

ITEM FOR DECISION

| Item No | Application No. and Parish | 8/13 week date | Proposal, Location and Applicant |
|---------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| (2) | 18/00833/FULD | 16 th November 2018 | Demolish garage and erect convenience store with 4 x apartments above and erect 4 dwellings Lawrence Building, Newbury Road, Hermitage, Thatcham RG18 9TD Landmark Estates |

To view the plans and drawings relating to this application click the following link:
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=18/00833/FULD>

Recommendation Summary: to **DELEGATE** to the Head of Development & Planning to **APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to conditions and completion s106 agreement in respect of affordable housing.

Ward Member(s): Councillor Quentin Webb
Councillor Graham Pask

Reason for Committee Determination: Reporting back for consideration of a revised affordable housing offer in accordance with Committee resolution

Committee Site Visit: 18th July 2018

Contact Officer Details

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1. Introduction

1.1 Members will be aware that this application was considered at the Eastern Area Planning Committee on 25th July 2018, where a resolution was agreed to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement to secure affordable housing within three months from the resolution date. A copy of the report and update sheet are attached to the report as Appendix 1.

2. Affordable Housing Provision

2.1 Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy sets out the levels of housing provision which will be sought through negotiation, and subject to the economics of provision from residential development. The application is proposing the construction of 4 no. two bedroom flats, 2 no. four bedroom houses, and 2 no. three bedroom houses, and a retail unit. The requirements of policy CS4 for a development of this size is a 20% provision, which is 2 units. An Affordable Housing Viability Statement was submitted with the application, which proposed a nil contribution of affordable housing. When this was reviewed by the Council's consultant, it was concluded that a near policy compliant affordable housing provision could be reached.

2.2 Following the Committee's resolution to grant permission subject to the completion of a S106 agreement to secure the affordable housing, the applicant submitted additional viability information, and land value calculations, these were reviewed by the Council's consultant. In assessing the updated viability information, the Council's consultant concluded that, a not unreasonable Existing Use Value had been indicated and that the Benchmark Land Value submitted was above that previously indicated when the first viability assessment was submitted. As a result of this the Council's viability consultant has suggested that the assumptions which have been made are acceptable, and whilst there were some potential differences in opinion about some of the aspects of the appraisal, the differences in the calculations would not provide a viable scheme on paper. During negotiations the offer was made to provide one of the three bedroom dwellings to be contributed for social rent purposes, and given that the assessment submitted does not indicate that the full affordable housing requirement can be met, this offer seems reasonable. The Council's Housing Officer has confirmed that this would be acceptable and that a Registered Provider had indicated an interest in accepting the dwelling on that basis. Policy CS6 says that the requirements of the levels of provision will be sought by negotiation, and levels below the thresholds set out in the policy shall be fully justified by the applicant. In this instance a justification has been provided, and assessed and considered to be a reasonable explanation of why the fully policy compliant situation cannot be met, and the offer of one three bedroom dwelling has been made. In addition the policy requires that the affordable units are fully integrated with the development. The three bedroom units are at the rear of the site, and form an integral part of the development, and so the provision of one of these units accords with his aspect of policy CS6.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The requirement of Policy CS6, in this instance would be for the provision of two dwellings to be provided as affordable units. The applicant has provided evidence in the form of a viability assessment which, on the advice of the Councils' consultant, has

been accepted by officers. The offer has been made of one of the three bedroom dwellings to be provided on a social rent tenure, in the light of the need to provide affordable housing, and the economics of this site as previously developed land, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this instance. Accordingly it is recommended that the revised offer in respect of affordable housing is accepted and the requirements of the s106 be amended to reflect this change. It is also recommended that the time limit to complete the s106 agreement be extended for two months from the date of this meeting.

4. Full Recommendation

- 4.1 To **DELEGATE** to the Head of Development & Planning to **APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION** following the completion of a S106 agreement by 7th January 2019 to secure affordable housing subject to the conditions outlined in the committee report and update sheet, attached as Appendix 1.

OR

If a S106 legal agreement to secure affordable housing is not completed within the above specified time, to delegate to the Head of Development and Planning to **REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION** for the reason listed below”

Refusal Reason

The application fails to provide a Section 106 Planning Obligation to deliver affordable housing, without which the proposal would be contrary to the NPPF, Policy CS6 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and the Planning Obligations SPD.”