



Horsham
District
Council

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT REPORT

TO: Planning Committee (South)

BY: Development Manager

DATE: 20 December 2016

DEVELOPMENT: Construction of dementia care home for 32 residents to replace existing dementia annex of nursing care home.

SITE: Homelands Nursing Home Horsham Road Cowfold Horsham

WARD: Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead

APPLICATION: DC/16/0543

APPLICANT: Medicrest Limited

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: The application if permitted would represent a departure from the Development Plan as set out in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

RECOMMENDATION: To refuse planning permission

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application was considered by Members at the 18th October 2016 meeting of the Development Management South Committee. The Officer's report for this application, which was included in the agenda of the 18th October meeting, is appended here for ease of reference. At that meeting Members voted to defer the application to a later Committee meeting to allow for further information regarding the need for the development to be provided, and to give the applicant time to submit revised detailing relating to the design of the facility.
- 1.2 In light of Members' resolution, Officers requested this information from the Applicant, and asked that their further submission address the following:
- (a) Justification for the development in terms of need for dementia care spaces within the District
 - (b) Revised drawings detailing an improvement in design

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- 1.3 The Applicant has submitted additional information which seeks to address concerns raised by Members at the meeting of the 18th October 2016, and Officers are now also in receipt of specialist advice from the County Council.

2. SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Applicant's statement outlining justification for the development in terms of need includes the following points:

- According to the Dementia Framework West Sussex 2014-2019, nearly 2,500 older people were diagnosed with dementia in the Horsham District. This is predicted to increase as more undiagnosed people are detected.
- It is increasingly difficult to find suitable care facilities for people with dementia and families would have to look further afield to find a place for their relatives.
- The Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) based in Horsham have regularly contacted Homelands Nursing Home searching for vacancies for their dementia patients.
- There is an increasing need to offer care facilities for people with dementia, providing them with a friendly environment and opportunity for carers and relatives to have some respite.
- Home care is not always suitable for older people with dementia, especially for those who live alone. Those who live alone are more at risk of their condition being unrecognised which can lead to emergency admission to hospitals and care homes.
- Homelands has a good reputation and is an existing dementia care unit which is set in a peaceful environment which is essential for dementia care.
- The proposed building is to increase and improve the care provided and to ensure that the quality of facilities is maintained over time.
- Opening a new dementia unit in an urban area would be difficult due to the availability and prohibitive cost of land.
- With increased provision of care, there will be a need to employ more care staff.

- 2.2 The applicant has also submitted revised Supplementary Information, plans and elevations, landscape design and artist impressions in an effort to overcome the second reason for deferral. The revised details include the following new points:

- The inclusion of dormer windows, window headers, tile hanging and quoins
- Proposal to cover the main roof including the dormers in Redland 'Rosemary clay plain tiles', 'red' colour.
- The use of vertical tile hanging at first floor level as Rosemary plain clay tiles, 'Russet mix' colour.
- Soldier header courses over the windows and single headers to the cills to be Ibstock bricks, 'Leicester red stock'.
- Quoins throughout to be Ibstock bricks 'Leicester red stock'.

The light buff colour bricks to be Ibstock bricks, either – 'Arundel multi stock' / 'Sevenoaks yellow stock' / 'Grainger Gold'.

3. CONSULTATIONS

3.1 West Sussex County Council Care Services: Support

Have advised that they are actively looking to support the development of specialist Dementia care provision and that demographical projections of older populations in Horsham would suggest a clear need for this type of development. WSCC highlighted that Homelands Care Home have recently (July 2016) been inspected and rated as 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission. Therefore WSCC are supportive of this application.

4. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

4.1 In the report of 18th October, Officers recommended refusal of the application for the following reasons:

1. *The need for additional dementia care facilities in this countryside location, and of the scale proposed, has not been satisfactorily demonstrated or evidenced. No justification has been provided to indicate that the proposed development is required in a countryside location and that it could not be accommodated within a more sustainable location within a designated Built Up Area Boundary. The proposal therefore does not accord with the overarching principles of sustainable development set out within the NPPF and the HDPF. The proposal therefore constitutes an unallocated and unnecessary development in the countryside, contrary to Policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) and the requirements of the NPPF.*

2. *The external design of the proposed building, and the materials proposed to be used, is considered to be poor and not reflective of the local character of the district, particularly the character of its countryside setting outside the Built Up Area Boundary. The proposal has failed to take the opportunities available to create a good quality external appearance, and design of the building is therefore considered to conflict with the principles of good design established in the NPPF, as well as the requirements of Horsham District Planning Framework Policies 32 and 33.*

4.2 In respect of the first reason for refusal previously recommended by Officers, Members sought additional information in respect of the need for this facility. The additional information submitted by the Applicant in response to this request is summarised above and is available to view in full on the Council's website.

4.3 Although it is appreciated that the Applicant has made some attempt to address the concerns of Members and Officers in relation to need, the updated information provided is still relatively basic in nature. The document entitled 'Reasons to Support this Application' makes reference to limited facts or figures, but does refer to those provided by WSCC Contracts team which detail the likely increase in types of dementia across the district but, does not detail the predicted number of those who will likely be in need of care. As such, it is not considered that the Applicant has appropriately demonstrated that there is a requirement or demand for dementia care places within the district; which in turn could justify the scale or location of the building within a countryside setting. However, separate to this, West Sussex County Council's Care Services team have now confirmed that increased dementia care facilities will be needed within Horsham district in the future and that they consider Homelands to be a 'good' facility as rated by the Care Quality Commission in their July 2016 report. The Care Services team are therefore supportive of the proposal for additional dementia care capacity in this location in order to meet current and anticipated future demand. Officers are therefore satisfied that a need for this dementia facility can be demonstrated in this location and that concerns surrounding need have been appropriately addressed through WSCC's comments.

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- 4.4 In respect of the second reason for refusal, the Applicant has submitted revised information relating to the external appearance of the building. It is noted that in proposing a revised design, the applicant has made some attempt to incorporate changes which are more appropriate for the Sussex countryside setting within which the proposed building is set; these include the addition of gables, dormer windows, window headers, tile hanging and quoins.
- 4.5 However, Officers consider that the changes proposed are minimal and that the applicant has still not appropriately addressed concerns relating to the external appearance and the countryside setting of the proposed building. This is particularly noted with the insertion of dormer windows into the roof, which has effectively created a third floor and now appears to serve an unused roof space. A significant part of Officer's original concerns related to the overall scale and massing of the building and the insertion of dormer windows into the previously proposed roof would exacerbate this by giving further prominence to the roof form. There would also be concern over future use of the roof space for additional accommodation, as the insertion of dormer windows would appear to enable this to become habitable rooms. Whilst the inclusion of dormer windows could be considered appropriate for the location, these should be used to reduce the visual impact and scale of the building, rather than increase it.
- 4.6 In addition, it is noted that two gables have been incorporated into the east and south elevations of the proposed building; whilst the principle of this is pleasing, the applicant has not appropriately considered the relationship of these gables to the building as a whole. In reality the gables have been inserted into the roof rather than forming projecting elements and as such would not be read as significant changes to the appearance. Moreover, the gable to the south elevation appears to be flush with the main building line, but with a materials change and it is not clear how the proposed hanging tiles would sit adjacent to the render without any break in this wall.
- 4.7 These concerns have been raised with the applicant, however, no further amendments to the design and external appearance of the proposed building have been provided. As such, Officers remain concerned that the overall design, scale and appearance of the building does not appropriately reflect the character of the surrounding rural area or relate sympathetically with its countryside setting. The application is therefore considered to remain contrary to Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 To refuse the application for the following reason:
1. The external design of the proposed building, and the materials proposed to be used, is considered to be poor and not reflective of the local character of the district, particularly the character of its countryside setting outside the Built Up Area Boundary. The proposal has failed to take the opportunities available to create a good quality external appearance, and the design of the building is therefore considered to conflict with the principles of good design established in the NPPF, as well as the requirements of Horsham District Planning Framework Policies 32 and 33.

Background Papers: Report of DC/14/2270 from Agenda of DM South 18th October 2016