

10. FULL APPLICATION - ERECTION OF FOUR 2 BEDROOM/4 PERSON FLATS IN THE FORM OF A TWO STOREY BLOCK, PLUS ACCESS ROAD AND PARKING ON OPEN LAND AT THE END OF FLORENCE GLADWIN CLOSE. INCLUDING AMENDMENTS TO THE EXISTING PARKING ON THE TURNING HEAD TO FLORENCE GLADWIN CLOSE, WINSTER. (NP/DDD/0717/0739, P3683 + 3736 18/7/2017 424214 / 360661/SC)

APPLICANT: WINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

Site and Surroundings

The application site is located off Florence Gladwin Close, a cul-de-sac currently serving five housing association properties in Winster. The development site is located directly to the north of these dwellings and comprises an open area of land that progressively slopes towards its northern boundary. The main part of the development site square in shape, with an area of approximately 0.13 Ha and would form an extension of the existing built up area on the northern edge of the village. To the east of the site are the garden boundaries of dwellings off Leacroft Road, which are separated from the development site by timber fencing and informal high hedging. On the southern boundary of the site is the gable elevation and timber fenced garden boundary of the nearest housing association dwelling. The site is well screened towards the north and north western boundaries by a mix of mature trees and hedging. The whole development site lies outside of the Conservation Area.

Proposal

The proposal is for the erection of 4 two bedrooled (4 persons) affordable local needs dwellings and associated parking. The accommodation would be in the form of flats, and arranged in a single terrace with each having its own entrance door on the main front elevation in order to give the appearance of a row of four houses. The walls would be constructed of random rubble limestone with gritstone quoins and dressings to openings and set under a blue slate roof with flush pointed gables. Windows would be timber casements. The proposal would include traditional chimney stacks although these would be non-functioning. Access would be available to the rear of the properties with meter boxes located on the side elevations. The two bed units would have a floor area of approximately 69 square metres, all within the Authority's current maximum size guidelines for affordable local needs dwellings. The scheme also proposes eight parking spaces, two per dwelling, with associated hard and soft landscaping treatment to the site boundaries and surfacing. In addition, the car parking layout around the turning head to Florence Gladwin Close (associated with the existing dwellings) would be reconfigured as part of the application.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the completion of a S.106 legal agreement relating to affordability/local needs and subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Time Limit (2 years).**
- 2. Adopt submitted plans.**
- 3. Withdraw permitted development rights for alterations, extensions, porches, and ancillary buildings.**
- 4. Submit and agree finished floor levels prior to commencement.**
- 5. Any services to be completely underground.**

6. **Appropriate highway conditions.**
7. **Minor design details.**
8. **Submit and agree a scheme of environmental management.**
9. **Submit and agree landscaping scheme.**
10. **Protected species mitigation measures.**

Key Issues

1. Whether the proposal complies with the relevant policies relating to the provision of affordable local needs housing.
2. The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the locality.
3. Whether the proposed dwellings are considered acceptable in terms of their design, landscaping, ecology, highways and amenity impacts.

Planning History

Pre-application advice regarding the proposal was given. Otherwise, there is no previous planning history that is directly relevant to the consideration of this application.

The pre-application advice given by the Authority did not raise any objections to the principle of the proposed development but made some identified issues that needed to be addressed in respect of ecology, footways and boundary walls.

Consultations

Highway Authority (HA) - The HA has no objections to the application subject to appropriate highway conditions being included.

District Council - Fully support the proposal for four affordable dwellings, which is considered an important housing scheme for the community of Winster and would enable single people and couples in the village to live and work locally.

Parish Council - Comments in full below:

'Although the Parish Council is the applicant, the authority resolved at its August meeting to recommend the application for approval.

The council has been working with the Peak District Rural Housing Association, the Rural Housing Enabler and Planning Officers of the Peak District National Park Authority since 2007 to address the need to provide good affordable housing for local people.

Since 2007 two housing needs surveys have been carried out independently by the Rural Housing Enabler. The first survey carried out identified a local need and from this the Parish Council, with its partners, undertook a search for a suitable site within the village. Five sites, including the application site, were considered for development and thorough investigations were undertaken on three of the five original sites. Considerable effort has been made by the council and its partners to identify and secure a suitable site for development that satisfies highway and planning requirements.

The proposed site is seen as an extension to the existing Housing Association houses (Florence Gladwin Close). Properties on Leacroft Road do have rear facing elevations facing the proposal with an established hedgerow between. It is felt the proposal is sufficiently away from those properties avoiding any amenity issues.

The design will reflect the local vernacular with the dwellings stepped up the slope, resulting in changes in height at eaves level. This creates the irregular appearance seen in the village and avoids bland uniformity. The scale of the proposal sympathetically relates to the traditional and building forms in the locality.

