



Planning Committee

Astwood Bank & Feckenham Ward

16 June 2009

**2009/079/FUL DETACHED TWO STOREY DWELLING FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF AN EXISTING DWELLING AND OUTBUILDINGS
YEW TREE HOUSE, WEAVERS HILL, REDDITCH
APPLICANT: MR D ELLIS
EXPIRY DATE: 24 JUNE 2009**

Site Description

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

The existing two storey detached dwelling is of brick and tile construction and located to the Western side of Weavers Hill within the Green Belt. The property is situated within a site measuring 0.24 hectares and is in an elevated position in comparison to nearby dwellings 'Willow Cottage' and 'Ivy Cottage' to the south which sit within a dip. Immediately to the North, South and West of the existing dwelling (to the Western side of Weavers Hill) is open countryside, all of which is designated as Green Belt. To the Eastern side of Weavers Hill, beyond a mature hedgerow and outside of the Green Belt lies a modern residential cul-de-sac, properties nearest to the application site being numbers 6 and 7 Ditchford Close.

The site is also occupied by a number of single storey outbuildings which are generally scattered randomly around the plot.

Proposal Description

This is a full application for the erection of a two storey dwelling with integral double garage, arranged as a 'T' shape, following the demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings.

Relevant Key Policies

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

www.communities.gov.uk

www.wmra.gov.uk

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

National Planning Policy

PPG2	Green Belts.
PPS1	Delivering sustainable development.
PPS3	Housing.
PPG13	Transport.

Regional Spatial Strategy

CF2	Housing beyond Major Urban Areas.
CF5	The reuse of land and buildings for housing.
CF6	Making efficient use of land.
T2	Reducing the need to travel.
T7	Car parking standards and management.

Worcestershire County Structure Plan

D.39	Control of Development in the Green Belt.
SD.3	Use of previously developed land.
SD.4	Minimising the need to travel.
T.4	Car parking.

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

B(RA.)1	Detailed extent and control of development in the Green Belt.
CS.7	The sustainable location of development.
B(HSG).6	Development within or adjacent to the curtilage of an existing dwelling.
B(BE).13	Qualities of good design.
C(T).12	Parking Standards.

Relevant Site Planning History

2009/031/FUL	Detached two storey dwelling following demolition of an existing dwelling and outbuildings	Withdrawn by applicant 3.4.2009
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Public Consultation Responses

Responses in favour

One letter received stating that provided trees are planted to replace the proposed removal of the 'defective boundary trees' referred to under Para 5.3 of the Design and Access statement, the application is supported.

A second letter where comments are summarised as follows:

- No objection as plans would represent an improvement to that which exists at present.
- Conditions should be attached in order to protect residential amenity in the case of approval however.

Responses against

None received.

Consultee Responses

County Highway Network Control

No objection subject to conditions regarding access, turning and parking.

Environmental Health

No objection. Recommend that any external lighting provided to serve the development be compliant with current guidance produced by the Institute of Lighting Engineers, and that further acceptable details be submitted regarding foul drainage. In addition would seek to impose conditions in respect of land contamination, no burning of waste materials on the site, and a condition to restrict noise making activities in association with demolition and construction activity to particular times of the day.

Severn Trent Water

No objection. Drainage details to be subject to agreement with Severn Trent.

RBC Drainage Engineer

Comments awaited.

Procedural matters

This application would normally be assessed under the delegated powers granted to the Head of Planning and Building Control, but is being reported to committee at the request of Cllr. B. Clayton.

Assessment of Proposal

The key issues for consideration are as follows:-

Principle of replacement dwelling

Of particular importance in the consideration of this application is PPG2 – Green Belts and Policy B(RA).1 of the adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan. Within the Green Belt, development is limited to that which is not inappropriate and which would preserve its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

Para 3.6 of PPG2 clearly states that:

‘the replacement of existing dwellings need not be inappropriate, providing the new dwelling is not materially larger than the dwelling it replaces.’

There can therefore be no objection to the principle of a replacement dwelling on this site, provided that it is not *materially larger than the dwelling it replaces*.

Design and Layout

In considering whether the proposal is materially larger than the dwelling to be replaced, your Officers have carefully examined the size and appearance of the existing dwelling. Whilst no floor plans of the existing dwelling have been submitted by the applicant, your Officers have noted from the site survey drawing, and from the site inspection that the existing two storey dwelling is one of square proportions with a footprint measuring approximately 7 x 8.5 metres. The dwelling does have small single storey elements, and your Officers have noted the presence of large workshop / shed structures within the curtilage which are of brick and timber construction, dilapidated in appearance and are proposed to be demolished as part of the scheme. The applicant feels that the size of these structures and their unkempt appearance is a material consideration in the determination of the application bearing in mind that these are to be demolished. Your Officers consider that whilst the workshop / shed buildings could not be viewed as aesthetically pleasing to the eye, their low pitched roofs and single storey construction mean that they are not particularly conspicuous in appearance, unlike any two storey building which is likely to be far more prominent and potentially visually intrusive.

The submission of this application has followed a similar scheme, lodged under application 2009/031. The replacement dwelling proposed under that application was considered to be significantly larger than the existing at odds with Para 3.6 of PPG2 above. The application would have been refused under delegated powers were it not for the applicant wishing to formally withdraw the application prior to the refusal notice being issued. Minor amendments to the elevational treatment of the dwelling have been made in the current application, but very little has been done in order to reduce the bulk and massing of the dwelling.

The proposed two storey dwelling, including proposed integral double garage would measure approximately 16.5 metres across with a maximum depth of over 21 metres. Although the maximum height of the dwelling would be 8 metres, and similar to that of the dwelling which would be demolished, the proposal would comfortably double the footprint of the existing dwelling and would therefore conflict with the advice contained within PPG2.

Whilst the footprint of the replacement dwelling would cover both part of the footprint of the existing dwelling and part of the footprint of the workshops (to similarly be demolished), and your Officers have no reasons to doubt the intentions of the applicant to remove the remaining structures within the site, your Officers consider that it would be difficult to resist, under the terms of PPG2, future planning applications for new structures such as 'small' garden sheds, greenhouses etc within the

significant garden curtilage of this prominent plot, which could cumulatively harm the openness of the Green Belt.

Aside from the fact that the proposal, in your Officers' opinion, constitutes inappropriate development which would by definition harm the openness of the Green Belt, your Officers have serious concerns regarding the design of the proposal. Little attempt has been made to break up the dwelling's visual 'bulk' which could have been done by introducing a greater number of single storey elements and by stepping ridge heights down, and walls in, to produce design breaks. By not doing so, the proposal would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area, particularly when viewing the site from Ivy and Willow Cottage to the South.

Other matters

The proposed new dwelling would not be considered to impact detrimentally upon the nearest occupied dwellings by virtue of any loss of light, privacy or loss of outlook. Similarly the proposal would not prejudice highway safety.

Conclusion

Whilst the development would not cause harm to residential amenity or highway safety, the scale, massing and appearance of the proposed dwelling is considered to be unacceptable and would represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt at odds with the Planning Policy Framework. As such, your officers cannot support this application.

Recommendation

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be REFUSED for the reason below:

1. The site is identified in the Development Plan for the area as falling within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. In such an area, development is limited to that which is not inappropriate to a Green Belt and which would preserve its openness. The proposal would amount to inappropriate development which is harmful to the Green Belt. It would result in an obtrusive form of development which would reduce the openness of the Green Belt and as such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy B(RA)1 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 and national guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 'Green Belts'.