

TWC/2016/0563

Site of Lincoln Grange Nursing Home, Lincoln Hill, Ironbridge, Telford, Shropshire
Erection of 53no. dwellings, conversion of former Lincoln Grange Nursing Home into
36no. dwellings following demolition of parts of Lincoln Grange Nursing Home and
associated internal and external works (Listed Building Application)

APPLICANT

Shropshire Homes Ltd

RECEIVED

27/06/2016

PARISH

The Gorge

WARD

Ironbridge Gorge

OFFICER Andrew Gittins

THE ACCOMPANYING FULL PLANNING APPLICATION INCLUDES FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH TRIGGERS PLANS BOARD CONSIDERATION.

1. THE PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application seeks Listed Building Consent for the conversion of the former Lincoln Grange Nursing Home (The Beeches) which is Grade II listed into 36 apartments, together with the erection of 53 dwellings. The scheme involves the formation of a new vehicular access directly opposite Beech Spinney which will serve the new build off the new adoptable shared surface. The apartments in the conversion will be served by the existing access which will not be adopted and will remain private. The scheme also involves the demolition of some late 20th additions.
- 1.2 The building will be converted to provide 6 x one beds, 25 x two beds, and 5 x three beds.
- 1.3 The application has been submitted with the following supporting information:
 - Conservation Appraisal
 - Historic Building Report
 - Archaeological Desk Based Appraisal
 - Design and Access Statement
- 1.4 Since submission the application has been subject to the following amendments:
 - Refinement of elevational treatments to listed building,
 - Comprehensive re-design of elevational treatments of the new build dwellings to reflect the Gorge vernacular,
 - Relocation of the gated walled enclosure for storage of refuse and recycling from the prominent p adjacent to Beech Rd to three less sensitive sites within the conversion.
- 1.5 An application for Full Planning Permission has been submitted under local authority reference TWC/2016/0562 and is also on this agenda.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site is located within the Built up Area of Telford to the north of Ironbridge, south of Woodside, east of Coalbrookdale and west of Madeley, within 150m of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and Severn Gorge Conservation Area. The site comprises a Grade II Listed Building and curtilage.
- 2.2 The site is located to the south of Beeches Road which links Madeley Road to the Wharfage in Ironbridge via Lincoln Hill. The site has a rural character with open undeveloped land on all three sides, bar the north where some limited low density residential care development has taken place on Forbes Close and a Care Village on Beech Spinney. The hospital is accessed by a tree-lined vehicular access drive to the west of the site. To the east the site is bound by an access drive serving two properties at The Woodlands Farm, a pond is located to the east of the track.
- 2.3 The site is covered by a group Tree Preservation Order with some located within the site with the remainder principally located along the existing access, adjacent to the proposed access and around the informal landscaped area. There are a substantial number of trees adjacent to the southern and eastern boundary of the new builds. The site is undulating in topography rising from east to west and north to south.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 None

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF): The NPPF is not the Development Plan for Telford and Wrekin but is a material consideration in this case because all of the Borough's Development Plan policies have to be viewed in light of this more recent national guidance.
 - Section 7: Requiring good design,
 - Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 4.2 Core Strategy:
 - CS14 Cultural, Historic and Built Environment
 - CS15 Urban Design
- 4.3 Wrekin Local Plan Saved Policies:
 - UD2 Design Criteria
 - HE15 Demolition of Listed Buildings
 - HE16 Alterations and Additions to Listed Buildings
- 4.4 A material consideration is the emerging Telford & Wrekin Local Plan, which has been submitted for examination. It is not the development plan for the purposes of determining planning applications, but under paragraph 216 of the NPPF weight can be given to policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, extent of unresolved objections and degree of

consistency with the NPPF, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The emerging T&WLP has reached an advanced state of preparation based on recent evidence (see the housing land supply and OAN issues already referred to below). Therefore the Council considers its policies to be sound and should be given some weight.

