

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD – 14 November 2012**

### **UPDATE TO AGENDA**

#### **APPLICATION NO.**

12/1578M

#### **LOCATION**

Land adjacent to Coppice Way, Handforth

#### **UPDATE PREPARED**

13 November 2012

#### **REPRESENTATIONS**

One further letter of representation from a local resident has been received since the last meeting which notes that approval of this scheme would undermine the responses to the Draft Handforth Town Strategy Consultation.

#### **APPLICANT'S SUBMISSION**

The applicant has submitted further information in support of the proposal, which notes the following:

- The application is for a Continuing Care Retirement Community (Care Village)
- Cheshire East Council's Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee in the recent 'Residential Provision Review' issued on 5 July 2012 states at 8.33;  
*"The case for developing additional Extra Care Housing in Cheshire East appears strong. There is a wide range of national evidence which shows that they improve the health and wellbeing of residents whilst reducing costs. An evaluation of an extra care housing scheme in Bradford sought to understand both the costs and the outcomes delivered by the scheme. It found that the better health enjoyed by those living in the scheme meant that health care costs were lower (more than a 50% reduction), mainly through a reduction in the intensity of nurse consultations and hospital visits."*
- Handforth Health Centre are currently taking on new patients
- The original committee report is incorrect where it states that the proposed Care Village would operate differently to other models due to it not providing care services directly to the close care cottages. Care homes cannot legally provide care to anyone who is not a permanent resident of the care home. The delivery of care to the close cottages requires a separate registration under a separate entity as a domiciliary care provider. The level of integration is the same as most other care village models.

- Reference to the application being a departure from the Local Plan - as the Plan was an old style Plan (pre October 2004) and the saved policies are not accorded the same weight as those in the new style Plans as set out in the NPPF therefore limited weight should be attached to this application being a departure.
- Greater significance should be accorded to the Council's shortfall in their 5 year housing land supply, as has been done in other committee reports, not least to inform Members more fully as this supersedes the need argument put forward at Appeal (which has been satisfied).
- The application site is sequentially preferred to other sites that have been approved in the countryside (as they were not earmarked to meet future development needs) such as the one at Alsager at the rear of the Old Mill or Loachbrook Farm where the Council lost the Appeal.
- Members should be made aware that Adult Services obtained advice from a barrister to support their objection but this advice has not been made known and no new evidence emerged as a result.
- Members should also be reminded of their recent decision regarding the change of use to C2 for the hotel at Disley which was approved and the need to be consistent, there were no objections of proximity to the border, need or impact on local services nor any associated restrictive conditions. The hotel could be converted to a 90 bed care home as one of its C2 uses.

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

In terms of the comments raised by the applicant that are not addressed in the original report, it is acknowledged that care villages will vary in operation and extent of facilities, and the applicant's comments regarding the legal requirement for different care providers for the cottages and the care home are acknowledged.

With regard to the application being a departure from the local plan, this is still considered to be the case. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF explains that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the framework. There is reference to safeguarded land at paragraph 85 of the NPPF, and policy GC7 of the Local Plan is considered to be adequately consistent with the NPPF in this regard for considerable weight to be afforded to this policy.

The relevance of the Council's shortfall in our 5-year housing land supply is related to the use class issue outlined in the original report. Whilst the development would provide elderly persons accommodation, as a *sui generis* use housing policies do not strictly apply, which is why the affordable housing provision is not in line with the Council's Affordable Housing Interim Planning Statement.

Similarly, other, less sequentially preferable sites referred to by the applicant that have seen approvals for development in the countryside are for more traditional housing schemes, and are not therefore directly comparable.

No confirmation has been received from Adult Services whether a Counsel opinion was obtained by them.

The comments received from a local neighbour regarding the application undermining the public responses to the Draft Town Strategy are acknowledged; however, the issue of prematurity has been considered by Inspectors on other sites. Notably within the Loachbrook Farm appeal, where the Inspector identified that refusal on the grounds of prematurity would seldom be justified because of the delay which this would impose in determining the future use of the land.

## **ADULT SERVICES**

Comments have been received from Cllr Janet Clowes (Portfolio Holder for Health & Adult Social Care), which are attached with this update.

The comments from Cllr Clowes are acknowledged, however, it is considered that the applicant has adequately addressed the concerns of the Inspector within their needs assessment and sequential site search. In terms of viability, there is no planning requirement for the economic sustainability of the proposal to be demonstrated, and there is no evidence to show that the proposal would not be economically viable. There is a growing elderly population, and it is considered that there is, and will continue to be, a need to provide suitable accommodation to enable our aging population to live full independent lives for as long as possible. The proposed care village will be one way to achieve this and provide a wider choice in this area. Finally, no evidence regarding the impact on local health services has been presented.

## **CONCLUSION**

As in the original report a recommendation of approval is made as outlined on pages 76 and 77 of the agenda.