

Item No: 4

Reference: B/09/00535/FUL and  
B/09/00641/CAC

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Parish: GLEMSFORD

Location: The Briars Residential Care Home, 23 Hunts Hill

Proposal: Erection of two-storey side extension to provide additional 36 no. bedrooms and associated facilities, together with single-storey link to existing building (existing social club to be demolished)

Applicant: The Briars Residential Care Home

Case Officer: Ben Elvin      Dates for Determination: 12 August 2009 (Planning Application only)  
31 July 2009 (Conservation Area Consent Application only)

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### THE SITE

1. The existing Briars building is a 2-storey rendered building which sits close to the edge of Hunts Hill. It lies within the Built-Up Area Boundary of Glemsford and is located centrally in the village on the east side of Hunts Hill.
2. To the south of the building is the existing social club, with car parking space to its rear. Beyond the social club to the south, fronting Hunts Hill is a pair of residential of semi-detached residences.
3. To the east of the site is a bungalow known as Lansdowne, which is accessed off Drapery Common. Two properties in Pannels Close also share a boundary with this site.
4. The Briars lies within the Glemsford Conservation Area and there is a protected tree (TPO 284) to the rear of the existing care home building.

### THE PROPOSAL

5. These applications include a full application for the erection of an extension to the existing Briars Residential Care Home, coupled with a Conservation Area Consent application for the demolition of the existing social club that lies adjacent.
6. The proposed two-storey extension is linked to the existing building by a single-storey element. The extension is of a residential appearance in scale, form and materials and measures 28 metres in length and approximately 35 metres in depth at its deepest point.
7. The extension would provide an additional 36 bedrooms to the existing care home, which provides accommodation and care for people with dementia.
8. A Design and Access Statement has been submitted with the application which makes the following points;
  - The site lies within the Built-Up Area Boundary and is centrally located in the village.
  - There are well established tree belts along the south and north eastern boundaries.

- The site borders existing housing to the south and east with Hunts Hill to the west.
  - Glemsford Social Club is scheduled for relocation adjacent the village hall.
  - The proposed extension respects the scale, form and materials of the existing buildings and the surrounding properties.
  - The footprint of the proposed building forms a central hard landscaped parking area and is surrounded by residents gardens.
  - The use is supported by the draft Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Survey.
  - The extension accommodates 36 bedrooms and associated dayrooms, bathrooms, showers etc.
  - The development is sited approximately 6 metres from a pair of semi-detached properties on Hunts Hill and 21 metres to the Lansdowne Bungalow at the rear.
  - The existing nursing home is oversubscribed.
9. There is currently an application for the relocation of the social club to the village hall site, which is also to be considered by the Development Committee (at this meeting) as part of a comprehensive plan.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

### The Briars

10. B/04/01902 (2004) – Erection of first-floor rear extension – Granted.
11. B/03/01751 (2003) – Erection of two-storey rear extension – Granted.
12. B/98/01424 (1998) – Retention of single-storey rear extension – Granted.
13. B/96/01111 (1996) – Retention of rear conservatory – Granted.
14. B/96/00571 (1996) – Change of use to residential care home for the elderly and erection of two-storey rear extension – Granted.

### Social Club

15. S/67/0293 (1967) – Erection of clubhouse and construction of access – Granted.
16. S/66/0581 (1966) – Erection of building for use as Social Club – Granted.

## **NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

17. **PPS1** (Delivering Sustainable Development)
18. **PPS3** (Housing)
19. **PPG13** (Transport)
20. **PPG15** (Planning and the Historic Environment)

## **PLANNING POLICIES**

21. The Development Plan comprises the East of England Plan, adopted 2008, saved policies in the Suffolk Structure Plan, adopted 2001, and the Babergh Local Plan (Alteration No. 2) adopted 2006. The following policies are relevant to this proposal:

## **East of England Plan - 2008**

- **SS1** (Achieving Sustainable Development)
- **ENV7** (Quality in the Built Environment)

## **Babergh Local Plan (Alteration No.2) 2006**

- **CN01** (Design)
- **CN08** (Conservation Areas)
- **HS02** (Development in Villages)
- **HS39** (Care Homes)
- **EM20** (Expansion/Extension of Existing Employment Uses)

**The relevant documents can be viewed via the internet. Please see Page 4 for details.**

## **CONSULTATIONS**

22. PC – will be reported when received.
23. LHA – any comments will be reported when received.
24. HoNABE (Environmental Protection) – make comments regarding noise and dust during demolition, and recommend that a note is added to the permission that works must accord with BS5228:Part 2:1986 and require details of operating hours and a scheme of dust control to be required prior to demolition commencing.
25. Housing Enabling Officer – The need for accommodation for older people is confirmed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Housing Needs Surveys, where it is identified that we have an ageing population in the Babergh area. Therefore the need for appropriate forms of accommodation does exist. However, I am not qualified to offer advice as to whether the proposed scheme is appropriate in this regard.
26. The County Council Adult Care Service is in the process of closing many of its residential care homes as it feels that this type of accommodation is no longer appropriate for older people.
27. Suffolk PCT – will be reported when received.
28. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service – make comments about access for fire fighting vehicles and water supply.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

29. Three letters of objection have been received which make the following comments;
  - The proposal will overlook their property
  - The proposal will be 1 metre higher than the land level of neighbouring properties.
  - The area is liable to flooding, and requests are made that they will be consulted at every stage where drainage issues may affect their land.
  - The reduction in height of hedging/trees along the side of the conservatory will result in loss of privacy.
  - A condition should be imposed to ensure that the height is as set out on the site plans.
  - The development will be very imposing and will result in loss of light.

