

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 24 FEBRUARY 2016

Application Number	3/15/2395/FUL
Proposal	Erection of new care home following the demolition of existing care home including, access, parking, trees and landscaping.
Location	Hillview Residential Care Home, 17 Collett Road, Ware, SG12 7LY
Applicant	B and M Care
Parish	Ware CP
Ward	Ware – Christchurch

Date of Registration of Application	9 December 2015
Target Determination Date	9 March 2016
Reason for Committee Report	Major application
Case Officer	David Snell

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions set out at the end of this report.

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The proposal seeks permission for the demolition of an existing 37 bed care home building and the erection, in its place, of a new care home, also having 37 en-suite bedrooms, together with communal facilities and associated parking and landscaping.
- 1.2 There is no objection in principle to the demolition of the existing building and the size and design of the replacement building is considered acceptable having regard to the context of the site and the surrounding area.
- 1.3 The highway, parking, landscaping and neighbour amenity aspects of the development are also considered to be satisfactory.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The site is shown on the attached Ordnance Survey extract. It comprises a 2.5 storey extended Victorian building situated on a 0.13ha rectangular plot on the north side of Collett Road. The existing care home building fronts Collett Road in a position elevated above the highway. The remainder of the more modern care home extensions are, however, to the rear and are not highly visible in the street scene.

2.2 The site lies within the town's Conservation Area and is bounded almost entirely by residential properties. It slopes quite steeply upwards to the north from the boundary with Collett Road.

3.0 Background to Proposals

3.1 The proposal seeks permission to demolish the existing buildings on the site and replace them with a new care home, providing the same number of bedrooms. The applicants, who operates 20 care homes, explain that the current care home facility does not comply with modern Care Quality Commission (CGC) standards and the proposal represents part of their ongoing program of replacement/improvement to bring their building stock up to modern standards.

3.2 The new 2.5 storey, 37 bed, care home will front Collett Road in a similar elevated position to the existing building. The remainder of the care home elements to the rear would also be 2.5 storey and the proposed siting is reflective of the existing building, with a slightly enlarged footprint and the addition of a basement level accommodating service facilities and car parking.

4.0 Key Policy Issues

4.1 These relate to the relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the adopted East Herts Local Plan 2007:

Key Issue	NPPF	Local Plan policy
The layout, design and external appearance of the proposed building	Section 7	ENV1, ENV2
Impact on Ware Conservation Area	Section 12	
Highway implications	Section 4	TR2, TR4, TR7
Loss of trees		ENV11
Neighbour impact		ENV1

Other relevant issues are referred to in the 'Consideration of Relevant Issues' section below.

5.0 Emerging District Plan

5.1 In relation to the key issues identified above, the policies contained in the emerging District Plan do not differ significantly from those

contained in the adopted Local Plan and the NPPF as identified above. Given its stage in preparation, little weight can currently be accorded to the emerging Plan.

6.0 Summary of Consultee Responses

- 6.1 The Lead Local Flood Risk Authority (LLFA) have no objection to the proposed development in respect of drainage and flood risk.
- 6.2 The Highway Authority do not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission and is satisfied that the layout (as amended) is acceptable in principle. It is noted that the existing crossover will remain in situ, providing access to a rear car park, as is the case at present. The existing crossover will also provide access to a basement car park. Visibility remains largely as existing which is considered acceptable given that trip generation of the proposed development will be similar to the existing. The proposals represent an increase in parking more fitting with the East Herts SPD and the Highway Authority is content with the proposed parking provision, although there may be some overspill onto the local highway network from visitor trips.
- 6.3 Environmental Health have no objections, but recommend conditions relating to construction hours of working; soil decontamination and piling works.
- 6.4 The Conservation and Urban Design Team have no objection to the demolition of the existing building. Whilst it is recognised that the bay window detailing of the existing building is of good quality, it is considered that the many alterations and extensions on the building have eroded its character. The replacement building is considered to be of a suitable quality, with suitable design detailing, timber sash windows, and suitable massing. The proposals will therefore not harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.5 The Landscape Section comments that three trees (a horse chestnut and two limes) are to be removed, with one sycamore to be retained. However, it is considered unrealistic to attempt to retain the sycamore as it is a self-set tree and too close to the boundary wall. None of the trees meet the criteria for making a TPO and a replacement tree (or trees) of a suitable species along the site frontage would mitigate the immediate loss and result in a long term gain. Landscape conditions are recommended.

