

Item No. 11

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/17/01339/FULL
LOCATION	24 Ickwell Green, Ickwell, Biggleswade, SG18 9EE
PROPOSAL	Erection of one new dwelling
PARISH	Northill
WARD	Northill
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Mr Firth
CASE OFFICER	Michael Huntington
DATE REGISTERED	04 April 2017
EXPIRY DATE	30 May 2017
APPLICANT	Mr J McGuinness
AGENT	
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Ward member call-in Reason for call-in

CS15/DM13 - Heritage. Impact upon the character of the Conservation Area

CS16 - Landscape. Effect upon the local distinctiveness of the village green.

Would impact upon the character and appearance of the rural character at the centre of the village.

Inappropriate development within the conservation area.

RECOMMENDED DECISION

Approve

Reason for recommendation:

The proposal for residential development is considered to be acceptable in light of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2009. The harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area would be less than substantial. There would be no materially significant amenity harm to existing residents and the proposal would provide an adequate form of access and parking provision.

Site Location:

The site is located along Ickwell Green, facing onto the village green to the south west, which is the heart and focal point of the village. The site is bordered to the north-west by an existing detached house at 26 The Green, and to the south-east by existing dwellings at 23, 24 and 25 The Green. Garden land that is categorised as being beyond the settlement envelope is located to the rear of the site, to the north east.

The scale of the housing alongside the village green is predominantly 1 ½ storey in height with some 2 storey and some single storey elements.

The site is located within the Ickwell conservation area.

The site shares an access with nos. 23, 24 and 25 The Green. Nos. 24 and 25 form a single dwelling.

The site is generally flat, although there is a slight rise in levels to the rear of the site.

The Application:

The application is made in full for one new three bedroom dwelling.

The application is accompanied by:-

Design and access statement

Heritage statement

Tree survey

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

Section 6 – delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Section 7 – requiring good design

Section 11 - conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies - North 2009

CS3: Healthy and Sustainable Communities

CS5: Providing Homes

CS14: High Quality Development

DM3: High Quality Development

DM4: Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes

Development Strategy

At the meeting of Full Council on 19 November 2015 it was resolved to withdraw the Development Strategy. Preparation of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan has begun. A substantial volume of evidence gathered over a number of years will help support this document. These technical papers are consistent with the spirit of the NPPF and therefore will remain on our website as material considerations which may inform further development management decisions.

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)

Relevant Planning History:

Application Number	CB/16/05666/FULL
Description	Erection of 1 dwelling on vacant plot between no.26 and no.24 The Green with associated car parking, utilising an existing highways access used by no.23 and no.24 The Green.
Decision	Application withdrawn
Decision Date	6 th February 2017
Application Number	CB/00559/FULL
Description	Alterations to driveway and landscaping
Decision	Full application – granted
Decision Date	2 nd June 2016

Application Number	CB/15/03841/FULL
Description	New dwelling house with associated hardstanding, landscaping and realignment of existing vehicular access
Decision	Full application – refused
Decision Date	9th December 2015
Appeal Decision Date	5th July 2016
Appeal Decision	Planning Appeal Dismissed

Consultees:

Parish Council The Planning Committee of Northill Parish Council considered the above revised application and the recommendation is to object to the proposal on the grounds that:

- The appearance of the conservation area would be greatly affected. The Green is an area where there are large spaces between the properties. The proposed dwelling would reduce the space between the neighbouring properties on that part of The Green and have a detrimental visual effect on the conservation area.
- It creates a precedent for similar development at other properties on The Green
- The height of the dwelling is overpowering in relation to the neighbouring properties
- The materials are out of character with the other properties on The Green

The Committee were unable to see how the site location had changed from the original proposal.

CBC Archaeology

No objection

The proposed development site lies within the historic core of the settlement of Ickwell and under the terms of the NPPF, this is a heritage asset with archaeological interest.

The application includes a desk-based assessment which was subsequently supplemented by a report on an archaeological field evaluation comprising a programme of trial trenches which formed part of the documentation submitted as part of the planning appeal for that application.

No archaeological remains were identified in the field evaluation and the report goes on to conclude that the site has negligible to low potential to contain archaeological remains relating to the Ickwell medieval settlement heritage asset with archaeological interest and that the impact of the proposal on archaeological remains and the significance of the heritage

asset would also be negligible to low, and this is an appropriate conclusion.

