

A REVIEW OF THE SHORTLISTED EXCEPTION SITES IN COMPTON AND SHAWFORD UNDERTAKEN BY THE HYDE GROUP – APRIL 2013

Summary

Chris Buchan-Hepburn, Head of New Business, The Hyde Group reviewed the preferred sites for rural affordable housing in Compton and Shawford in April 2013, based on those sites put forward for consideration since November 2012. He has commented on each of the sites in this report.

In light of his observations, he considers that sites 11, B and C do not have sufficient merit to investigate further; they are advisedly affected by several key issues:-

- They lack the quality of environment that would enable successful housing to be developed, because they suffer heavily from road noise, lack of garden amenity space that is sunny and open, and also lack safe access to village amenities for young families.
- Road access is unsafe and construction costs will be disproportionately high and is likely to be technically difficult to standards required. The farm buildings would not offer a financially viable prospect for affordable housing and in fact all 3 sites are unlikely to be viable.
- Sites 4 (Attwoods Drove) and Site 5 (Martin's Field) both have good potential. Prior to asking an architect to develop sketch ideas Hyde would like the parish council to confirm they are supportive of development on both sites 4 and 5 and to rank their preference. On receipt of this Hyde will develop some sketch ideas for a pre-application enquiry with WCC in order to specifically explore the site constraints, contextual analysis and some massing ideas.
- It is probably worth mentioning that Hyde, as part of the rural programme, has completed a number of rural exception developments that have been extensions to narrow and restricted roads such as those of Attwoods Drove and Martins Fields; for example in Martin in the New Forest, Preston Candover and Cocking. In each of these projects, Hyde's contractor worked closely with residents and the local community to ensure construction traffic and the impact of the construction was minimised; Hyde's contractors are registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme. Traffic flow out of completed developments is often a concern, especially where roads are narrow. However, having undertaken traffic studies of one of Hyde's completed rural exception developments in Littleton, Hyde now understand that this fear can be overstated. This was borne out in Boldre where the parish council latterly confirmed that they were wrong to have feared the impact traffic emerging from the new homes would have on the village, in fact they had noticed no impact and were very pleased with the development.

The Compton and Shawford Parish Council is asked to consider the content of this report and the Hyde Group looks forward to learning of the council's considered views and next steps proposed.

THE SITES – APRIL 2013

1. Site 4 - Attwoods Drove

Highways

The access to the site will need widening in order to achieve required turning radii/perpendicular road junction and safe passing of oncoming vehicles.

Some loss of hedgerow is required to accommodate road widening, visibility splay and new entrance.

Overhead cables may require diversion.

Generally the route to the site is reasonable although it is noted that periodic congestion occurs close to the school (visit time coincided with school collection time), the congestion is not considered to be problematic.

Existing private driveway towards Attwood Farm is also a registered footpath and safe passage of pedestrians passing the new development would need to be considered in the design.

Landscape

Proposed site location is north of 1-6 bungalows on Attwoods Drove, whilst an extension to the built settlement form has little impact on the wider landscape and would be perceived as a continuation of Attwoods Drove. There are limited distant views of the site from Badger Farm Road (1km) and Otterbourne Road (0.5km).

The proposed development would benefit from establishing new field boundaries comprising indigenous species for hedging. Some loss of hedging would be required but this can be reasonably mitigated and improved upon by replacement and enhanced landscape planting. There may be some ecological impact from loss of habitat.

There is safe access to the village recreation ground

Scale and Development

10 new homes are proposed, scale and massing needs to be considered; adjacent built form are bungalows, storey and a half, leading into 2 storey homes. Care needs to be given to avoid overbearing massing.

The topography is rising and therefore ridge lines will rise making the form appear larger than it is, this can be managed through good design



2. Site 5 - Martins Field

Highways

The access to the site will result in some loss of parking and a loss of a small amount of green space. The parking can be re-provided.

Access to the site off Martins field is straightforward but is adversely affected by width restriction and casual parking in the lower reaches of Martins Fields. Beyond Martins Fields the route to the site is reasonable although it is noted that periodic congestion occurs close to the school (visit time coincided with school collection time), this congestion is not considered to be problematic.

Landscape

Proposed site location is north of 35 and 36 Martins Fields, there are no existing landscape features of significance, there is a single tree that would require removal.

The site is in a slight depression and therefore visibility from the wider landscape will be limited. The development will be an obvious intrusion into the landscape but a natural extension of Martins Fields. The development will only notably be visible from Attwoods Drive.