7.0 Town Council Representations

7.1 At the time of writing this report, no representations have been received from Ware Town Council. Any representations made will be reported at the committee meeting.

8.0 Summary of Other Representations

8.1 The application has been advertised by neighbour consultation and a site notice. Five responses have been received which raise the following matters of concern:

- Building footprint is moving slightly nearer to residential properties in Greenways to the west.
- There is no plan to replace the 3 trees on the western boundary to be removed which offer significant screening therefore the proposal will increase overlooking.
- The loss of trees will adversely impact on wildlife habitat.
- One response raises no objection in principle, but is concerned that during construction the proposal will reduce on-street parking. Also, vehicle access for construction will create noise and pollution effects on neighbours.
- The loss of the existing building will have a negative impact on the historic character of the street.

9.0 Planning History

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
3/94/1165/ZA	Two storey/single storey extension	Approved	1994
3/93/1063/FP	Roof alterations to provide additional bedrooms	Approved	1993
3/91/1679/FP	Extension	Approved	1991
3/84/1867/FP	Extension to canopy and window alterations	Approved	1984
3/84/1021/FP	Alterations and extensions	Approved	1984

10.0 Consideration of Relevant Issues

10.1 The key issues are set out in section 4.0 above.

Scale, Design and layout

10.2 The massing and scale of the replacement building is similar to that of the existing building. The frontage of the proposed building would be 19.3m wide with the front entrance porch centrally located. The block would be 2.5 storeys in height with a front facing gable feature and dormer windows within the roof slope. It is considered that the new building proposed is of an appropriate scale and standard of design and detailing that would assimilate well with surrounding development and preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Impact on Conservation Area

10.3 The bay window detailing of the existing building is of good quality. However, the existing building has been substantially extended and altered in the past and this has eroded its character and contribution to the conservation area. The demolition of the building is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle. The replacement building is considered to be of suitable quality and it is therefore considered that the impact on the Conservation Area would be neutral. It is considered that the proposals will not give rise to harm to the wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Highways and parking

10.4 The existing care home has 7 parking spaces at the rear of the building, accessed by an access road off Collett Road on the west side of the building. The proposal retains the rear parking area (with provision for 5 visitor spaces, including two disabled spaces) and would provide, in addition, 7 basement spaces, making a total of 12 spaces. The current adopted parking standard would require 1 space for 5 residents and 1 space per 2 non-resident staff. There will be no increase in staffing levels and a maximum of 8-10 staff are present over a 24 hour period covered in 3 shifts. The maximum adopted parking requirement would therefore be 13 spaces and within the emerging District Plan Standard also 13 spaces. The proposal is therefore in accordance with current parking standards and one space short of the proposed new standards in the District Plan.

- 10.5 The site is close to local bus services and, given that the proposed parking provision is an improvement on the existing position, and that no increase in beds or staffing levels is proposed, it is considered that the provision of 12 spaces is acceptable. The scheme also includes the provision of 5 cycle parking spaces.
- 10.6 The Highway Authority also considers that the access and parking arrangements are satisfactory.

Neighbour impact

- 10.7 The proposed building would be located in a similar position to the existing building relative to the eastern side boundary of the site and it will be of a similar height and massing. It is therefore considered that there will be no additional impact on the neighbouring property to the east. A projecting patio/fire escape at first floor level is to be screened by an obscured glass panel and will not give rise to overlooking of the garden of that property.
- 10.8 Parts of the proposed building would be sited approximately 2.2m closer than the existing building to the western boundary. These closest elements of the side elevation would not, however, contain windows. The western flank elevation of the new building would contain windows, to bedrooms situated at ground, first and second floor levels (4 on each floor) similar to the existing position, but approximately 1.1m closer to the boundary. The number of facing windows would be reduced, compared to the existing situation, and a distance of approximately 4.4m would be maintained to the side boundary with the existing Greenways residential development. A distance of approximately 14.7m is maintained to the closest part of the facing rear elevation of these properties. Whilst the loss of three trees on the western boundary would reduce screening to some extent it is considered that the proposed building would have a similar relationship to Greenway to the existing building in terms of overlooking and that it would not result in a material increase in overlooking or unacceptable loss of visual amenity.

