

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FORUM12 August 2015
10.00 - 10.55 am**Present****Planning Committee Members:** Councillors Blencowe, Dryden, Holt, and C. Smart.**Officers:**

City Development Manager – Chair: Lisa Lamb

Planning Officer: Amit Patel

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

Committee Manager: Sarah Steed

For Applicant:

Chris Green (Blues Property - Developer)

Dale Robson (Architect)

Nick Phillips (Architect)

Michael McKay

For Petitioners:

Jeremy Jones

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**15/7/DCF Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were declared.

15/8/DCF Induction by the Chair

The Chair outlined the role and purpose of the Development Control Forum. Those present were informed that no decisions would be taken at the meeting.

15/9/DCF Application and Petition Details 15/0908/FUL 14 Wort's Causeway, Cambridge CB1 8RL**Committee:** Planning Committee**Date:** 7th October 2015**Application No:** 15/0908/FUL

Site Address: 14 Wort's Causeway, Cambridge CB1 8RL
Description: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 2 no. detached dwellings with new access via Alwyne Road
Applicant: Mr Ian Purkiss, Blues Property Worts Ltd
Agent: Mr Dale Robinson DPA Architects Ltd
Address: The Gallery, 96 King Street, Cambridge CB1 1LN
Lead Petitioner: Jeremy Jones
Address: 12a Wort's Causeway, Cambridge CB1 8RL
Case Officer: Amit Patel

This is a petition asking Cambridge City Council to hold a Development Control Forum in relation to the following Planning Application:

Text of Petition:

The undersigned all object to the proposal in the above application for the demolition and replacement of one single-storey dwelling with two three-storey, detached properties. We believe that such intensification represents over-development of such a site and entirely out of keeping with the level of density in the local area. We also believe the impact on the privacy of the residents at number 15 Alwyne Road from the current application is unacceptable. We are also concerned that the applicant has failed to reflect the substantial gradient on their submission, nor included any comparable indication of roofline levels between the proposed houses and neighbouring properties which has made true consideration of the visual impact of the bulk of the properties impossible for planning services and planning committee. We believe the design of the properties is not in keeping with existing housing stock in the local area and that the boundary treatments are damaging to the character of the area and represent substantial environmental loss. We also believe there are design issues with the layout and configuration of the building plot, both on the practicality of the space and the breaching of the existing building line.

Do you think there are changes that could be made to overcome your concerns?

We support the brownfield redevelopment of the site, and welcome the current dwelling's replacement with further family housing. We would like the opportunity to discuss the options available, but dependent upon the changes proposed, we feel we would be inclined to support an application that limits development to a single dwelling, is of a maximum height in keeping with the

neighbouring properties, and minimises and mitigates against overlooking of 15 Alwyne Road.

Case by the Applicants:

1. The Petitioner's objections were broken down into six categories, which consisted of the principle of development, the impact to 15 Alwyne Road, breach of the established building line, natural gradient of the application site, design being out of keeping with the local area and boundary treatments which damaged the character of the area.
2. Pre-application advice was sought from the Council in December 2014, it was agreed that the sub-division of the plot was acceptable.
3. The street frontage of the proposed development was similar to 1 and 18 Wort's Causeway.
4. Concerns had been raised regarding the impact on privacy to 15 Alwyne Road.
5. The properties were designed with a flexible use in mind and care had been taken in the design to limit overlooking.
6. The distance of plot 1 to 15 Alwyne Road was 13.4 metres and from plot 2 to 15 Alwyne was 15.4 metres, these distances were consistent with distances locally. 12A Wort's Causeway had a distance of 14.1 metres from the adjacent property and 2 Alwyne Road had a distance of 10.7 metres to the adjacent property.
7. The properties had varied building lines.
8. Site levels had not been properly surveyed however this had now been undertaken. Site levels were to remain relatively unchanged. The land profile sloped down from the public highway, the gradient was fairly level.
9. The design of existing dwellings along Alwyne Road were circa 1960-70s. The character was varied with modern refurbishments and development.
10. The National Planning Policy Framework stated that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural style or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain developments forms or styles. It was however proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
11. The existing landscaping would be enhanced.