- 4.5 Telford and Wrekin Local Plan (2011-2031 – Submission Version January 2016)
BE 1 Design Criteria
BE 4 Listed Buildings

5. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

5.1 Standard Consultation Replies

5.1.1 **The Gorge Parish Council:** Objected on the following grounds:

- Proposal appears to be over-development.
- Insufficient information to demonstrate how traffic will be managed on the existing 'Access Only' highway network.
- Concerns regarding the capacity of existing drainage systems.
- The Parish have also noted the following:
- It is hoped that account is being taken for the extra requirement for school place and healthcare provision.
- Requested a condition requiring a Traffic Management Plan for development traffic to minimise disruption to residents and prevent development traffic using unsuitable roads in The Gorge.
- The PC reserved the right to make further comment after the Public Consultation on the 1st September.
- The PC reserved the right to call-in the application to Plans Board.
- Following the submission of the Transport Assessment (TA) and re-consultation the Parish Council raised the following objections:
- The TA does not acknowledge that the nearest Primary School, shop and ATM is in Coalbrookdale, accessed via Lincoln Hill, a single track highway with steep gradient and no pavement with no apparent enforcement of the 'Access Only' signage.
- Ability of existing pupils at Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge School to retain existing school places.
- Water tower and underground tank should be safely demolished / excavated avoiding any pollution.

5.1.2 **Cllr Nicola Lowery (Ward Member): Comment:**

- Impact on the character and setting of the listed building. The logic to separate proposal from listed building is acknowledged, it would be preferable for new development to have taken reference from the heritage asset.
- Concern regarding encroachment upon the listed building allayed following site visit the provision of more green space would have been welcomed.
- Consideration to the provision of a footpath in the new development.
- Management/maintenance of communal areas.
- Compliance of Belgrave house type with HQI benchmark.

- Use of simple plank doors on 'Denbigh' housetype may be more appropriate.
- Concern surrounding the sub-division of gardens, considered communal garden space would be more in keeping.
- Acknowledge that 23dph density is lower than average but consider site is overdeveloped in respect of wider context and impact on WHS principally:
 - Impact of additional traffic although comments from Local Highway Authority in respect of mitigation through contributions are awaited.
 - Keen to identify if number of dwellings can be reduced, and understand what traffic calming measures will be installed on Beech Rd to prevent traffic using Access Only.
 - Traffic Assessment does not sufficiently consider the impact on Hodge Bower, Church Hill, Church Road and Lincoln Hill, nor is it considered that the traffic movements could be comparable to that which could be generated by the existing hospital use.
 - Further consideration to the cumulative effects of Forbes Close development as Lincoln Hill provides access to school/nearest supermarket/cashpoint encouraging use of access only roads.
 - Concern regarding time period of which traffic counts took place.
 - TA identified speeding as an issue but does not address or acknowledge impact of development.
 - Development should contribute to enforcement of Access Only.
 - TA needs amendment to correct housing numbers.
- Development should contribute to Local Nature Reserve to improve access, signage and pond restoration to mitigate impact.

5.1.3 **Built Heritage Conservation:** Additional plans with commentary provided on the 23rd August addressed some issues raised. However, whilst the applicant sought to justify the wholesale replacement of the windows in the listed building and sub-division of the courtyards to the front of the conversions it is not considered that sufficient justification has been provided for either of these elements. However, generally supportive of the scheme which preserves and enhances a Grade II Listed Building following a comprehensive re-design of the new build dwellings.

5.1.4 **Historic England:** No response received at time of publishing report.

5.2 Neighbour Consultation Responses:

5.2.1 14 letters of objection have been received neighbours were also re-consulted following the receipt of the Transport Assessment on the 25th July 2016. Comments have been raised in respect of the following key considerations:

- Impact on the Listed Building

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Having regard to the development plan policy and other material considerations including comments received during the consultation process, the planning application raises the following main issues:

- Principle of Development
- Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale

- Preservation of the listed building, its setting, features of special architectural or historic interest.

6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the NPPF is a material consideration.

6.2.2 The 'Development Plan' consists of saved policies of the Wrekin Local Plan and the Telford and Wrekin Council Core Strategy. These will be replaced by the Telford and Wrekin Council Local Plan which is at an advanced stage of preparation having been submitted for examination.

