

36/2005/015

FALCON RURAL HOUSING

ERECTION OF 7 DWELLINGS TO MEET LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS ON LAND AT POLKESFIELD, STOKE ST GREGORY

35003/27344

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

The application site consists of approximately a third of a hectare of field to the north west of the existing development at Polkesfield, Stoke St Gregory. A housing needs survey was carried out in 2004 and again in April 2005. It is considered that 7 units proposed will create a sustainable development to meet housing needs in the short, medium and possibly long term. An area is being set aside for possible further local needs housing should the need be proven in the future. The housing will include 1 x 3 bed roomed house, 2 x 2 bed roomed houses and 1 x 2 bed roomed bungalow for rent and 2 x 3 bed roomed house and 1 x 2 bed roomed house for low cost ownership. The site lies adjacent to existing residential development and is considered a suitable 'exception site'. The dwellings are proposed in the form of two terraces and the construction will be timber framed with timber cladding and roof shingles to blend in with the area.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST there are limited or no archaeological implications to this proposal and we therefore have no objections on archaeological grounds. RIGHTS OF WAY TEAM the public footpaths must remain open and easy to use at all times during development. The routes of the paths must not be altered, temporarily or permanently, without going through the proper procedures. Any changes to the surface of the paths must be authorised by the County Council Rights of Way Group. Any new drainage must not affect the footpaths and no additional furniture/barriers should be installed on the paths. WESSEX WATER the development is located within a sewered area with foul and surface water sewers available. It will be necessary if required to agree points of connection onto our systems. This can be agreed at the detailed design stage. There are water mains in the vicinity and this can be agreed at the detailed design stage.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER subject to detailed landscape proposals it should be possible to integrate the proposals into the local landscape. NATURE CONSERVATION OFFICER I advise that SERC are consulted. Badgers are known to inhabit the area. The terrain and sward gives opportunities for reptiles such as slow worms. The submitted report indicates that there are no protected species on site. However the site is very good for insects and I support the recommendation for proposals to plant native species shrubs/trees and to maintain existing hedgerows. Also it would be good to think that the remaining open space could have a boundary strip managed for insects and small mammals. FORWARD PLANNING OFFICER the site lies beyond the settlement limit of

Stoke St Gregory as defined in the adopted Local Plan. However policy H11 provides for 'exception sites' beyond village settlement limits if an identified need for affordable housing has been established. In this instance the Housing Manager confirms that this is the case and the proposal is therefore supported in policy terms. Policy C4 requires sites of six or more dwellings to make provision for recreational facilities. I note that the adjoining open space is being offered as the contribution (to be managed by the Parish Council?) although plans indicate it may be considered as a future affordable housing site. If this is the case a condition should be attached whereby if the open space is developed at a later stage, recreational contributions are sought for both that proposal and retrospectively for the 7 houses under the current application. HOUSING OFFICER the Housing Service is very keen to support this planning application which is for shared ownership and rented houses on a rural exception site. There is a proven need for these homes which is evident from the Housing Need Survey recently carried out.

PARISH COUNCIL the Parish are co-applicants and it may be improper for them to comment. However they are strongly in favour of this application. A need for low cost housing emerged when the Parish Appraisal was carried out in 2003. Two open days have been strongly supported by the village; many people came to look at the designs and plans. The great majority of those who attended the open days are in favour of the scheme.

POLICY CONTEXT

RPG10 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West.

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 Sustainable Development, STR6 Development Outside Towns, Rural Centres and Villages, POLICY 1 Nature Conservation, POLICY 35 Affordable Housing, POLICY 48 Access and Parking.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 General Requirements, S2 Design, S7 Outside Settlements, H11 Rural Local Needs Housing, M4 Residential Parking Requirements, C4 Standards for Play and Open Space Provision, EN5 Protected Species.

ASSESSMENT

The proposal is to erect 6 two storey dwellings and a bungalow for people in local housing need at a Greenfield site adjacent to the existing residential development at Polkesfield, Stoke St Gregory. The site would be accessed via an existing cul de sac serving the existing Polkesfield housing. The main considerations with the proposal are whether the housing meets policy requirements, whether the design is appropriate and whether there are any adverse impact in terms of ecology, protected species and open space.

The policy H11 of the Local Plan allows for small affordable schemes which meet local community needs on exception sites. The needs survey carried out by the Housing

Association has identified a local need which meets the policy and the site is considered to be the best available and not to harm the character and landscape setting of the settlement. The need to secure the provision of the dwellings in perpetuity is addressed through a Section 106 agreement.

The site is accessed off the existing estate road and the layout takes the form of two terraces at right angles to one another off the access with parking for each dwelling set in front off the highway. This layout is one that reflects the best use of space and reflects the adjoining housing development. The materials to be used are a sustainable timber cladding with a dark coloured shingle roof and solar panels incorporated on the roof to assist in the heating system and the aim of carbon free development. These materials are considered to be in keeping with the general character of the area, although different from the adjacent brick and concrete tile of the Polkesfield housing. The sustainable emphasis of the scheme is something that should be encouraged and the scheme as designed is considered as acceptable.

The ecological survey carried out indicates that the site is a well established grassland area that is in an unmanaged state and there are no species of special note. No protected species were found on the site and the report concludes that its development would not cause any great impact on the flora and fauna of the surrounding area. A new hedge planting scheme is proposed to define the boundary of the site. The scheme involves the provision of 7 units and as such the site falls to be considered as needing to provide open space. This is catered for within the layout by providing space leased to the Parish Council. As this development is for local people in need it is considered appropriate that the Parish Council are responsible for any open space provision in the area.

In summary the development is considered to provide local needs housing in line with policies of the development plan, it is of an adequate design incorporating sustainable elements and there are no adverse impacts in terms of ecology or open space.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to a Section 106 Agreement to secure the affordable housing provision in perpetuity by 12th September the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, windows and doors, landscaping, boundary treatment, parking, access road details, details of hard surfacing, play equipment details, no extensions, no garaging, no fencing, colour of the cladding and services underground. Notes re ensuring footpaths remain open and easy to use at all times during the development, a point of connection is agreed with Wessex Water prior to commencement.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal provides local needs housing in line with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy H11 and there are no material circumstances to indicate otherwise.

If no Section 106 Agreement is completed authorisation be given to REFUSE for reason of not ensuring housing in perpetuity in line with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy H11(C).

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

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NOTES: