



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEV/SE/16/036

Development Control Committee

4 May 2016

Planning Application DC/16/0453/FUL

Former Village Hall, The Street, Stradishall

Date	18 March 2016	Expiry Date:	13 May 2016
Registered:			
Case Officer:	Aaron Sands	Recommendation:	Refuse
Parish:	Stradishall	Ward:	Hundon
Proposal:	Planning Application - 1 no. dwelling (following demolition of former village hall)		
Site:	Former Village Hall, The Street, Stradishall		
Applicant:	Mr E Hollingsworth		

Synopsis:

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Associated matters.

CONTACT CASE OFFICER:

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Background:

This application is referred to the Committee from the Delegation Panel as a consequence of being called in by Councillor Jeremy Farthing.

A site visit is scheduled to take place on 28 April 2016.

Proposal:

1. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey dwelling following the demolition of an existing, currently empty village hall. The proposed dwelling is one and a half storeys with a one and a half storey rear projection.
2. The proposed dwelling measures 7.5 metres in overall height and 4 metres at the eaves. It measures 10 metres in overall width and 14 metres in overall depth.
3. Vehicular access is provided to the rear of the site, with an access off the B1063 which provides a shared access to Hoult's Mansion and the cold store to the rear of the site which is no longer operational.

Application Supporting Material:

4. Information submitted with the application as follows:
 - Application Form
 - Heritage Assessment Report
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Ecological Survey
 - Environmental Survey
 - Land Contamination Questionnaire
 - Planning Statement
 - Quantity Surveyors Viability Report
 - Tree location plan
 - Location Plan (Drawing no. 001 A02)
 - Topographical Survey (Drawing no. 002 A02)
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Drawing no. 004 A01)
 - Proposed First Floor Plan (Drawing no. 005 A01)
 - Proposed Elevations (Drawing no. 006 A01)
 - Proposed Elevations (Drawing no. 007 A02)

Site Details:

5. The site comprises a currently empty village hall within the housing settlement boundary and conservation area of Stradishall, categorised as an 'infill village'. Though the village hall is not curtilage listed it is considered to represent a non-designated heritage asset as identified at pre-application stage and the site lies adjacent to Hoult's Mansion, a Grade II listed building. The site is prominent in the street scene by virtue of its elevated ground level in relation to the road.

Planning History:

6. DC/14/0669/FUL – Adjoining Site - Planning Application - Erection of new dwelling and cart lodge (following demolition of existing dwelling) as amended by drawings received on 10th November 2014 (redesign of proposed dwelling). Granted. 11.12.2014
7. DC/15/1078/FUL - Planning Application - demolition of former village hall and replacement with single detached dwelling. Refused. 30/07/2015

Consultations:

8. Suffolk County Archaeology: No objection subject to conditions
9. Conservation: Objection on the grounds of insufficient detail and assessment
10. Environment Team: No objection subject to informatives
11. Highway Authority: No objection just to conditions

Representations:

12. Parish Council: No objection in relation to the loss of the former village hall. Objection to the replacement dwelling on the grounds of harm to the neighbouring listed building and neighbouring amenity.
13. Ward Member (Councillor Farthing) – Call to delegation panel

Policy: The following policies of the Joint Development Management Policies Document and the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy December 2010 have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

14. Joint Development Management Policies Document 215:
 - Policy DM1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
 - Policy DM2 (Creating Places – Development Principles and Local Distinctiveness)
 - Policy DM15 (Listed Buildings)
 - Policy DM16 (Local Heritage Assets and Buildings Protected by an Article 4 Direction)
 - Policy DM17 (Conservation Areas)
 - Policy DM20 (Archaeology)
 - Policy DM22 (Residential Design)
 - Policy DM41 (Community Facilities)
 - Policy DM46 (Parking Standards)
15. St Edmundsbury Core Strategy December 2010
 - Policy CS2 (Sustainable Development)
 - Policy CS3 (Design and Local Distinctiveness)
 - Policy CS4 (Settlement Hierarchy and Identity)

