

Item No. 10**SCHEDULE A**

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/10/00482/FULL
LOCATION	Land Adjacent Springwood House 22, Ickwell Green, Ickwell
PROPOSAL	Full: Demolition of existing outbuildings and the construction of a new 2 storey 4-bedroomed detached house and associated works.
PARISH	Northill
WARD	Northill and Blunham
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Maudlin & Cllr Turner
CASE OFFICER	Kate Phillips
DATE REGISTERED	11 February 2010
EXPIRY DATE	08 April 2010
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs MaGuinness
AGENT	DLP Design Ltd
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Cllr Turner's request due to considerable local interest
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Full Application - Refused

Site Location:

The application site is the land adjacent to Springwood House, 22 Ickwell Green in Ickwell. The site, which is within Ickwell Conservation Area, is toward the south end of the village, accessed from a bridleway which leads from the Green. The site is located partly within Ickwell's Settlement Envelope and partly outside.

The Design and Access Statement which accompanies the application notes that the site originally formed part of Springwood House's land and has been used as an area for stabling, a menage and grazing. The use of the site for stabling and equestrian activities is not currently authorised because the site no longer forms part of Springwood House's curtilage and the use is not ancillary to the dwelling.

The surrounding pattern of development is rural in character. To the north, past Springwood House, are other residential properties of varying styles and ages surrounding the village Green, which is a significant rural feature of the village. To the east of the site is an area of woodland within a neighbouring property's garden, and to the south-east, south and west of the site are open fields separated by hedgerows and wooden open-style fencing.

The Application:

This application seeks permission for the demolition of existing outbuildings and the construction of a new 2 storey 4-bedroomed detached house and associated works.

The dwelling would measure up to 13.5 metres wide and 11 metres deep and it would sit almost centrally within the rectangular plot allowing for a parking area to

the front (north) and a garden to the rear (south). It would measure approximately 8 metres tall.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Policies (PPG + PPS)

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)
PPS 3 Housing (2006)
PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)

Regional Spatial Strategy

East of England Plan (May 2008)
Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (March 2005)

Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011

Not applicable

Central Bedfordshire Council's Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document

Policy CS2 Developer contributions
Policy CS14 High quality development in the natural and built environment
Policy CS15 Heritage
Policy DM3 High quality development – incl. extensions
Policy DM4 Development within and beyond settlement envelopes
Policy DM13 Heritage in development

South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review Policies

Not applicable

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Central Bedfordshire Council's Technical Guidance – A Guide for development (2010)
Central Bedfordshire Council's Technical Guidance - Design Supplement 1: New Residential Development (2010)
Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (Reviewed November 2009).

Relevant Planning History

None

Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

Northill PC No comments received
Adjacent occupiers Two letters of objection has been received. The main points are summarised below:

- Contrary to Policies CS14, DM3, DM4 of the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD
- The development does not preserve or enhance the conservation area
- The stables and ménage do not benefit from planning permission
- Ickwell is characterized by road frontage with very little backland development
- The site currently contains a few low key timber structures, appropriate to their rural setting but a dwelling would extend the residential built up limits of the village, encroaching into the countryside.
- The development would not complement the surrounding pattern of development and there is no development on the other side of the plot. Therefore it is contrary to the definition of infill.
- The fact the site is within the Settlement Envelope should not automatically mean that planning permission should be granted for a dwelling
- The new dwelling would have an imposing and aggressive appearance, which is inappropriate to its rural setting
- The front windows would be only 15 metres away from the boundary of number 22 and would overlook their rear garden, reducing their level of privacy.
- The access is off a well-used bridleway and is therefore highly visible
- The bridleway is well used by walkers, horse-riders, dog-walkers and cyclists who would experience disruption as a result of the proposal
- The access is very poor quality and is not wide enough for vehicles to pass one another or horses and there is no possibility of providing a passing place, or upgrading the part of the access that is owned by the occupiers of number 22
- Previous owners started an equestrian business on site which led to heavy and unpopular use of the bridleway by vehicles attending to the horses. Do not want further disruption.

Consultations/Publicity responses

Site notice posted
CBC Highways

4.3.10

There are various issues with the application, as summarised below, but if the application is granted planning permission, conditions have been suggested.

- The gates restrict access for parking and turning or delivery/service/ambulance

- sized vehicles
- The bridleway is only 2.5 metres wide which is too narrow for a fire appliance to use
- The bridleway/access exceeds 80 metres and therefore a turning area is required for fire appliances
- The visibility at the site access is severely restricted which could be dangerous to traffic using the bridleway
- The bridleway is not wide enough for a two way flow of vehicle and pedestrian/cyclist, or vehicle and horse
- The bridleway exceeds refuse collector carry distance
- Cycle parking required
- Turning area required within the curtilage of the site for delivery/service/ambulance sized vehicle, separate to three parking spaces for dwelling
- The means of access is taken from a bridleway (a Rights of Way issue)

CBC Rights of Way Officer

No comments received

British Horse Society

No comments received

Rambler's Association

No comments received

CBC Archaeology

No comments received

CBC Tree and Landscape Team

No objection subject to conditions.