- Can the development incorporate obscure glazing to avoid overlooking.
  - The red line site plan is incorrect and includes land that isn't in the applicants ownership.
30. One letter of support has been received, though this does raise concerns with regards to the position of bin storage and with regards to the parking provision being inadequate and potentially hazardous.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

31. Policy HS39 provides the basis for considering applications of this nature. The policy provides that planning applications for extensions to care homes will be permitted subject to, inter alia, the site being within the Built-Up Area of a Town or Sustainable Village and includes good access to local facilities, the development provides adequate accommodation for staff, includes useable attractive areas of communal garden and can meet the relevant parking standards.
32. The proposal also needs to be considered against the provisions of policies CN01, and CN08. These policies require that, proposals within Conservation Areas preserve or enhance the character of the area, use appropriate materials and positive detailing and respect the existing spaces around buildings, and generally require that schemes do not give rise to loss of amenity to neighbouring residents, provide development of a scale and form commensurate with the host property and surrounding development and does not cause harm to the environment or landscaping.
33. It is apparent that the proposal accords largely with the requirements of policy HS39. The site lies within a Sustainable Village where there is access to a good number of local facilities. The scheme will provide employment for a number of local people and these are accommodated for within the scheme in terms of facilities. The scheme provides communal garden areas to the front of the site, with a more private area to be laid out to the southern end. Parking is to be accommodated with a courtyard between the existing and new structures, and whilst the parking provision is considered further at paragraph 36 below, the use of the existing access is not considered to cause any particular detriment.
34. The proposed extension takes the form of a two-storey main wing which is linked to the existing two-storey property by a single-storey wing. The proposal incorporates a mix of materials that will allow the extensions to be understood as separate elements and which will result in a built-form that will improve the facade to Hunts Hill. Whilst the main entrance to the building is located within an internal face of the building, the exterior face to Hunts Hill has been designed with a door onto the garden area from the dining room and makes use of differing fenestration forms and false windows to provide an interesting composition. In this respect, the proposal is considered to accord with policies CN01 and CN08.
35. The building would have a deep plan form. However, the existing social club does sit deep in its plot, and The Briars is also of a deep form currently. This layout is not considered to cause detriment to the development pattern in the locality.
36. The main issues of objection that have been raised by local residents are in respect of the scale of the building, the potential for overlooking and the car parking arrangements. In terms of the buildings scale, the proposal would provide a dominant feature in the streetscene. However, the building is comparable to other structures in the locality and is set-back from the road relative to the properties that sit immediately to the south. In this respect, the scale of the proposed extension is not considered to be such that would cause particular harm to the streetscene or character of the area.

37. There are windows in the side (south) elevation of the proposed extension, which would face towards the garden areas of the properties to the south. However, these windows are largely set-back into the deeper element and this separation, when coupled with the mature hedgerow screen to the boundary (within the ownership of the neighbouring property) would not give rise to such a detrimental loss of amenity so as to warrant refusal.
38. The rear elevation of the proposal, facing Lansdowne and the new property that adjoins it, has some windows at first-floor level that will offer views towards these properties. However, these windows are some distance from the neighbouring property, and are contained well behind the main projecting rear wing. These should not result in significant overlooking of the neighbouring properties.
39. The Local Highway Authority has raised issue with regards to the number of available parking spaces proposed but had not, at the time of writing the report, provided there formal comments. This matter has been raised with the applicant who is looking to address the parking provision with the Local Highway Authority, and their formal comments should be available for the committee meeting.
40. Access to the existing sub-station is to be retained to the southern end of the site.
41. The demolition of the social club needs to be considered in terms of the loss of this building in the Conservation Area. The building is not an important building in the streetscene, and this scheme makes provision for a development that would enhance the character of the Conservation Area. The proposal therefore accords with the provisions of PPG15 relative to demolition in a Conservation Area.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

42. The proposed scheme provides a built-form and design that will enhance the Conservation Area. The extension will enable the intensification of the care home, facilitating the provision of care facilities in the area for an organisation that is currently oversubscribed. The scheme will provide jobs for local people, and lays out proposals for communal garden areas that are considered appropriate and reasonable.
43. The proposal therefore accords with the provisions of policies CN01, CN08 and HS39 of the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.2 (2006), as well as PPG3 and PPG15.

## **REASONS FOR APPROVAL**

44. The proposed development, including the erection of a two-storey side extension to provide 36 additional bedrooms and single-storey link (existing social club to be demolished), is considered to be in accordance with the provisions of saved policies CN01, CN08 and HS39 of the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.2 (2006) and PPS3 (Housing) and PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment). The proposed extension would enhance the Conservation Area through the replacement of the existing Social Club building, and would provide a form of development that would respect the character and scale of the host dwelling, provide appropriate levels of communal space and staff facilities, encourage the employment of local people and does not give rise to detriment to highway safety or the amenity of neighbouring residents.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) Grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions;
  - Materials
  - As requested by LHA
  - External Lighting
  - Protection of Trees During Construction Works
  - Landscaping Details
  - Scheme of Dust Control for Demolition
  - Hours of Operation for Demolition Works
  - Levels
  
- (2) Grant Conservation Area Consent
  - Demolition not to commence until a contract for redevelopment has been made