The proposal will sit closer in to the built environment of Winster than the existing 1970's extension to Leacroft Road. It will therefore respect the form and layout of the village and any impact on existing dwellings is minimal and considered acceptable.

The proposal will also provide a formal footway link to the play area/open space at Woodhouse Lane and provide an alternative safer off road route to Main Street.

The council feels the design has taken into account relevant local development policies, together with advice from planning officers at the National Park and Highway Engineers, the PDNPA Design Guide and relevant government guidance'.

PDNPA Ecology – No objections, subject to appropriate mitigation measures for bats, birds and Great Crested Newts and a landscaping scheme to incorporate measures put forward in the submitted Ecological Report (July 2016).

PDNPA Archaeology - Previous development has already encroached into this particular field, and the adjacent field has already been developed, therefore scheme would not have an overly harmful impact on the historic landscape feature.

Natural England - Based upon the information provided, Natural England advises that the proposal is unlikely to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes.

Third Party representations

There have been five individual letters of objection and two letters of general comment, all of which have been summarised below.

Objections to the proposal

- Inaccuracies and lack of sufficient information do not enable proper scrutiny of the application.
- The flats are inappropriate and not likely to be suitable for the elderly.
- Small flats with small rooms and shared communal gardens are not considered suitable for families.
- The Housing Needs Survey is out of date.
- Proposed street lamp would cause issues to No 1 & 2's front bedrooms.
- No consultation with residents regarding the application.
- More of a need for affordable buying not renting.
- There seems plenty of space within the plot to build several suitable family homes.
- Safety concerns regarding the increase in volume of traffic movements and the safety of children playing in the area.
- Concerns over safe access for construction vehicles during the building stage of the development.
- Widening the access road would reduce the shared garden areas to the front of our property.
- Loss of privacy - overlooking issues.

General Comment

- Concerns over the access and how it would affect local properties and amenities.
- Concerns over hedging being affected by the development as it is home to several wildlife.
- Believes an inadequate assessment of the housing need has been made.
- Details of the plans appear to have omissions making it impossible to scrutinise.

Local and National Housing Policy

Both National Planning Policy (NPPF) and local policies in the Development Plan set out a consistent approach to new housing in the National Park. Paragraph 54 in particular states, that in rural areas local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing.

Main Development Plan Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1 ,2, 3, 4, DS1, HC1, L1

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC16, LC17, LC20, LC21, LH1, LH2, LT11, LT18, LC21, LC22, LU1, LU2

Core Strategy (CS)

GSP1, GSP2 jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage assets.

GSP3 requires that particular attention is paid to the impact on the character and setting of buildings and that the design is in accord with the Authority's Design Guide and development is appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park.

DS1 reflects the objectives of national policy, indicating that new build development for affordable housing will be acceptable within or on the edge of the settlements of which it lists, which includes Winster.

HC1 states that provision will not be made for housing solely to meet open market demand and prioritises the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs within named settlements.

L1 says that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character, as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment and other valued characteristics.

Local Plan (LP)

LC4 considers design, layout and landscaping and points out that particular attention will be paid to scale, form, mass and orientation in relation to existing buildings.

LH1 make provision for local needs affordable housing and LH2 set out the qualifying criteria.

LT11 & LT18 require adequate means of access and parking facilities in new development.

LC17, LC18 & LC19 seek to ensure that no harm is caused to protected species as a result of development being carried out, and that where appropriate safeguarding measures are exercised.

LC21, LC22, LU1 & LU2 require adequate measures to deal with utilities infrastructure.

CC1 and the associated supplementary planning document (SPD) on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, encourage incorporating energy saving measures and renewable energy into new development.

Further Supplementary Planning Guidance is provided in the Authority's Design Guides and Meeting the Local Need for Affordable Housing in the Peak District.

Officer Assessment

The Need & Affordability

In applying the relevant housing policies of the Development Plan to this scheme, it is considered critical that the proposed dwellings would represent the more affordable housing criteria, to meet an identified local need. This would be subject to a Section 106 legal agreement being attached to control occupancy and affordability. Policy further requires schemes of three or more dwellings to be carried out by a registered social landlord.

The proposed 4 x 2 bedroomed flats for local people would meet the need from single people and couples identified in the Winster Housing Need Survey undertaken in 2012, and refreshed in 2016 by Peak District Rural Housing Association, which identified six local households requiring flats. This information was gathered through the circulation of 'register of interest' forms in the village, with most of those registering being young people wanting to set up home independently.

The flats would be for rent and would be advertised through Home-Options, the District Council's Housing Register. The District Housing Enabler wrote in September (2017), that eleven households registered on the Home-Options system who were in need of an affordable home and currently living in Winster, Birchover or Elton and having a strong local connection to one of these parishes, with eight of those households eligible for a two bedroomed flat. Further saying that, from experience, this figure under-represents actual need as not everyone in housing need registers on Home-Options and that the figure does not take account of local people who have left the village and wish to return. Moreover, the District Council are fully supportive of the application and has committed Capital Grant funding of £80,000 towards the proposal. The scheme also has grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency.

All the dwellings are below the 87m² maximum floor area set out in the Local Plan, with the rent for the properties being arranged at a local housing allowance. Subsequently, it is considered the applicant has demonstrated that there is sufficient need and the four dwellings proposed adequately reflect the findings of the updated information on Housing Need in respect of their type and scale. The principle of the proposal therefore, meets the requirements of Development Plan Policies in relation to affordable local needs dwellings, in accord with policies HC1 and LH1.

The suitability of the site for residential development

The Authority's Adopted SPD on affordable housing states that the Authority's intention is to ensure that within any named settlement, the best possible site is selected for larger developments of 3 or more dwellings. Consequently before an application of a greenfield site for 3 or more dwellings is considered, the applicant will be expected to demonstrate that a thorough search of brownfield sites (derelict land and empty buildings) has taken place. Only in the event of no such site being available, should the search for the best greenfield site be undertaken and suitable sites within the settlement given preference.

Site appraisal work has been undertaken in Winster since 2007 involving Planning Officers, the Peak District Rural Housing Association (PDRHA), Derbyshire Dales District Council (DDDC) Rural Housing Enabler and Winster Parish Council, to identify the most suitable site for a small

development of affordable homes for local people within the village. Several sites within the village were looked at. These included a site on Wensley Lane. However, the landowner withdrew his interest because of difficulties with the tenant farmer. The re-development of the former care home was also investigated; however, the owner was unwilling to commit to a scheme. In this case, it is considered that in the context of the Supplementary Guidance, a sufficient search of alternative sites has been carried out, with input from the Parish Council as representatives of the village and that the proposed site is judged to be the most suitable.

It is therefore considered that the form and layout of the proposed housing would signify a measured and logical extension to this part of the village. Although the development would result in loss of open space, the site represents the best available location and its development would not appear detrimental to the character of the village or wider area.

Layout and Design

Layout

The development site is within an area of enclosed land on the north western fringe of the village, outside of the village Conservation Area. The site itself falls gradually from south to north and is currently in an uncultivated condition. The main depth of the site is approximately 27 metres from the north to the south boundary and around 28 metres from east to west with an access linking the site from the turning area at the end of Florence Gladwin Close. The proposed layout would comprise a block of four flats, sited approximately 18 metres from the garden boundaries of dwellings to the east on Leacroft Road, and a distance of around 7 metres between gable elevations of the proposed flats and the existing properties on Florence Gladwin Close. Bin dwell areas and timber sheds would be located along the north and west boundaries of the site, with a private shared garden area between the rear elevation of the flats and the western boundary of the development site. A two metre wide public access path would separate the existing dwellings from the proposed flats and afford access to a children's play area to the west of the development site.

Car parking for the development would be situated to the front of the dwellings, between the small garden frontage/drystone wall boundaries and the eastern edge of the development site and arranged in two blocks of four spaces; two per dwelling. In streetscape terms, the form and layout reflect the vernacular style of the area. The development would be viewed as an extension of the existing built environment and is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the village and its wider setting. The car parking layout around the turning head to Florence Gladwin Close (associated with the existing dwellings) would also be reconfigured as part of the application.

Design

The houses would be constructed of rubble limestone for the walling under a blue slate roof, with timber windows and composite doors. The eaves height would be 4.6 metres, with the overall height to the ridge of 7.3 metres. The gable width would be approximately 7.6 metres reflecting the gable widths of the existing dwellings on Florence Gladwin Close. The proposed timber sheds would measure around 2.1 metres x 2.1 metres and would be positioned within the garden area, two along the northern boundary and two on the southern boundary. In this case, the scheme is considered sympathetic to the area, reflecting the size and appearance of a more traditional design approach, in accord with policies GSP3 and LC4.

Landscaping and impact on the wider locality

The submitted layout drawings show the access roads and footways would be laid in tarmac and concrete curbing. Paving within the plots would be Heritage Riven concrete pavers and some rolled aggregate surfacing would be used within the curtilage of the plot. A proposed drystone

wall would be erected along the northern boundary of the site separating the garden areas from the remainder of the field, with further drystone walling along the front separating the small garden areas from the parking and turning area. The remainder of the boundary treatment would be timber post and rail fencing with vertically timbered access gates. The plans do not show any detail of soft landscaping, therefore it is considered a more detailed landscaping plan should be submitted and agreed and in line with the method statement and mitigation measures submitted as part of the ecological survey regarding protected species (see 'other matters' section below). Whilst the development site is within an area of open space, the arrangement would show a fairly concentrated development of the plot, with the northern part of the field remaining undeveloped. Moreover, the design, form and layout are considered to be appropriate to the area which is sited outside of the village conservation area. Consequently, with an agreed landscaping plan, the scheme would present a sympathetic development to the locality, which in turn is considered would preserve and maintain the special qualities of the surrounding area in accord with policies LC1 and LC4.