6.2.3 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory obligation on Local Planning Authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

6.2.4 Members will note that Historic England had not provided a consultation response at time of publication of the report. This was due to a delay in consulting Historic England after recognition that they were a statutory consultee on the demolition element of the scheme. The 21 day consultation period expires on the 13th September, however in advance of this response Officers would outline that the statutory consultation relates to the following:

- The demolition of late c20th additions which the Purcell Miller Tritton Conservation Appraisal classified as being of Low Significance.
- The demolition of the link between Block G and B the ground floor which is of High Significance. The justification is that its removal is the only means of accessing the proposed dwellings in this area of the conversion. Given that this is the only building of High Significance that is being demolished on balance Officers consider this acceptable.
- The demolition of the Nursing Home. The revised Significance Plan states that the building is of low significance (originally it recorded it as low to moderate). This was amended following reference to page 24 of the Purcell Miller Tritton report which recorded the building as a late 1950's or early 1960's building of Low Significance. On this basis Officers have no objection to its removal.

6.2.5 Members should have the benefit of the Historic England comments when determining the application, however should this not be the case Officers would request delegated powers to approve the scheme as per the recommendation below on the basis that Historic England do not formally object to the proposal.

6.3 Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale

Appearance

- 6.3.1 The new builds will be delivered in the form of five different house types. All of the properties have been designed to reflect the simple Gorge cottage style rather than the more formal institutional architecture of the hospital. The designs have been based around rectangular footprints, built in a traditional brick and clay tile construction with timber flush fitting casement windows. The local vernacular architecture will be articulated through robust chimney stacks, brick-on-end headers and cills, eaves detailing and a limited selection of simple traditional porches. Officers have invested considerable time and effort in the fenestration details, with regard the location, proportion and design of windows and doors. Further attention will be paid to the intricate detail which will further enhance the buildings through the imposition of conditions requiring the production of sample panels of brickwork, submission of sections of windows and doors and rood details. It is therefore considered that the appearance of the new builds will preserve and enhance the character of this gateway to the Gorge. With regards the listed building existing detailing is being retained wherever possible and there will be minor alterations to some elevations including the insertion of rooflights, which have been reduced in number since the original submission.
- 6.3.2 Officers are content that the proposal will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of what is acknowledged as an important gateway to the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site (WHS) and the Severn Gorge Conservation Area.

Landscaping

- 6.3.3 In order to illustrate the potential visual impact, the developer has provided a Streetscape from Beech Road. This illustrates how the retention of the majority of the roadside hedge and specimen oak but with the removal and replanting of a short section of the boundary hedge will reduce views of the development. Additional trees will be planted on the southern side of this hedge within the gardens of the proposed properties in order to offer additional screening.
- 6.3.4 Internally the estate road has been design as a shared surface which will act as a traffic calming measure and allow the verge to be grassed. On the majority of the site a mixed native species hedge will be planted behind this verge with hornbeam, alder and birch trees planted to provide further soft landscaping. The scheme also proposes a sensitively designed Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) together with the retention of a semi-natural area which extends to 0.45ha that will be within the viewpoint on entry to the development. This landscaping in addition to the efforts that have been made to retain as many existing trees and hedges as possible is considered to facilitate the introduction of built development and mitigate its impact.

Layout

6.3.5 The total site area including the hospital extends to 3.5 hectares (ha) which equates to a density of 25 dwelling per hectare (dph). Furthermore, the site area of the new build, which is more visible from Beech Road, extends to 2.3ha equating to a limited density of 23 dwellings per hectare. Officers note that the Parish Council have objected on the grounds that the site appears to be over developed. However, officers consider the density to be low and respectful of this semi-rural location. The perceived density of the development is further reduced through the setting back of dwellings off the highway behind grass verges and driveways, front gardens are landscaped with mixed native species hedges and specimen trees. A sensitively designed local area of play has been sited within the centre of the development. The LEAP will be set within an informal landscaped area adjacent to a semi-natural area around the existing badger setts where the mature trees will be retained. This is considered to provide a sense of openness which further reduces the perceived density of the development.