Case by Petitioner:

12. The goal was to work with the applicant but not to the detriment of the community.

13. Recognised the limitations of the current property and supported the applicant to replace the building however the development needed to be appropriate to the context of the site itself.
14. The four reasons for objection were overdevelopment, the design being inconsistent with the National and Local Planning Policy, unacceptable environmental impact and unacceptable impact on neighbouring property amenity.
15. The Planning Practice Guidance on Design stated that key consideration for new development was that it responded appropriately to the existing layout of buildings to ensure adjacent buildings related to each other, spaces complement each other. Layout should take into account the building heights in the area, effectively the context.
16. The density to the north side of the road was 16,788.18 square metres with 19 properties. The density to the south side of the road was 12,022.01 square metres with 11 properties. The density of the site itself was 679 square metres with two properties proposed; this did not reflect or complement the existing density.
17. The gardens proposed were very small and plot two did not respect the building line.
18. Two houses put in the space for one was dominant in relation to the rest of the houses.
19. Wort's Causeway was characterised by wide frontages normally two storey dwellings but could be single storey.
20. The application had a narrow frontage and had to be tall to accommodate the space, the ridge height being 9 metres.
21. Town houses had a reasonable design but in the right location not in a suburban area. This application did not reflect local design and did not safeguard or enhance local design.
22. Many existing properties were behind substantial trees, which was in contrast to the proposed new development.
23. Reference was made to Policy 3.11 of the City's Local Plan and the fact that the application eradicated almost all of the green infrastructure on the site.
24. The amenity of local residents was adversely affected and reference was made to Policy 3.10 and 3.29 of the City's Local Plan in relation to impact on neighbourhood amenity.
25. The points of objection were summarised as overdevelopment, design being inconsistent with National and Local Planning Policy, unacceptable environmental impact and unacceptable impact on neighbouring property amenity.

Case Officers Comments:

26. Each dwelling had its own amenity space and car parking, the bins and bike storage were to the rear of the site.
27. Following site visits it was noted that other properties, albeit with extensions encroached into the corner of plots. The proposal was designed to address the corner with plot 1 being set back.
28. The design of the buildings was with north and south facing windows with a pitched roof. The external finishing's were in modern materials.
29. Comments were received from a number of consultees:
 - Highways: A condition was required for a visibility splay to have no fences or walls exceeding 600mm. Members were reminded that this did not grant permission for works in a highway.
 - Environmental Health: The proposal was acceptable subject to conditions which related to construction hours, piling and dust.
 - Landscape Team: The proposal was acceptable subject to conditions which related to hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Members' Questions:

30. Why are two dwellings proposed and not one large dwelling on the site?
31. Was there a reason why the site had not been separated into separate plots?
32. What were the ridge heights and the window levels?
33. In relation to highways and access, would the hedge need to be cut down?
34. How many bedrooms would the houses have?
35. What was the advantage of two separate houses, could the properties be joined?
36. What were the parking arrangements for plot 1?
37. The boundary treatments were quite prominent, during construction if they were removed, would they be replaced?

Response to Members' Questions:

38. Pre-application advice from the Council was that the sub-division of the plot was acceptable as the applicant wanted to maximise their return from the site.
39. If the application was approved the dwellings would have their own plots at that stage. If the dwellings were moved to the left this would have required a loss of trees, if the dwellings were moved to the right this would have affected the access arrangements.

40. The ridge height was 8.6 metres with an eaves height of 5.8 metres. The properties were two and a half storey dwellings. The windows on the first floor were 900mm / 1100mm high.
41. In relation to the visibility splay, a condition would be imposed to prevent any fence or wall exceeding 600mm in height.
42. The properties had four bedrooms, a master bedroom in the roof space and then three bedrooms on the first floor.
43. The joining of the two properties could be considered, however two detached houses was preferred by the Applicant.
44. Plot 1 had two existing parking spaces in a tandem position.
45. The Landscape Team raised no comments during the consultation; however following objections from the Petitioner, a landscape proposal was produced. The north and west boundaries were to be retained and further hedgerows would be planted to soften the boundaries.

Summing up by the Applicants:

46. Felt the application addressed concerns most notably the principle of development.
47. The Sub-division of the plots was in accordance with the City Local Plan policies 3.10 and 5.1.
48. The views of the Council had been taken into account.
49. The design enhanced the setting and would provide high quality contemporary housing.

Summing up by the Petitioner:

50. The size of the plot was 29 metres squared; the more that the properties encroached into the depth of the site the more the garden size would be reduced.
51. If the applicant wanted to keep the existing dwelling and refurbish it, this would be acceptable.
52. The applicant stated that the area had a mix of semi and detached dwellings, there were only two semi-detached dwellings and these were next door.
53. The development was entirely out of keeping with the local area.
54. The main issues of objection were summarised as overdevelopment, the development was inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and local requirements, unacceptable environmental impact, unacceptable impact on neighbouring property amenity.
55. The substantial overlooking issue remained for 15 Alwyne Road.

56. The proposed development had the wrong design and was in the wrong location.

The meeting ended at 10.55 am

CHAIR