

28 MAR 2006

TRANSPORTATION

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**PLANNING STATEMENT**

TO ACCOMPANY A PLANNING APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE IRONWORKS SITE, HAMLET ROAD, HAVERHILL TO PROVIDE 39 NEW DWELLINGS, ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING ACCESS OFF HAMLET ROAD

FOR ATTERTON AND ELLIS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0.1 The planning application for redevelopment of the Ironworks Site, Hamlet End, Haverhill is submitted in conjunction with:

- An application for listed building consent for alterations and extensions to Hamlet House. This proposal will secure the reinstatement of Hamlet House as a single dwelling.

- An application for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of existing buildings on the site, other than Hamlet House and the adjoining former Silk Mill.

1.0.2 The application seeks fully planning permission for alterations and the change of use of the former Silk Mill to form 3 No. 3 storey town houses. The remainder of dwellings are formed from new buildings in five separate buildings. The precise dwelling mix is set out at Appendix 1 of the Design Statement.

1.0.3 The proposal will involve the relocation of the Atterton and Ellis industrial operation which comprises the fabrication of garden machinery. It is clearly evident from a visual inspection, that the existing arrangement of buildings, in terms of size, shape, disposition is seriously deficient in the provision of a modern industrial environment.

1.0.4 Atterton and Ellis hope to be able to relocate to modern industrial premises within the locality. The relocation should provide an efficient working environment, enhancing the future viability of the business. Furthermore relocation of this general industrial activity will provide the catalyst for the reinstatement of a residential use within Hamlet House. Presently the relationship of Hamlet House to the industrial activities deters a residential occupation on account of the potential difficulties arising from noise and general disturbance.

2.0 THE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

2.0.1 The starting point for the determination of the merits of this application is the provisions of the development plan. Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act states:

'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

2.0.2 The development plan comprises:

- RPG6 Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia
- Suffolk County Structure Plan
- St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan

2.0.3 The St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan 2016 has reached an advanced stage of plan preparation. The Local Plan Inspector's Report is awaited following the Local Public Inquiry. In circumstances where outstanding objections to the provision of the Deposit Local Plan remain to be determined, less weight is to be given to the provisions of the emerging local plan accordingly.

2.0.4 National planning guidance as set out in the following documents is considered relevant to the proposals:

PPS 1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG 3	Housing
PPG 13	Transport
PPG 15	Planning and the historic environment
PPG 25	Development and flood risk

Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia to 2016.

2.0.5 Published in November 2000, the RPG became part of the Statutory Development Plan from the 28th September 2004. The key strategic issue identified as part of the development strategy is:

- Moving towards sustainable development

This strategic issue is to be pursued through policies that promote:

- Urban Renaissance (Policy 1)
- Meeting Development Needs (Policy 2)
- Development Principles (Policy 3)
- Location of Housing (Policy 4)
- Development on previously developed land (Policy 5)

2.0.6 The Suffolk Structure Plan seeks to concentrate housing and employment development at towns on the basis the approach helps to minimise total travel needs and encourages a more intensive use of public transport. The Structure Plan provides for housing in the main towns including Haverhill. Policy CS3(a) states:

'Most housing development will be located in or adjoining towns, at a scale consistent with the potential for sustainable development at each town... provision for significant housing development will [also] be made at... Haverhill.'

2.0.7 The Structure Plan sets out the sequential approach to the location of land for housing, giving priority to the redevelopment of brownfield sites. Policy CS7 states:

'New housing allocations will be made in local plans having regard to the following sequential approach.'

a) *Initially sites comprising previously developed land and buildings or vacant or under used land should be identified within built-up areas.'*

2.0.8 The redevelopment of the Ironworks work site complies with the underlying thrust of the regional planning strategy, and the general strategy of the Structure Plan. The site lies in a sustainable location within the urban area of

Development Issues:

- *Listed Buildings adjacent to the site*
- *Possibility of inclusion in proposed Conservation Area*
- *Gateway site into older part of Haverhill*
- *Frontage building should be retained*
- *Single Land Ownership*
- *Site lies in indicative flood plain*
- *Possible contamination*

2.0.12 In March 2005, the Council published the Replacement St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan 2016. The Plan states at paragraph 14.4:

'A small number of larger sites were identified in the urban capacity study and those which, in the opinion of the Borough Council can be delivered during the Plan period are put forward as allocations in Policy HN1 and identified on the Proposals Map. The development of each site will be expected to accord with the concept statement and / or masterplan'.