Scale

6.3.6 The proposed development will be a traditional two-storey scale which is considered to be in keeping with the local vernacular of the Gorge cottage style and subservient to the more formal institutional architecture of the former hospital.

6.4 Preservation of the listed building, its setting, features of special architectural or historic interest

6.4.1 The scheme for the conversion of the listed building is based on an understanding of the significance of the composite parts and reasoned justification and evidence presented in order to justify the proposed works.

6.4.2 Within the conversion complex the scheme proposes four parking areas three of which will have communal walled bin enclosures. These are located in discreet areas and will be landscaped in order to soften the hard landscaping. Considerable discussion has taken place regarding the subdivision of the front garden areas with 900mm high metal railings, with Officers questioning the need for so much fencing in what was a communal institutional setting. The applicant has presented an argument that this defensible space is required to make the units saleable. It is accepted that the rear gardens which provide private areas require more privacy and this will be achieved through sensitively designed timber fencing and brick walls. On balance the use of three-bar estate metal railings in the front courtyards is generally acceptable.

6.4.3 The scheme also includes the demolition of the Nursing Home to the south of the site. Initially Officers strongly resisted the demolition of this building on the basis that the applicant's significance plan stated that it dated from the 1930's and was of low to moderate significance. However, following further investigation it was established that the highly detailed Purcell Miller Tritton Conservation Appraisal evidenced that the building was a later 1950's early

1960's addition which was of low significance, which allows for loss if it were to benefit the site or a building of higher significance. Officers are satisfied that the loss of this building and the design and form of the replacement structures will not harm the setting of the listed building.

- 6.4.4 The new housing scheme includes a semi-natural area around the badger setts where the mature trees will be retained, which will provide an appropriate degree of separation from the listed hospital. Careful consideration has been given to the siting of the closest dwellings and these have been moved further from the hospital to minimise any impact whilst special attention has been and will continue to be given to boundary treatments under the discharge of condition process.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The principle of the conversion of a Grade II Listed Building in 36 dwellings and erection of 53 new dwellings is acceptable under existing and emerging policy on the basis that the harm of developing the Green Network will be outweighed by the benefit of securing the long term preservation of the listed building.
- 7.2 The new building element has been carefully designed to both preserve and enhance this gateway approach to the adjoining World Heritage Site and Conservation Area with special attention to the proximity of dwellings to Beech Road and the streetscene elevations of dwellings on the site entrance.
- 7.3 Special attention has been paid to the proportions, design, fenestration detailing and materials of the proposed dwellings which take reference from The Gorge and are sympathetic to the listed building including scale, layout and landscaping including choice of boundary treatment. Furthermore, the proposed density has been limited to approximately 23 dwellings per hectare which is reflective of the local vernacular.
- 7.4 The scheme for the conversion of the listed building is based on an understanding of the significance of the composite parts and reasoned justification and evidence presented in order to justify the proposed works. Whilst Officers questioned the need for some much fencing in what was a communal institutional setting on balance this is accepted.
- 7.5 Following a detailed balance of all material planning considerations Officers are of the opinion that the proposal is a sustainable form of development and is in overall compliance with the Development Plan and NPPF.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Based on the conclusions above, the recommendation to the Planning Committee on this application is that DELEGATED AUTHORITY be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to **GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT** subject to the following conditions (with

authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager):

- | | |
|----------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. A05 | Time Limit – Listed Building |
| 2. B014 | Samples of materials - LBC |
| 3. B015 | Sample Brick Panel – LBC |
| 4. B020 | Details of windows and doors – LBC |
| 5. B091 | HE - Schedule of work Listed Building |
| 6. B092 | HE -Details of Services: Exterior |
| 7. B094 | HE - Roof Details |
| 8. B095 | HE - Details of heads and cills |
| 9. B100 | HE - Roof Lights |
| 10. B104 | HE - Features to be removed, moved or replaced |
| 11. B121 | Landscaping Design |
| 12. C005 | Windows white timber |
| 13. C38 | Developmental accordance with plans |
| 14. C066 | Making good |

Informative(s)

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| I40 | Conditions |
| I42 | Reasons for Listed Building Consent |
| RANPPF3 | Listed Building Approval - NPPF |