The proposed development would benefit from establishing new field boundaries comprising indigenous species for hedging

There is safe access to the village recreation ground

Scale and Development

10 new homes are proposed. Context to the site is 2 storey buildings allowing a continuation of this scale and massing. It would be reasonable to continue the grain of semi-detached houses and short terraces.

The topography is rising and therefore ridge lines will rise making the form appear larger than it is, this can be managed through good design



3. Site 11 - Stoney Drove Farm (Place Lane)

Highways

Sightlines from the Place Lane into Otterbourne Road are sub-standard, and would be considered by the Highways Agency as dangerous

Significant highway upgrade would be required to the entrance with changed levels required. Safe pedestrian access would be required. The access ramp will need improving and structural integrity for refuse lorries will need to be tested. The track will require widening to accommodate 2 cars to pass.

Road and access construction costs will be very high.

The development site is on the wrong side of the road to the village recreation ground and school making it unsuitable for family housing.

Landscape

The site is bounded by a mature line of roadside trees, entrance to the site will require upgrading but will be limited by root protection.

The site would have little impact on the wider landscape.

Private gardens and amenity space will be adversely affected by tree shading and leaf drop; communal gardens are the most likely proposal which is not popular with family accommodation. Garden/play area is unlikely to meet current safety guidance being remote from dwellings.

The site is located in a depression and is subject to road noise from the Otterbourne Road, this is partly shielded by trees and hedges.

Scale and Development

The development would comprise converted farm buildings and is unlikely to achieve the desired scale of development.

Existing buildings will require significant investment, structural integrity and lifetime home and Housing Quality indicators will be very difficult to achieve. It is likely the new homes will not meet minimum social housing standards.

The conversion of the farm buildings would be contrary to policy and would require HCC and WCC to satisfy policy requirements prior to this site being considered for development.

On site play are required in the absence of safe access to the village play area



4. Site B (Place Lane)

Highways

Sightlines from the Place Lane into Otterbourne Road are sub-standard, and would be considered by the Highways Agency as dangerous

Significant highway upgrade would be required to the entrance with changed levels required. Safe pedestrian access would be required.

Road and access construction costs will be very high, the road is private and rights would need to be checked. Extensive upgrade to the length of Place Lane and the connecting lane would be required. The track width will need to be widened to allow 2 cars to pass. The access road would require non standard construction because of tree roots. Bearing capacity of the track and new road would require to be investigated to ensure access by refuse lorries is viable.

The development site is on the wrong side of the road to the village recreation ground and school making it unsuitable for family housing.

Landscape

The site is bounded to the South and North by mature line of trees on steep banks; stability of this bank would need to be known. The site would require piled foundations; an engineer would need to consider sheering risks.

The site would have little impact on the wider landscape.

The site is located adjacent to the M3 motorway and suffers greatly from road noise.

Scale and Development

10 new homes are proposed, this could not be achieved. The context is made up of farm building and small 2 storey houses.

The development would require to be designed around acoustic attenuation with outside space being subject to constant background noise

Consideration needs to be given to utilities and services connections

On site play are required in the absence of safe access to the village play area



5. Site C (Place Lane)

Highways

Sightlines from the Place Lane into Otterbourne Road are sub-standard, and would be considered by the Highways Agency as dangerous

Significant highway upgrade would be required to the entrance with changed levels required. Safe pedestrian access would be required.

Road and access construction costs will be very high, the road is private and rights would need to be checked. Extensive upgrade to the length of Place Lane and the connecting lane would be required. The track width will need to be widened to allow 2 cars to pass.

The development site is on the wrong side of the road to the village recreation ground and school making it unsuitable for family housing.

Landscape

The site is bounded to the South by a mature line of trees on a steep bank; stability of this bank would need to be known. However because of the bank and trees, through the winter the site will receive very little sunshine.

Ground conditions will need to be tested.

The site would have little impact on the wider landscape.

The site is located in a depression and is subject to road noise from the Otterbourne Road and M3 motorway, this is partly shielded by trees and hedges but is a constant significant background presence.

Scale and Development

10 new homes are proposed and could be achieved. The context is made up of farm building and small 2 storey houses.

There would be a conflict and concern regarding loss of amenity to Warner's Farm and garden, consideration in the design would need to be given to preserve this, but again in order to avoid shading, buildings would need to be located towards the northern parts of the site.

Consideration needs to be given to utilities and services connections

On site play are required in the absence of safe access to the village play area



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