2.0.13 The allocated sites within the period 2001-2016 include:

Atterton and Ellis, Hamlet Road 25 dw (indicative capacity)

2.0.14 No objection was submitted to the principle of this allocation. This provision of the Deposit Replacement Local Plan Review can now be given significant weight in decision making. The principle of redevelopment of the site for housing forms part of the emerging development plan strategy.

2.0.15 The site is now situated within the recently approved Hamlet End Conservation Area. A duty is placed upon decision makers to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area when exercising planning functions.

2.0.16 The Planning Authority has not prepared a statement to identify the key features of the Conservation Area. This application is accompanied by a Supporting Statement prepared by a specialist Historic Environment consultant that examines the character and appearance of the area. The consultant properly considers the impact of the proposed development in the Conservation Area and concludes:

'The proposed development recognises the industrial nature of the site, its layout and its history, and reflects these elements in the way the buildings are designed and set out. The choice of materials for the buildings and the way they interact on site all reflect the history and nature of this site today. As a result this proposal will not have any adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area.'

2.0.17 The proposed redevelopment – by relocating the existing general industrial use from the site – provides a secure long term future for Hamlet House, as a listed building, and a new lease of life for the former Silk Factory. The proposals will enhance the setting of the listed building (Section 66(i) Listed Buildings Act 1990) and enhance the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. The character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be enhanced by the removal of general industrial activities on this site, and the removal of some buildings which are clearly of poor design.

2.0.18 The local architect has paid very careful attention to the context of the site, and the characteristics of architectural detailing within the locality. The architect has properly responded to the advice on design as set out in PPS1 and in the context of the historic environment PPG15. The design of development will create an improved interface between high quality built development and the adjoining open space.

2.0.19 For the reasons set out in the historic environment consultant's report, the existing buildings other than Hamlet House and the former Silk Mill make little or no positive contribution to the Conservation Area. The removal of these buildings is outweighed by the merits of the proposed development – in compliance with the advice at para 4.27 of PPG15.

2.0.20 The Government seeks a more efficient use of land for housing, which is not to be achieved at the expense of a high quality urban design. The architect has skilfully designed the scheme with great care, so as to achieve an efficient use

of land for housing while safeguarding key urban design principles. These may be summarised as:

- The positioning of buildings fronting Hamlet End and the open green space.
- The relationship of built development to the existing copper beech tree subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The setting and future viability of this tree is enhanced by the development.
- The presentation of attractive street scenes when viewed along Hamlet End and Ehringhausen Way.
- The relationship of built development to the existing water course through the site.
- An urban design that avoids over emphasis on the highway layout and car parking provision.

2.0.21 It is accepted that in response to the request of the County Highway Authority, two trees fronting Hamlet End need to be removed for the provision of the bellmouth. In the context of the benefits and overall high quality of the development, the loss of these two trees is not considered to be significant.

2.0.22 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared to address the relationship of the site to the River Stour. It is established that the site can be developed without the risk of flooding.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

3.0.1 It is submitted that the architect has designed a very high quality redevelopment scheme that is truly appropriate to the context of the site, both in terms of its location within the Conservation Area, and with adjoining listed buildings. The design and layout is supported by national planning guidance that has been identified – and accords with the aspirations of the Development Plan accordingly. The character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be enhanced by allowing the development. The Listed Building and its setting are enhanced by the development proposals. The impact from the removal of two trees in order to facilitate the provision of the access, while regrettable, is outweighed by the overall planning advantage from the scheme.

3.0.2 It is submitted that planning permission should be granted accordingly.

P J Frampton

Date: 17th March 2006