- Policy CS13 (Rural Areas)

Other Planning Policy:

16. National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Officer Comment:

17. The issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Principle of Residential Development (not including demolition or loss of community facilities)
- Demolition of the Non-Designated Heritage Asset
- Loss of Community Facilities
- Impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area

Principle of Development (not including demolition or loss of community facilities)

18. The site is located within the housing settlement boundary, where proposals are considered to be sufficiently sustainable as to garner the support of Policy DM1. The dwelling is situated between existing dwellings, with the adjacent site to the south east having been granted permission in 2014 for a replacement dwelling (ref. DC14/0669/FUL). The proposed replacement dwelling is not considered inappropriate in character in relation to the wider area of Stradishall and does not constitute an overdevelopment of the site. However, noting that the existing site contains a non-designated heritage asset that is proposed for demolition, the principle of development is not considered acceptable in the form proposed, as detailed further below.

Demolition of the Non-Designated Heritage Asset

19. The former village hall is an attractive, single storey building that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is not considered to be curtilage listed due to its relationship with Hoult's Mansion, but is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, and was identified as such at the pre-application stage. There is, therefore, a presumption against its demolition subject to an assessment of significance and a structural report to determine whether or not its repair and conversion would prove tantamount to its reconstruction.

20. Policy DM17 of the JDM requires that proposals for the demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the conservation area should demonstrate the building is beyond repair, or that repair would result in the loss of its historic features and that all possible measures to sustain the existing use or find an alternative have been explored. The policy is clear that all proposals will need clear justification for the works, especially where they would harm the significance of the conservation area or its setting. Such proposals should also show that a contract for the carrying out of the works has been made where planning permission has

been granted. These requirements are echoed in the NPPF, particularly paragraph 129 which requires applications to take into account heritage assets into account when assessing the impacts of development.

21. The proposal has been accompanied by a heritage statement and a built heritage assessment. The heritage statement, in its assessment of the former village hall, notes, in particular, its current empty status and dilapidated appearance and concludes that the former village hall is harmful to the conservation area. The built heritage assessment states that the village hall has;

"...negligible, if any significance to the adjacent Grade II listed Hoult's Mansions. Due to its close proximity to the heritage asset, the Former Village Hall is considered to provide a neutral contribution to its setting"

22. The Conservation Officer's comments disagree with the assessment's conclusion that the building does not make a contribution to the area and notes its form, appearance and detail as what would be expected of a building of this time. Such features are the contributing factors for the historic merit of the building. Additionally, there remains no evidence submitted as to the structural status of the building and the quantity surveyor's report details only the cost, with statements made about the ability to convert the building, but no indication as to how the conclusions have been reached. This was identified in the previous application, and has not been addressed during this resubmission.
23. It is considered, therefore, that the proposal has not sufficiently demonstrated that the demolition of the non-designated heritage asset (i.e. the former village hall) has been fully addressed. Additionally, as per part iii) of policy DM17, an acceptable scheme has not been forthcoming for the redevelopment of the site as the proposed dwelling is considered to represent harm to the adjacent listed building, as discussed below.

Impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area

24. As stated, the conservation officer has objected to the proposal, and it is considered that the scope of assessment of the conservation area that has been carried out that identifies the characteristics, materials, plot sizes, divisions etc. is limited. Additionally, while reference has been made as to the impacts on the adjacent listed building, it is not considered that these have been adequately supported by evidence.
25. Policy DM17 requires development within the conservation area to preserve or enhance the character of the Area. In considering the replacement of The Haven on the adjacent site, the applicant had regard to the scale of the dwelling to be replaced and replicated some of the style and character of the previous dwelling on the site in the proposed replacement. Whilst this replacement is greater in its overall depth, the appearance of the frontage has been maintained in order to preserve its character of the Conservation Area.

26. The proposed dwelling would be greater in scale than both Hoult's Mansion and The Haven and would not respect the scale and massing of either dwelling either side. In addition to this the former village hall to be replaced is of a much smaller scale and this is a consideration in how its impact is assessed. The application is also considered to fail to accord with policy DM22 which requires development to have design based on an analysis of existing buildings, and to fully exploit the opportunities that these present. The development has not utilised the characteristics of the locality and has failed to create a continuity of built form which reflects the wider characteristics of the area.
27. Setting aside the objection to the proposed demolition the replacement building will sit immediately alongside Hoult's Mansion and, whereas the existing hall appears very much subservient to the listed property and makes a positive contribution to its setting, the proposed development, whilst attractive in its own right, is considered to compete with the listed building due to its increased bulk. The proposal does not demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the listed building or respect its setting. It is therefore contrary to policy DM15 of the joint development management policies.

Loss of Community Facilities

28. Policy DM41 of the Joint Development Management Policies indicates that the loss of valued community facilities will only be accepted provided that the use is not economically viable, with appropriate supporting financial evidence, including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months. This sits alongside a requirement to either provide evidence that there is no local demand for the use of the building or site or that there are appropriate replacement facilities of at least equivalent standard, in an accessible location well served by public transport.
29. This requirement is echoed in policy DM17 that also requires that proposals resulting in the demolition of heritage assets demonstrate that all possible measures to sustain an existing use or find an alternative have been explored and failed and that development would bring substantial public benefits. The retention of community facilities is actively encouraged in the NPPF under paragraph 28.
30. No evidence has been submitted that indicates the use of the site is not economically viable. No marketing assessments have been submitted, nor were any submitted with the previous application (ref. DC/15/1078/FUL). It does not, therefore, appear that a marketing exercise has taken place, though it is noted that this in itself would not preclude evidence that economic viability is not achievable.
31. The planning statement states that a replacement building has been provided and is in use by the Parish Council and other parties. If this is the case then it is considered that there is clear need and want for community facilities. However, no assessment has been made as to the replacement sites accessibility or its condition in relation to the application

site. Additionally, no location has been provided of the replacement facility and the addresses given do not appear in the address database which means it is not possible to verify the status of the replacement or its service infrastructure. Though the village is served by bus services, without knowledge of the location of the site, it can not be concluded that they are suitably served by public transport.

32. In that regard, it is considered that the proposal does not adequately meet the requirements of policy DM41, having provided no evidence as to the viability of the site as a community facility, and having inadequately assessed the replacement that has been provided.

Conclusion:

33. The proposed development would result in the loss of a non designated heritage asset which currently makes a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building. The replacement dwelling would compete with the adjacent listed building due to its overall bulk, scale, height and massing therefore proving contrary to policy DM15, DM16 and DM17 and relevant policies contained within the NPPF.

34. The proposal also fails to take account of policy DM41 and has not provided any indication as to the economic viability of the site, or made any assessment as to the adequacy of the replacement facilities in comparison to the former village hall.

Recommendation:

It is **RECOMMENDED** that planning permission be **Refused** for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed development would result in the loss of a non designated heritage asset which currently makes a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building. The replacement dwelling would also compete with the adjacent listed building due to its overall bulk, scale, height and massing therefore proving contrary to policies DM2, DM15, DM16, DM17 and DM22 and relevant policies contained within the NPPF.**
- 2. The loss of the community facility has not been adequately addressed within the application and therefore fails to comply with policy DM41 of the Joint Development Management Policy Document.**
- 3. The applicant has failed to provide any evidence that the building is structurally unsound or that the proper repair of the building would not be possible, in addition with the failure to comply with policy DM41, which is echoed within policy DM17, and which requires that measure to sustain an existing use have been explored. Therefore it is considered that the principle of**

demolition has not been satisfactorily established and the applicant has failed to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the building can not be retained. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to the requirements of Policy DM17.

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online.

<https://planning.westsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=O3CPU5PDFOJ00>

Case Officer: Aaron Sands

Date: 20th April 2016