CBC Conservation & Design

The site is within Ickwell Conservation Area where all new development must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. Due to the site's location at the edge of the Conservation Area/ settlement the development will have a particularly visual impact on the character and appearance of the area which is unacceptable.

Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are;

1. The principle of residential development;
2. The impact upon the visual amenities of Ickwell Conservation Area
3. The impact upon the amenities of adjoining, nearby and future occupiers
4. Access and parking
5. Any other relevant material considerations

Considerations

1. The Principle

The application site is located partly within the Settlement Envelope of Ickwell, although part of it (the proposed location of the rear garden for the new dwelling, approximately 224 square metres) lies outside the Settlement

Envelope.

Ickwell is classified as a 'Small Village' by Policy CS1 of the Council's Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (CS&DMP DPD) and Policy DM4 notes that, 'Within Small Villages, development will be limited to infill residential development'.

Paragraph 11.1.7 of the CS&DMP DPD defines infill development as small-scale development utilising a vacant plot which should continue to complement the surrounding pattern of development.

In terms of the above definition, the proposal is not considered to constitute infill development because the proposed use of the plot would not continue to complement the surrounding pattern of development. This is because the plot's boundary is approximately 22 metres away from Springwood House and the new dwelling itself would be approximately 36 metres away. The plot is surrounded by the countryside on the other three sides (woodland to the east, open fields to the south and west), rather than other residential development. Therefore the development would effectively extend Ickwell's built up form into the countryside and the incongruous and inappropriate features of the development (the brick and glazed two storey dwelling, its domestic garden and the parking area) would detract considerably from the predominantly rural character and appearance of the immediate surroundings, especially because the site is visible from a distance outside the village and from the public bridleway which runs adjacent to the land.

The principle of development in this location is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies CS1 and DM4 of the CS&DMP DPD.

Policy DM4 also notes that, 'Beyond Settlement Envelopes, limited extensions to gardens will be permitted provided they do not harm the character of the area. They must be suitably landscaped or screened from the surrounding countryside and buildings may not be erected on the extended garden area'.

As outlined above, the overall proposal would be likely to harm the character and appearance of the area due to the intrusion of inappropriate features into the countryside and therefore the proposal to site the garden outside Ickwell's Settlement Envelope is also considered to be unacceptable.

Overall, given that the principle of development is unacceptable, the application should be refused on this basis.

2. Impact upon the visual amenities of Ickwell Conservation Area

As noted in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, the site is not visible from Ickwell Green because of the distance involved and the fact that it effectively sits behind Springwood House. Nevertheless, as noted by the adjacent occupier, the access track which would lead to the new dwelling is a well-used bridleway and therefore users of this route would have clear views of the new dwelling and its parking/ turning area, through the new access that would be created in the currently unbroken hedgerow which lines the western edge to the plot, and above the site's future boundary treatment.

The Ickwell Conservation Area appraisal document (2005) makes specific

reference to Pemberley House and Springwood House and the track. It notes that Springwood House is at right angles to the track behind a brick wall which formed part of the boundary of The Old House (a grade II listed building with medieval origins). The appraisal document notes that along this track, which would be the access route to the proposed new dwelling, is a substantial hedge and beyond that, open paddock land. Given that the hedge and paddock land are both specifically referred to in the appraisal document it is strongly considered that they are worthy of future retention and protection due to their noted contribution to the conservation area's character and appearance. However, as noted, as part of the application, a new opening would be made in the hedgerow, and part of the paddocks would become a domestic garden.

Furthermore, the Ickwell Conservation Area appraisal document (2005) classifies the field just outside settlement envelope (the location of the proposed new dwelling's rear garden) as an Important Green Space, and the protection of locally important green spaces in Ickwell is encouraged, with a presumption against new development. It is therefore considered that any type of development at this particular location within Ickwell would contradict the guidance given in the Ickwell Conservation Area appraisal document. Because the development does not accord with the appraisal document's advice, it cannot be said that it would preserve Ickwell Conservation Area, rather it is considered that it would detract from it. The development is therefore considered to be contrary to both Policies CS15 and DM13 of the CS&DMP DPD and also PPG 15.

In terms of the design of the proposed dwelling, the Ickwell Conservation Area appraisal document notes that, in order to maintain the distinctive character of Ickwell, it will be necessary to ensure that new development positively contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area in terms of siting, mass, scale, design and materials used.

The siting of the dwelling has already been established as unacceptable in principle.

With regards to mass and scale, the Ickwell Conservation Area appraisal document notes that one and a half storey with dormer windows is the most predominant built form in Ickwell, although it is recognized that the nearest dwellings, Springwood House and Pemberley House are both two storey dwellings. The proposed new dwelling would have a basement and outdoor, underground courtyard area to the front but from a distance it would also appear to be a normal two storey dwelling.

An adjacent occupier has noted that they believe the new dwelling would have an imposing and aggressive appearance, inappropriate to this rural setting, which is currently occupied by a few low key timber structures associated with equestrian activities. Conversely, the Design and Access Statement which accompanies the application argues that the dwelling's design accords with the Council's adopted technical guidance in so far as the mass of the building has been broken down into component parts, for example the gable end projections and the first floor balcony are subservient to the main dwelling, and through the use of 'shallow modelling', whereby different elements of the house project outwards from the main part of the dwelling to varying degrees. On balance, it is considered that the new dwelling would appear dominant within its immediate

setting and the fact that it would present a mostly blank façade towards the adjacent track/ bridleway is considered to be poor design.

The proposed materials specified in the application form are stated as being similar to Springwood House. If the application was otherwise considered to be acceptable, the exact materials to be used could be agreed prior to the commencement of development, through attaching a condition to any planning permission granted. However, as outlined above, the proposal is not considered to be acceptable due to the adverse impact upon Ickwell Conservation Area, and the application should be refused on this basis.

3. Impact upon the amenities of adjoining, nearby and future occupiers

The main property that would be affected is Springwood House, to the north. The occupiers of this dwelling have objected to the proposal on the grounds that the front windows of the house would be 15 metres away from the boundary with their rear garden, reducing the level of privacy that they currently enjoy. However, the Council's adopted technical guidance, 'Design Supplement 1: New Residential Development', notes that in conventional suburban environments there should be a distance of approximately 21 metres between the rear of one 2 storey property and the rear of another facing it. Given that this is not a conventional suburban environment and there is in fact a distance of 36 metres between Springwood House and the proposed new dwelling, it is not considered that either property would suffer from overlooking or loss of privacy as a result of the proposal. It is also not considered that the new dwelling would appear overbearing to the occupiers of Springwood House, or any other nearby properties because of the separation distance.

With regards to the occupiers of the proposed new dwelling, the technical guidance notes that rear gardens for family houses should be on average about 100 square metres, and therefore the south-facing garden, which measures over 300 square metres, is considered to be acceptable in terms of size and orientation. It is therefore considered that any future occupiers of the proposed new dwelling would experience an acceptable level of residential amenity.

Another aspect of the proposal to consider is the access route to the property and the impact upon nearby properties of extra vehicles using it, which was also highlighted by the objection letters. It is not considered that the frequency and volume of vehicle movement would be significant because the driveway would only serve one house. Nevertheless, the access track is of very poor quality and is not wide enough to accommodate two vehicles passing each other, or even a vehicle and a horse. Therefore there might be occasions when a car would have to wait with its engine running for short periods of time at the end of the access to allow other users of the route to pass. However, on balance, the impact of extra vehicle movement in the area as a result of one extra dwelling is considered to be acceptable.

Overall, the impact of the proposal upon the amenities of adjoining, nearby and future occupiers is considered to be acceptable.

4. Access and parking

As noted by the objection letter which has been received, the access to the site is very poor quality. The Highways team have also highlighted that it is not wide enough to allow two-way traffic, or a fire appliance to use it. The visibility at the

site access is also severely restricted which could be dangerous to traffic using the bridleway. Furthermore, the gates at the end of the track, if used, would restrict access for parking and turning or delivery/service/ambulance sized vehicles.

Because the bridleway/access exceeds 80 metres a turning area would be required for fire appliances. A turning area within the curtilage of the site for delivery/service/ambulance sized vehicle, should be provided, separate to the three parking spaces for the dwelling. The bridleway also exceeds refuse collector carry distance.

Despite the above concerns, the highways team have indicated that the problems can be overcome through the use of planning conditions and therefore in terms of access and highway safety the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

In terms of parking availability, three car-parking spaces for a 4 bedroom dwelling is also considered to be acceptable.

5. Any other relevant material considerations

Following the adoption on 20 February 2008 of the Planning Obligations Strategy Supplementary Planning Document, the Council requires a financial contribution for developments of one or more dwellings and therefore a unilateral agreement is required for this proposal prior to the granting of planning permission. This contribution would go towards local infrastructure such as educational facilities, sustainable transport, health facilities and recreational open space in the Ickwell area. A Unilateral Undertaking has not been submitted with the proposal and therefore the application should also be refused on this basis.

- 1 The proposed development, by nature of its siting and relationship with adjacent land, does not constitute infilling within the Settlement Envelope of Ickwell which has been classified as a Small Village; as such the proposal would extend the built form of the settlement into the countryside thereby harming its character. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies DM3 and DM4 of the Central Bedfordshire Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2009).
- 2 The application site lies within Ickwell Conservation Area and the proposal, by reason of its size and siting towards the edge of the Conservation Area and the settlement would detract from the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area; as such the proposal is contrary to PPG15 and Policies CS15 and DM13 of the Central Bedfordshire Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2009).
- 3 A Unilateral Undertaking has not been submitted with the proposal, in order to make a financial contribution towards infrastructure in the local area; as such the proposal is contrary to Policy CS2 of the Central Bedfordshire Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2009) and the Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (Reviewed November 2009).

DECISION