Loss of trees

- 10.9 The proposal would result in the loss of 3 trees on the western boundary of the site that abut a high concrete retaining wall between the application site and the adjoining property Greenways. None of the trees meet the criteria for making a TPO and, whilst the loss of the trees is regrettable as they provide some screening of the development when

viewed from the adjoining properties, the losses are of necessity as the retaining wall requires rebuilding, and it is unrealistic to retain them.

Conclusion

10.10 Having regard to the policies of the adopted Local Plan, the application is considered to be acceptable in principle and of a satisfactory size, scale and design such that there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the surroundings; neighbour amenity or to the character of the wider Conservation Area. Parking provision is acceptable and whilst some trees would need to be removed, suitable replacement planting on the frontage of the site would result in a longer term improvement to the appearance of the development. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions below.

Conditions:

1. Three year time limit (1T12)
2. Approved plans (2E10)
3. Samples of materials (2E12)
4. Boundary walls and fences (2EO7)
5. External lighting (2E27)
6. Construction hours of working – plant and machinery (6N07)
7. Hard surfacing (3V21)
8. Prior to first occupation of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include, as appropriate: (a) Proposed finished levels or contours (b) Means of enclosure (c) Retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration, where relevant (d) Planting plans (e) Schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate. Thereafter the development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design, in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV11 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

9. Landscaping works implementation (4P13)
10. If the construction works include piling then prior to the commencement of development, a method statement detailing the type of piling and noise emissions shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All piling works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Details are required prior to commencement to safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of surrounding residential properties in accordance with Policy ENV24 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

11. The presence of any significant unexpected contamination that becomes evident during the development shall be brought to the attention of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure adequate protection of human health, the environment and water courses in accordance with Policy ENV25 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

12. Before first occupation of the development, all access and junction arrangements serving the development shall be completed in accordance with Plan No. 4b – ‘Proposed Site Layout Plan’, and constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority’s satisfaction.

Reason: To ensure that the access is constructed to the current Highway Authority’s specification in the interests of highway safety.

13. A 0.65 metre x 0.65 metre visibility splay shall be provided and permanently maintained on the east side of the access, measured from the edge of the access way to the edge of the back of footway, within which there shall be no obstruction to visibility between 600mm and 2.2 metres above the footway.

Reason: To provide adequate visibility for drivers leaving the site.

14. Before first occupation of the development, access roads and parking area shown on the approved plans shall be provided and thereafter maintained.

Reason: To comply with Policy TR7 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

15. Prior to the commencement of the development a Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The construction of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Plan shall identify details of:

- Phasing of the development, including highway works.
- Methods of accessing the site.
- Construction vehicle numbers and routing.
- Wheel washing facilities and their location.
- Associated parking areas and areas for the storage of materials clear of the highway.

Reason: To ensure that development takes place in a comprehensive manner with due regard for highway safety and capacity and minimise the impact of construction traffic on the highway network.

Informatives:

1. Other legislation.

Summary of Reasons for Decision

East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (Minerals Local Plan, Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2012 and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007); the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

KEY DATA

Residential Development

Development Type	Floor area
Proposed Care Home	1,832sqm
Existing care home	1,034sqm

Accommodation	Bedspaces
Existing care home	37
Proposed care home	37 en-suite

Parking	Spaces
Existing	7
Proposed	12
Local Plan Standard Zone 4	13
Emerging District Plan Standard	13

Employment	
Existing	15 full 15 part-time over 24 hours in 3 shifts 8-10 staff present at any time
Proposed	15 full 15 part-time over 24 hours in 3 shifts 8-10 staff present at any time