CBC Conservation

No objection

The proposed amended approach sits more comfortably within the long site and follows the grain of nearby similar linear buildings.

Close attention to architectural detail and in the selection of conservation standard materials will be required.

A small number of proper conservation roof lights might be acceptable, although high level windows tucked under the eaves might be a less assertive alternative to roof lights.

CBC Highways

No objection

The amended Block Plan shown on drawing no. 17195-10 Rev A is satisfactory showing sufficient parking at three spaces for the proposed new dwelling, an additional three spaces for no. 24 and unobstructed access retained for no. 23. There is no change to the access at the interface with the public highway. It is adequate to cater for movements associated with the proposal and existing uses. Additionally, the proposal is unlikely to cause significant adverse highway impacts.

A condition will be required ensuring that the parking will be provided as per the submitted details for the proposed and existing dwellings, and that those spaces will be retained thereafter.

Internal Drainage Board
Other Representations:

No comments

Neighbours and others

There are 56 objections, and their comments are summarised below:-

Ampthill

Lodge Piece Farm

Biggleswade

6 Sherrington Close

Gamlingay

41 Cinques Road

1 Crab Apple Way

Great Barford

32 High Street

4 Roxton Road

Ickwell

- Principle – does not meet criteria set out in policy DM4
- Precedent
- Impact upon conservation area, imposing, overbearing and dominant, will not protect, conserve or enhance the conservation area. Cramped on site.
- Impact upon neighbours, overlooking from rear balcony to gardens of neighbours, and to habitable rooms and private gardens to Smithy Cottage and no.26. Galleried landing reduce privacy of neighbours
- Insufficient car parking
- Elevational detail, barn style design not in keeping with surrounding cottages
- Scale

Well Cottage, Bedford Rd
2, 11, 32 Caldecote Road
5 Colemoreham Court
Oak Tree Cottage,
Pemberley House, Shyre
Cottage, 1, 3, 17, 17a, 20,
21 24 The Green
10 Northhill Road
Stepping Stones, 2, 3
Warden Road
11 Thorncote Road

- Finished floor levels
- Photograph does not accurately represent proposal
- Flooding

Keysoe

4 Elmtree Grove

London

15 Eustace Road

Luton

4 Hewlett Road

Northill

24 Sand Lane
Woodcote Corner

Sandy

7 Brook End
13 Georgetown

Upper Caldecote

2 Ashby Drive
27 Shakespeare Drive

Upper Winchendon

Waddesdon Hill Farm

Determining Issues:

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle
2. Effect on the Character and Appearance of the Area and the Historic Environment
3. Neighbouring Amenity
4. Highway Considerations
5. Other Considerations

Considerations

1. Principle of development

- 1.1 Ickwell is classified as a 'Small Village' within Policy CS1 of the Council's Core Strategy

and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (CS) and Policy DM4 notes that, 'Within Small Villages, development will be limited to infill residential development'.

- 1.2 Paragraph 11.1.7 of the Core Strategy defines infill development as small-scale development utilising a vacant plot which should continue to complement the surrounding pattern of development.
- 1.3 The application site forms part of the garden curtilage serving No. 24 and is within the Settlement Envelope boundary. It is adjacent to residential garden land to the south east and north west.
- 1.4 In terms of the infill definition as set out in Policy DM4, the proposal can be considered as small scale development appropriate for the size of the village within a vacant plot, and so the principle of development could be considered to be acceptable, subject to an assessment of the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

The site is not located within the flood plain.

- 1.5 The previous application 15/03841/FULL was refused due to the harm the proposal would have had on the character and appearance of the area by being located to the rear of the site, outside the settlement envelope, and this decision was upheld at appeal.
- 1.6

- 1.7 A more recent application 16/05666/FULL was withdrawn earlier this year. That application proposed a building located further forward within the site, closer to the village green, and in the approximate location of the current proposal. Although the location of the building in that application was considered to be acceptable, its overall form, that of a more 'standard' conventional 4 bedroom detached dwelling, did not reflect the character and general pattern of development in this location, and this resulted in the application being withdrawn.

2. Effect on the Character and Appearance of the Area and the Historic Environment

- 2.1 The application site is situated within the Ickwell Conservation Area boundary. In terms of the historic context, policy CS15 states that the Council will protect, conserve and enhance the district's heritage including its Conservation Areas and their setting and policy DM13 states that applications within Conservation Areas will be assessed against the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal and inappropriate development will be refused.
- 2.2 The NPPF states in paragraph 132 "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be." and Paragraph 134 of the NPPF goes on to say "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal." A designated heritage asset in this context is the Conservation Area and any Listed Buildings.
- 2.3 The buildings facing out on to the green consist of a mixture of house types in terms of

age, style and scale, although the character of the place predominantly comes from the older houses, which tend to be mostly 1 ½ storeys in height. Many of the older houses are listed, and those that are, are all at grade II. The nearest listed buildings are the Old House and no. 27 Ickwell Green. The Old House at 1 and 2 Ickwell Green has medieval origins with 16th, 18th and 19th century alterations. 27 Ickwell Green, which is close to the application site, is a 17th century house with 20th century additions.

- 2.4 Almost all of the houses that face the green have been extended and adapted throughout the 20th and 21st century, without altering the essential character of the village green. More recent infill development has taken place on the southern side of the green, near to the cricket clubhouse. There is a generally loose grain of building form but there is no defined standard width of gap between each of the buildings facing out onto the green, indeed this variety of gap size is part of its character. There are some buildings close to the edge of the green, there are some that are set back, there are some buildings close to each other and there are some with more significant gaps. Some buildings are narrow in span and present their gable to the green, and some have a deeper span and some are square in form. There is no policy provision that prevents additional buildings being developed within the Ickwell Conservation Area, and adding another building in this location, so long as the overall massing, form, scale and design is acceptable, should not be an unacceptable approach to development in this location.
- 2.5 The shared access between nos. 23 and 24 means that the proposed building needs to be set back from the street, running along a similar building line to the adjacent Stable Cottage. By setting back the building, its impact on the street scene will be less significant and will have the visual effect of the building receding into the background when viewed from the green. By presenting its gable to the green, this will also help to blend in the development with the prevailing character of built form in this part of the green, which predominantly consists of buildings gable end on. The form, scale and architectural character of the building is an appropriate response to the site's location.
- 2.6 Concern has been raised by the scale of the proposed dwelling. The proposal is for a building which will have the eaves slightly lower than for a conventional 2 storey dwelling, and for a steeply pitched roof that will complement the character of the area when presenting the gable to the green. The scale of the proposal is considered to be an acceptable approach in this location.
- 2.7 Concern has been expressed about the barn like design of the building. It is considered that, by designing the building so that its form is long and narrow with its gable presented to the green, then the design will not be inappropriate to the conservation area, and its elevational treatment is an acceptable design approach in this location. A condition will require high quality materials and architectural detailing that befits its location within the conservation area.
- 2.8 Concern has also been raised regarding the quality of the photograph of the site showing the location of the proposal in context, and that it may not have been taken by a qualified architect or surveyor. When assessing the merits of the planning application, reference to the photograph has to be taken together with the submitted plans and elevations that have been drawn by an architect, and which are all to scale in

accordance with the requirements of the planning application. Should the application be approved, a planning condition will be required showing the proposed finished floor levels of the proposal in context with the neighbouring dwellings, particularly nos. 24 and 25, to ensure that the proposal is at the same finished floor levels of these buildings.

- 2.9 The Councils Conservation Officer has raised no objection to the development in terms of harm to the significance of the nearby heritage assets or the historic environment.

The NPPF states that less than substantial harm should be balanced against the benefits of the proposal which in this case is limited to the small scale provision of additional housing for the village. In terms of the impact on heritage assets the proposal is considered to be in compliance with the NPPF and the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DM13 and CS15.

The proposal, by virtue of its siting, form and scale, will have a less than significantly harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3. **Neighbouring Amenity**

- 3.1 Concern has been expressed by neighbours that the proposal will harm their privacy. The overall design has been created to ensure that there will be no materially significant issues in relation to overlooking. The first floor windows looking out over the garden to the neighbour (no. 26) to the north west consist of high level conservation roof lights which serve the three bathrooms. The proposed building is set back at an oblique angle to the existing dwellings at nos. 23 and 26, and together with the building being set back in the plot will result in a building that is not considered to be overbearing to those neighbouring properties. The main 1st floor windows consist of a feature window to the master bedroom looking out over the rear garden which will not give rise to any material privacy issues with neighbours, and there will be another window to the front gable to bedroom 1. This will provide architectural interest to the gable when viewed from the village green. Bedroom 3 will have high level conservation roof lights on the side elevation facing the garden to the neighbour to the south east.

There is a 17m side to side distance with Stable Cottage to the south east, which does not have any windows to habitable rooms on this elevation, is separated by existing landscaping, and this is considered to be an acceptable distance in this location.

- 3.2 The land rises slightly to the rear of the site, and as discussed earlier in the report, a planning condition will be required to ensure that the proposed dwelling's finished floor level will be the same as the adjacent houses.
- 3.3 It is concluded that there will be no materially significant harmful effects upon the amenity of the neighbours arising from this proposal. In terms of the impact on neighbouring amenity, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009).

4. **Highway Considerations**

- 4.1 The proposal provides the appropriate number of car parking spaces as defined in the Design Guide. This requires that for a 3 bedroom house, the number of car parking

spaces that should be provided is a minimum of 2 and a suggested number of 3. The application is proposing 3 car parking spaces and the shared access drive is sufficiently wide to enable a considerable number of additional informal car parking spaces, should they be needed.

There is no change to the access at the interface with the public highway. It is adequate to cater for movements associated with the proposal and existing uses.

5. Other Considerations

- 5.1 Concern has been expressed that granting planning permission for this proposal would set a precedent. Precedent is not a planning consideration, and every planning application is considered on its own merits.
- 5.2 Concern has been expressed that the proposed roof lights on bedroom 2 do not meet current building regulations, specifically relating to fire safety. However, the building regulations are covered by separate legislation, and the granting of planning permission does not confer a granting of building regulations approval.

Approved document B, volume 1, is the document which refers to fire safety. The document sets out provisions for the means of escape from the upper floors of 2 storey dwellings with rooms not more than 4.5m above ground level. The document states on para 2.4 of that document that except for kitchens, all habitable rooms in the upper storey of a dwelling house should be provided with an escape window or direct access to a protected stairway. In this instance, the high level velux windows would not be accessible as a fire escape, however, a stairway with direct access is located immediately adjacent to the bedroom.

5.3 Human Rights issues:

No issues have arisen in relation to the Human Rights Act or Equality Act 2010.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be APPROVED subject to the following:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.
- Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers
17195-10A - Layout

17195-11A - Floor plans and sections

17195-12A - Sections

Reason: To identify the approved plan/s and to avoid doubt.

- 3 **No development shall take place, notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, until details of the materials to be used for the external walls, roofs, windows, doors and eaves of the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To control the appearance of the building in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality. This is a pre-commencement condition as it is important to agree materials in this sensitive location before construction begins.

(Section 7, NPPF)

- 4 **No development shall take place until details of the existing and final ground and slab levels of the buildings hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include sections through both the site and the adjoining properties, the location of which shall first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the site shall be developed in full accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To ensure that an acceptable relationship results between the new development and adjacent buildings and public areas. This is a pre-commencement condition as it is important to agree the finished floor levels in relation to neighbouring properties before construction begins.

(Section 7, NPPF)

- 5 **No development shall take place beyond slab level until a landscaping scheme to include all hard and soft landscaping and a scheme for landscape maintenance for a period of five years following the implementation of the landscaping scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented by the end of the full planting season immediately following the completion and/or first use of any separate part of the development (a full planting season means the period from October to March). The trees, shrubs and grass shall subsequently be maintained in accordance with the approved landscape maintenance scheme and any which die or are destroyed during this period shall be replaced during the next planting season.**

Reason: To ensure an acceptable standard of landscaping.

(Sections 7 & 11, NPPF)

- 6 **No equipment, machinery or materials shall be brought on to the site for the purposes of development until details of substantial protective fencing for the protection of any retained trees has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved**

fencing shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made.

**Reason: To safeguard existing trees and hedgerows. This is a pre-commencement condition because tree protection measures must be implemented before construction takes place.
(Sections 7 & 11, NPPF)**

- 7 Before the dwelling is occupied a scheme shall be submitted for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed in accordance with the approved scheme before the building is occupied and be thereafter retained.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenities of the locality.
(Section 7, NPPF)

- 8 The proposed dwelling shall not be occupied until the means of access and parking areas shown on drawing number 17195-10 Rev A have been laid out, drained and surfaced in accordance with details previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and those areas shall not thereafter be used for any other purpose.

Reason: To provide a satisfactory means of access and to enable vehicles to draw off and park clear of the access road to minimise conditions of danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the adjoining access road.
(Section 7, NPPF)

INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT

1. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.

Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 6, Article 35

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

DECISION

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