Impact on neighbourliness

The closest properties to the development site are located adjacent to the site (Florence Gladwin Close) and beyond the eastern boundary (Leacroft Road). The proposed flats would mirror the linear arrangement of the existing properties on Florence Gladwin Close and be physically separated from them by around 7 metres. The distance between the front elevations of the proposed flats and the rear elevations of the dwellings on Leacroft Road would be approximately 30 metres. In this case, due to the separation distance, orientation, layout and existing hedging (eastern boundary), it is considered that the impact on privacy and any perception of overlooking would be negligible and that the scheme complies with policies GSP3 and LC4 in these respects.

Impact on highway safety/access

There are no objections to the application in terms of highways safety, subject to conditions relating to the following: 1) Allocate space within the site curtilage for site accommodation, storage of plant and materials etc. 2) Provide wheel cleaning facilities within the site so all construction vehicles shall have their wheels cleaned before leaving the site, in order to prevent the deposition of mud and other materials onto the highway. 3) Before any other operations commence existing vehicular access to Florence Gladwin Close shall be modified in accordance with the submitted drawing. 4) No dwelling shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the submitted drawing for 8 cars to be parked within the site and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. 5) There shall be no gates or other barriers within 5m of the nearside highway boundary and any gates shall open inwards only and 6) Prior to the commencement of the development, details shall be submitted to and approved by the National Park Authority, showing the means to prevent the discharge of water from the development onto the highway. Moreover, the properties would have their own vehicular, pedestrian access points and parking spaces which considered, would not interfere with the amenities of adjoining residents or highway safety. Consequently and subject to the above conditions, the development is considered acceptable in highways terms in accordance with policies LT11 and LT18.

Other matters

The Authority's Ecologist raises no objections to the development, subject to recommendations being followed in the submitted Ecological Appraisal and subsequent Working Method Statement regarding Great Crested Newts, these would include the grassland within the development site to be grazed by cattle ensuring low suitability for great crested newts prior to site clearance and as part of the enhancement measures put forward in the report. In addition, a suitable grass and wildflower seed mix shall be agreed with the Authority's Ecologist prior to the start of the works. Clearance works should also be avoided during the bird nesting season, with a scheme for nesting sites being provided (in particular for house sparrow and swift). Other protected species

are known to be active in the area, therefore immediately prior to the commencement of development a further survey must be undertaken to ensure that there are no such species in the broadleaved woodland bordering the site. If any are found to be present, appropriate mitigation must be agreed and put in place.

With regards to bats, two ridge tile access points should be provided in the main roof of the building. It is also recommended that any lighting to be installed on the site, both during and post development should be directed as far as is practical away from any bat access points to avoid or disturb any bats which may be utilising them. In this case, subject to appropriate mitigation measures, the development is considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy policy L2 and Local Plan policy LC17 with respect to impacts on ecology.

The Authority's Ecologist has also requested that a landscaping scheme be submitted and approved of which should incorporate the measures put forward in the July 2016 Ecological Appraisal and September 2017 report 'Reasonable Avoidance Measures and Precautionary Method of Working for Great Crested Newt'. This should incorporate mitigation measures to protect the trees and hedging along the boundaries of the development site, including the eastern boundary between the site and the neighbouring garden areas of Leacroft Road.

The Authority's Archaeologist has raised no objections, stating that as previous development has already encroached into this particular field and the adjacent field has already been developed, the scheme would not have an overly harmful impact on any historic landscape features. In this case the development is considered to be compliant with L3 and LC16.

Environmental Management

The agent has stated that the new dwellings would be super-insulated to reduce energy use with a sustainable heating system and low water use fittings. A number of other options were considered which included heat pumps. However, whilst it would be ideal to incorporate other sustainability measures such as these, the development is for low cost dwellings for rent on a constrained budget, which has to incorporate relatively expensive natural building materials, and the agent advises that these are not affordable. However, officers consider that an appropriate condition should be included, requesting further exploration by the applicants regarding the use of alternative renewable energies. Notwithstanding the above, the proposed use of traditional materials should enhance the sustainability of the flats building throughout its life. Moreover, the building would also require compliance with recently upgraded building regulations.

Conclusion

This is considered to be a sympathetic scheme for four affordable dwellings that would meet an identified local need for the village and comply with National and Development Plan Policies. Subject to the completion of a S.106 relating to affordability and local occupation criteria, the scheme is recommended for approval.

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