins, surrounds and lintels and the roof would be clad with natural slate. The window and door fenestration would generally reflect the local vernacular and the frames would be painted timber.

The siting of the buildings have been brought forward to better reflect the frontage plots of the adjacent buildings, Robin Hey and Burley Farm and the northernmost dwelling has been set down into the site by 1.5m to allow a break in the roof and to reduce the prominence of the northern gable of the building. The fenestration detailing and parking layout has also been amended to provide a more appropriate urban character rather than suburban.

It is therefore considered that subject to appropriate conditions to secure landscaping details and architectural details that the detailed design of the buildings themselves is of a high standard which reflects and respects locally distinctive character within the Conservation Area in accordance with the design guide.

Public Benefits

Officers have identified that the proposed development would have a harmful impact upon the historic significance and landscape setting of the Wardlow Conservation Area. Policies in the development plan make clear that development which would have a harmful impact upon the significant of the National Park's heritage assets will not be approved other than in exceptional circumstances and that where harm is identified the Sandford principle will be applied. The Framework says that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and this makes a presumption against harmful development in decision taking.

In this case the harm to the Conservation Area would be less than substantial because the proposed development would not result in the substantial or total loss of significance which contributes to the Conservation Area. In these circumstances the Framework says that the Authority must weigh any public benefits of the development against the harm that has been identified.

The proposed development would provide private benefits for the named first occupants by providing housing which has been demonstrated would not otherwise be affordable to them. If built the housing would be restricted to eligible local need in perpetuity and would provide two units of intermediate or 'more affordable' housing to local people and this would represent a modest but important public benefit to the communities within the Parish and surrounding Parish. The proposed development would not provide any other enhancement or benefit to the Conservation Area or the wider landscape.

It is acknowledged that there are public benefits associated with the development and that these are an important consideration. However in the context of the Authority's housing and conservation policies that make clear that affordable housing is only acceptable in principle where it would not harm the valued characteristics of the National Park it is considered that these benefits would not outweigh or over-ride the harm that has been identified.

The proposed site is located in an area where the Conservation Area appraisal explicitly says that new infill development would not be appropriate. Therefore while the Authority's policies offer support in principle to proposals for affordable housing it is clear that these developments should be directed to sites which can accommodate development without a harmful impact. It is also noted that representations indicate that existing buildings at Hey Farm may be able to accommodate the development; however, in the absence of any detailed appraisal of the potential or availability of these buildings it is considered that this issue should not be given significant weight either for or against the development.

Other Issues

Concerns have been raised that the development would have an adverse impact upon the residential amenity of the occupants of the neighbouring properties to the north and south of the proposed development. Given the distance from the northern gable of the proposed dwellings to

Birley Farm and intervening planting there are no concerns that the mass of the building would be overbearing or result in any significant loss of sunlight or day light to the occupants of that property.

The southern gable would be closer to the facing wall of Robin Hey to the south within which is a main window to the kitchen of that property. The proposed southern gable would be sited approximately 12m from the facing wall and kitchen window, given that distance, orientation of the buildings and the fact that the proposed dwellings would be set at a lower level than Robin Hey it is considered that the proposed development would not be over-bearing or result in any significant loss of sunlight or daylight to the occupants of that property.

It is considered that the proposed development can be provided with satisfactory access with clear visibility in both directions onto the highway. The submitted plans also show that the development would be served with adequate parking and turning areas for both properties. Therefore Officers agree with the Highway Authority that subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions that the development would not harm highway safety or the amenity of road users.

The application site is improved grassland and there is no evidence that the proposed development would harm any protected species or habitat. Concern has been raised that the development would adversely affect mature trees along the southern boundary of the site within the curtilage of Robin Hey. The proposed building would be sited outside of the likely root protection areas of these trees, however, the proposed parking areas could potentially intrude into the root protection area where excavations and compaction related to the creation of hardstanding could have a harmful impact.

If permission is granted planning conditions could be imposed to required either the parking areas to be revised away from the trees or to require the submission of an appropriate tree survey and methodology statement to protect the trees to be submitted and approved by the Authority. This would allow the Authority to ensure that the development does not have a harmful impact upon the trees which are an important feature of the Conservation Area.

Concern has been raised in regard to the proposed surface and foul drainage, particularly in regard to the proposed reed bed system. Given that the development would be served by a package treatment plant there are no concerns that water discharged from the proposed foul drainage system would be likely to pollute the water environment or give rise to smell issues or flooding. However officers are concerned about the visual impact of the proposed reed bed system within the field, particularly if the reed bed would be enclosed by fencing. If permission is granted then Officers would recommend a condition to ensure that details of foul and surface drainage were submitted and approved.

Finally, the submitted application states that the proposed dwellings will meet a minimum of the equivalent of Code Level 3 through the use of high performing insulation. Officers consider that there is limited scope for the installation of renewable energy technology given the prominence of the buildings in the Conservation Area and the potential additional impact that a ground source heat pump could have archaeology. It is therefore considered that the proposed energy saving measures would be in accordance with CC1.

Conclusion

The submitted application has demonstrated that the first occupants of the proposed affordable housing have a local qualification in accordance with LH2 and that they are in need of affordable housing which is not available to them within the existing housing stock. The proposed dwellings are of a size and type which would be affordable in perpetuity in accordance with LH1 (i) – (iv). There are no objections to the design of the building itself or its architectural detailing.

However, it is considered that the proposed development would have a harmful impact upon the significance of the designated Wardlow Conservation Area.

The pattern of medieval field systems which surround Wardlow make a significant positive contribution to the historic and architectural significance of the Conservation Area and are important because they are an integral part of the close interrelationship between the built up frontage within the village and the surrounding landscape.

The proposed development would result in the erection of two dwellings which would infill the majority of the frontage of the strip field in which they would be sited which would result in the loss of one of Wardlow's characteristic open frontages because the buildings would interrupt important, wide, long-ranging views out to and in from the surrounding countryside.

It is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in some public benefit because the development would result in the provision of two units of intermediate or 'more affordable' housing which would be available to local communities in perpetuity. However, it is considered that these benefits would not outweigh the harm that has been identified.

It is therefore concluded that the proposed development would not be in accordance with Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP3, L1 and L3, saved Local Plan policies LC4 and LC5 or the National Planning Policy Framework which makes a strong presumption against development which has a harmful impact upon the National Park and its heritage assets. In the absence of any other material considerations it is considered that the development is contrary to the development plan and is accordingly recommended for refusal.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil