

Item No. 7

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/17/01236/OUT
LOCATION	Land at Sorrell Way, Biggleswade
PROPOSAL	Outline application: erection of building(s) to provide extra care accommodation comprising up to 93 units with associated access, landscaping and ancillary works. All matters reserved except for access.
PARISH	Biggleswade
WARD	Biggleswade South
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Lawrence & Woodward
CASE OFFICER	Michael Huntington
DATE REGISTERED	31 March 2017
EXPIRY DATE	30 June 2017
APPLICANT	CBC Assets Department
AGENT	Woods Hardwick Planning Ltd
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Land in ownership of Central Bedfordshire Council
	Town Council objection to a major application recommended for approval
RECOMMENDED DECISION	APPROVAL subject to a s106 agreement

Reason for Recommendation

The proposal is in a sustainable location within the built up settlement boundary for Biggleswade. While the proposal would result in the loss of open space, it has historically been allocated as a location for a lower school and nursery unit in the Stratton Development Expansion area in 1990, with an alternative use as housing. There would be no significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, including neighbouring amenity, and the access arrangements are considered acceptable. The benefits of the proposed new extra-care accommodation are considered to add weight in favour of the development and therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Site Location:

The application site is situated to the south east of Biggleswade, within an existing residential area. It was originally allocated as a site for education or housing development, as part of the Stratton Development Expansion area, the masterplan of which was approved in 1990. Since the 1990 masterplan, Biggleswade has expanded further to the east, with residential development still taking place at the Kings Reach site. Employment development is also continuing at the Stratton Park business park, close by to the site to the south east.

Sorrell Way forms the site boundary to the north east, and Chambers Way provides the south eastern boundary. Buttercup Mead forms part of the southern edge, and a roundabout that includes the Biggleswade eastern relief road along Saxon Drive and Baden-Powell Way is located at the south eastern corner of the site.

The site is currently used as informal open space, with a public footpath running close to the southern boundary, and other informal routes criss-cross the site.

The Application:

The applicant seeks outline planning permission for the erection of buildings to provide extra-care accommodation comprising up to 93 units with associated access, landscaping and ancillary works. The scheme would be 100% affordable housing.

All matters are reserved except for access.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies - North 2009

Policy CS1 – Development Strategy

Policy CS2 – Developer Contributions

Policy CS3 – Healthy and Sustainable Communities

Policy CS4 – Linking Communities – accessibility and transport

Policy CS5 – Providing Homes

Policy CS7 – Affordable Housing

Policy CS13 – Climate Change

Policy CS14 – High Quality Development

Policy CS16 - Landscape and Woodland

Policy CS17 - Green Infrastructure

Policy DM3 - High Quality Development

Policy DM10 – Housing Mix

Policy DM14 - Landscape and Woodland

Policy DM15 - Biodiversity

Policy DM16 - Green Infrastructure

Policy DM17 - Accessible Greenspaces

Development Strategy

The Council is currently consulting on its Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18). The Plan outlines the overarching strategy for growth and also sets out more detailed policies which will be used to determine planning applications. A substantial volume of evidence gathered over a number of years supports this document. These technical

papers are consistent with the aspirations of the National Planning Policy Framework and therefore will remain on the Council's website as material considerations, which will, along with the direction of travel of the Local Plan, inform development management decisions.

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)

Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Drainage Guidance (May 2015)

Relevant Planning History:

MB/90/00466/CC Stratton Development Area – Masterplan pursuant to outline planning permission for residential and associated development. Approved 8th May 1990.

17/1277/OUT - Subject to a separate report on this committee agenda.

Consultees:

Biggleswade Town
Council

Objects on the following grounds:-

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECT** to this application on the grounds that the access is not clear, that the application is linked to the Saxon Drive development with a view to offset the provision for social housing on the Saxon Drive site.

Anglian Water

No objection

The site layout should take into account Anglian Water assets close to or crossing the site.

The sewerage system has the capacity to deal with flows arising from the development.

Environment Agency

No comment

Fire and Rescue

No objection

Vehicular access for a fire pump needs to be provided within 45m of all points within a dwelling house, and turning facilities are required.

Fire hydrants will be required and no building shall be further than 90m from a fire hydrant.

Internal Drainage Board

No comment

Sustainable drainage	No objection, subject to planning conditions requiring detailed plans of the drainage system, together with a maintenance and management plan.
Archaeology	<p>No objection</p> <p>It can be demonstrated that the proposed development is unlikely to have an impact on archaeological deposits and will not affect the setting of Stratton Park Moat Scheduled Monument and will not, therefore, affect the significance of heritage assets with archaeological interest or the designated heritage asset. Consequently, there is no objection to this application on archaeological grounds.</p>
Ecology	<p>No objection</p> <p>To ensure that the development delivers a net gain in biodiversity, a condition will be required to ensure the an ecological enhancement strategy is submitted and approved.</p>
Green Infrastructure	<p>Object</p> <p>The application would result in the loss of a green infrastructure asset and recreational open space, identified in the Leisure Strategy and as an accessible green space in the Biggleswade Green Wheel.</p>
Highways Development Control	<p>No objection</p> <p>Access is shown at 5.5m with a 9m junction radii, which is acceptable.</p> <p>Concern has been raised that the red line connects to Sorrell Way, which has not yet been adopted.</p> <p>Car parking will be required at 1 space per 4 beds and 1 space per 2 members of staff. This should be regarded as a minimum standard. Cycle parking will also be required.</p> <p>The Transport Assessment has looked at the surrounding junctions. All the junctions are below the capacity level RFC of 0.85 with the exception of the Chambers Way / London Road junction which is above the theoretical maximum with a worst case scenario of 1.16. However the development would only add 0.01 to this, which is not considered severe in accordance with the NPPF.</p>

Planning conditions will be required relating to the Highway Junction, visibility splays, vehicular turning areas and surface water drainage.

Housing

Supports the application

Sorrell Way has been identified as a key priority by CBC for the delivery of an extra care facility.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified a tenure requirement from qualifying affordable housing sites as being 73% affordable rent and 27% intermediate tenure. This would make a requirement of 68 units of affordable rent and 25 units of intermediate tenure (shared ownership) from this proposed development. However, a flexible approach can be taken with the tenure mix to enable the delivery of the extra care scheme and to ensure that the correct balance of tenure is provided.

Landscaping

Object

The development would introduce a very large building and parking court on one of the few open spaces within the residential area of east Biggleswade. The current proportion of built form to open space is too high.

The landscape proposals need to be strengthened, with the northern boundary providing scope to provide a strong tree line as well as the planting of landmark trees along the Chambers Way frontage.

A green corridor will also be beneficial alongside the public footpath, and ecologically rich SuDs will be necessary for the parking court and the building.

MANOP Team (meeting the needs of older people)

No objection.

The number of older residents in this ward and the substantial predicted rise in the number of people over 65 in the Ivel Valley area demonstrates that there is likely to be significant demand for mainstream housing with care and support available for mainstream housing.

Public Art

No objection

A public art plan will be required, to highlight a sense of place on the development.

Public Protection

No objection

The contamination assessment suggests that there is no need for any remediation.

The site is located where some of the proposed units are exposed to noise from traffic, and it will be necessary to ensure that any end users are protected from traffic noise.

Conditions will be necessary relating to a final risk assessment relating to ground contamination and also relating to noise protection.

Public Rights of Way

No objection

The developer will be required to submit a Strategic Rights of Way Plan. Public Footpath no. 24 crosses the site and may have to be diverted to accommodate the development. Any diversion will need to ensure that the new route is located in a wide green landscaped area with the possibility of a Toucan crossing where the footpath crosses Chambers Way, and upgraded to allow for cycle use.

Sustainability

Development must meet sustainability standards set out by the core strategy policy CS13: Climate Change and development management policies DM1: Renewable Energy and DM2: Sustainable Construction of New Buildings.

Trees

The site consists of rough grassland, with one group of trees on the site. The group of trees are proposed to be removed, and these should be retained as much as possible with only minimal removal to enable the re-routing of the path.

Other Representations:

29 comments from neighbours and others:-

These comments can be summarised as follows:-

3, 4, 6, 9,10 Buttercup
Mead
17,19 Chervil Close
12 Eagle Farm Road
17 Lilac Grove
24 Orchard Close
23 Osprey Road
11 Reynolds Close
3, 5, 15 Rosemary
Close
40 Rutherford Way
19,25 Sage Close
1, 4, 7 Sorrell Way
71 Stratton Way
15, 16, 36, 37 Tansey
End
52 Weavers Green

- Increase in traffic along Sorrell Way, the roundabout is at capacity
- Increase in noise from the development
- Noise from the construction of the development
- Loss of precious open space and removal of trees
- Effect on wildlife
- Loss of trees on the site
- Scale of the proposed 3 storey block on the corner
- Loss of sunlight for neighbours because of the scale of the building
- Massing of the building – not suitable in this area
- Site not suitable for vulnerable people
- Loss of privacy in rear gardens
- Rerouting of public footpath

Determining Issues:

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle
2. Effect on the character and appearance of the area
3. Neighbouring amenity
4. Highway considerations
5. Planning contributions
6. Planning balance
7. Other considerations

Considerations

1. Principle

- 1.1 The site lies within the town envelope of Biggleswade. It was originally allocated as a site for a Lower School and Nursery Unit as part of the Stratton Development Area in 1990. Its alternative use if the school did not come forward was for housing. The school and its alternative use never came forward and the site became an informal area of open space, with several informal footpaths crossing the site.
- 1.2 Biggleswade is the largest town in the northern part of Central Bedfordshire and is categorised as a Major Service Centre in the hierarchy of settlements. The vision in the adopted local plan is for the town to expand in this role. The town contains a number of services that are expected of a higher order settlement, and taking these points into account it is considered that, as a settlement, Biggleswade should be regarded as being a sustainable location for further growth.

- 1.3 The scale of the proposed development should reflect the scale of the settlement in which it is to be located. In the wider context of the settlement, the addition of up to 93 dwellings within an extra care scheme is considered to be of an appropriate scale.
- 1.4 The site will be accessed via the existing highway on Sorrell Way. Subject to achieving the necessary technical approvals, the location of this access is considered acceptable.
- 1.5 The site is very close to existing community facilities with shops and other leisure facilities directly across the road at the Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, and this would be a sustainable location for development.
- 1.6 The application will provide the affordable housing element of the neighbouring Saxon Drive scheme ref. 17/01277/OUT, which is subject of a separate report on this agenda, should that application be approved. The proposed 'up to' 93 units when added to the 'up to' 230 dwelling scheme at Saxon Drive, equates to over 40% affordable housing over both sites, in excess of the policy compliant 35% requirement.
- 1.7 The location of the proposal and the benefits of the proposed new extra-care accommodation are considered to add weight in favour of the development and therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 Effect on the Character and Appearance of the Area

- 2.1 Development of the site will increase the built form in the area. Development will result in a loss of open space and this is considered to be an adverse impact. However, this site was earmarked for either education or residential development in the 1990 Stratton Expansion Area development, and although neither of the proposals have been implemented, the land is not protected open space, and it has always been intended since 1990 that some development would take place in this location. While there would be a loss of open space it is not considered that the impact would detrimentally harm the character and appearance of the area to the extent that it is regarded as significant and demonstrable in this instance. There are several long distance footpaths located in the wider area which provide ample opportunities for dog walking and other exercise.
- 2.2 The scale and massing of the proposed development, mainly two storeys in height, is considered to be appropriate for the site. The development of an extra care building is such that rooms will probably have to be accessed off a central corridor. The proposal to have a corner building of up to 3 storeys is considered to be an appropriate height to add interest in this location. Three storeys has already been used successfully at the neighbouring Kings Reach development,

and subject to detailed design at reserved matters stage to ensure that the scale and massing is dealt with appropriately, then this should be a sympathetic development which would not harm the character and appearance of the area in accordance with policy DM3 of the Local Plan.

3 Neighbouring Amenity

- 3.1 Access is proposed off Sorrell Way. The access was selected at the far north western end of the site to enable a landscaped car park to be located there, which would minimise the potential overlooking issues with the residents of Rosemary Close by setting the building away from that part of the site. By ensuring at reserved matters stage that the car park is significantly landscaped along the site boundary, and that bollard lighting rather than column lighting is used, then this will ensure that the privacy of the neighbours will be safeguarded.
- 3.2 The illustrative masterplan shows the majority of the built form facing out onto Sorrell Way and Chambers Way. This is an appropriate response, as it provides for built form having a positive and active relationship with the street. At reserved matters stage the development will be required to be designed to ensure that the massing of the building will be broken up.
- 3.3 The illustrative masterplan identifies how the building could be design to deliver up to 93 dwellings without materially harming the amenities of the neighbouring dwellings along Sorrell Way and Buttercup Mead. At reserved matters stage the development will be required to be designed to ensure that windows and other openings will be located in locations that will not demonstrably harm the amenity of existing neighbours.
- 3.4 Noise and other issues arising from the construction of the development will be controlled by a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

4 Highway Considerations

- 4.1 As highlighted in para 3.1, access is proposed to be off Sorrell Way. This is considered to be an appropriate location for the proposed access.
- 4.2 It is not considered that the proposal will significantly contribute to increased traffic in the area. Car parking will be required to meet the standards as set out in the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.
- 4.3 It is considered appropriate that a Toucan crossing is provided to access the adjacent local centre, and this can be achieved by planning condition.

5. Planning Contributions

It is intended that the site will provide the affordable housing element of the neighbouring Saxon Drive scheme which is also recommended for approval on

the same agenda. A s106 Agreement will secure this.

6. The planning balance and whether the scheme is sustainable development

- 6.1 The Council can now demonstrate a 5.75 years supply of housing land, but this does not mean that planning applications on unallocated land can be automatically rejected, and indeed such applications still have to be determined in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, and its commitment to significantly boost housing supply.

Consideration should be given to the individual merits of the scheme in light of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. The scheme should therefore be considered in light of these.

Environmental

It is acknowledged that there would be a loss of open space, however the site was masterplanned as a development site and would contribute to protecting the built environment as required in the NPPF and therefore the proposal passes this strand of sustainable development.

Social

The report has detailed that Biggleswade is regarded as a sustainable location and it is considered that the town offers services and facilities that can accommodate the growth resultant from this scheme. The illustrative layout shows that a 'high quality built environment' which is a specific requirement of this strand as set out in the NPPF, could be achieved. The proposal also has the benefit of providing housing to meet the needs of the elderly.

Economic

It is accepted that the proposed scheme will bring economic benefits to Biggleswade during the construction period of the scheme and it is acknowledged that new residents are likely to support existing local services close by to the site.

In this case, the provision of an extra-care housing scheme with 100% affordable housing, would be a significant benefit to the town to meet the needs of the existing growing population of elderly residents.

8. Other Considerations

8.1 Human Rights issues:

Based on the information submitted, there are no known issues raised in the context of the Human Rights / Equality Act 2010, and as such there would be no relevant implications with in this proposal.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be granted subject to the following:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 Application for the approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority within three years from the date of this permission. The development shall begin not later than two years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, if approved on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 **No development shall take place until approval of the details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the development [and any other details required i.e. the landscaping adjoining it] within that area (herein called “the reserved matters”) has been obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To comply with Part 3 Article 6 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 2015.

- 3 **No development shall take place until details of the surface water drainage system and the implementation (including a timetable), maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme relating to that phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out and operated thereafter in accordance with the approved details.**

**Reason: To ensure that adequate foul and surface water drainage is provided and that existing and future land drainage needs are protected.
(Section 10, NPPF)**

This is a pre-commencement condition as it is important to agree drainage details before development begins.

- 4 The plans to be submitted in accordance with Condition 2 of this permission shall include a tree survey carried out in accordance with BS5837 2012 which shall identify the location of all trees on the land, together with the species of each tree.

Reason: To enable the siting of buildings to be considered in relation to the existing trees.
(Section 7 & 11, NPPF)

- 5 The plans to be submitted in accordance with Condition 2 of this permission shall include details of how the proposed and existing landscaping relates to the existing public footpath and any potential diversions of the footpath that may take place. Development shall take place in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and the principles of the NPPF.

- 6 No part of the development shall be occupied until a toucan crossing has been provided enabling pedestrians and cyclists to cross Chambers Way, connecting occupiers of the development with facilities at the Saxon Centre.

Reason: To ensure that the development provides appropriate access and linkages in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and the principles of the NPPF.

- 7 No development shall take place above DPC level until details of all means of enclosure and boundary treatments, including buffers to existing and new hedging, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and the principles of the NPPF.

- 8 No part of the development shall be occupied until the car parking layout shall has been completed in accordance with the approved plans. The area shall be retained thereafter for its intended purpose.

Reason: To ensure that the car parking provision is provided before the occupation of any of the dwellings, to ensure the amenity of the residents (Section 7, NPPF).

- 9 If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site, then no further development of that phase shall be carried out until an investigation strategy and risk assessment and, where necessary, a remediation strategy and verification plan detailing how this unsuspected contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No part of that phase shall be occupied until measured identified in the approved remediation strategy and verification plan have been completed and a verification report demonstrating completion of the approved remediation works and the effectiveness of the remediation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To protect human health and the environment (Section 8, NPPF)

- 10 No dwelling shall be occupied until details of a piece of public art to form part of the development, including a timetable for its provision, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and the principles of the NPPF.

- 11 No external lighting shall be installed on any part of the development until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the amenity would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and the principles of the NPPF.

- 12 **No development shall commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include details of:**

- a) Construction traffic routes and points of access/egress to be used by construction vehicles;**
- b) Details of site compounds, offices and areas to be used for the storage of materials;**
- c) Contact details for site managers and details of management lines of reporting to be updated as different phases come forward;**

Construction working hours shall be 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays. There shall be no burning on site.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved CEMP.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of existing and future residents. (Section 7, NPPF)

This is a pre-commencement condition as this detail needs to be agreed before the start of construction.

- 13 This approval relates only to the details shown on the submitted plan number SLP-02 SW rev B.

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

14 **No development shall take place until wheel-cleaning facilities which prevent the deposit of mud or other extraneous material on the highway during the construction period have been installed at the vehicular site exit and made operational and the Site Developer shall ensure that these are used by all vehicles exiting the site until the development has been substantially completed or until the roadworks necessary to provide adequate and clean access to and from the public highway have been completed (apart from final surfacing).**

Reason: In the interests of the users of adjacent roads and to prevent the deposit of mud or other extraneous material on the highway during the construction period. This is a pre-commencement condition as it is important to ensure that there are wheel cleaning facilities in place before development begins (Section 7, NPPF)

15 **No development shall take place until a Section 106 agreement has been entered into to secure the provision of an affordable housing scheme and off site highway works on the form of the draft attached hereto.**

Reason: To secure appropriate contributions towards the social and community infrastructure needs of the local community.

INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT

DECISION

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