

**REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**22 August 2018**

**REFERENCE:** HW/FUL/18/00088

**OFFICER:** Ganesh Gnanamoorthy

**APPLICANT:** Harlow Council Regeneration Team

**LOCATION:** Garage Blocks  
19-52 The Readings  
Harlow  
Essex

**PROPOSAL:** Demolition of Garage Blocks and Associated Hard-Surfacing and Construction of 2 No. Accessible Bungalows and 1 No. Terraced Dwelling.

**LOCATION PLAN:**



**REASON BROUGHT TO COMMITTEE:** Council development and more than one objection received.

## **Application Site and Surroundings**

The application site hosts four single storey garage blocks, and is located off the south western end of The Readings, from an access road which is located between numbers 52 and 53 The Readings.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character.

The application site is not located within a designated conservation area, nor near listed buildings.

## **Details of the Proposal**

The Council seeks to demolish the four garage blocks and erect three new dwellings. All three dwellings would be affordable housing.

Two of these would take the form of a pair of semi-detached wheelchair accessible bungalows and these would be sited to the rear of Nos 49-52 The Readings. The footprint of the bungalows would be rectangular. The pair of dwellings would have symmetrical front and rear elevations and would have pitched roofs with front projecting gabled features. The dwellings would be finished in painted render, timber effect cladding, concrete roof tiles and PVCu fenestration.

The third new dwelling would be a new end-of-terrace property adjoined to the south of 53 The Readings. This would broadly follow the proportions of the remainder of the terrace, incorporating the same roof form and front and rear building lines. This dwelling would be constructed of brickwork with concrete roof tiles and PVCu fenestration to match the terrace.

Parking would be provided at surface level. 5 standard car and 2 disabled car parking spaces would be provided.

The existing access from The Readings would be widened, and resurfacing works are also proposed. New landscaping is proposed both fronting The Readings and directly adjoining the new dwellings.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

There is no relevant planning history on this site.

## **CONSULTATIONS:**

### **Internal and external Consultees**

#### **HDC – Consultant Arborist**

No objection raised subject to the imposition of conditions requiring a detailed landscaping scheme and an arboricultural method statement.

## **HDC – Cleansing And Environment**

No comments received.

## **ECC – Highway Authority**

No objection raised subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the parking, turning and access arrangements to be provided prior to the first occupation of the new dwellings.

## **Neighbours and Additional Publicity**

Number of Letters Sent: 28

Total Number of Representations Received: 3

Date Site Notices Expired: 15 March 2018

Date Press Notice Expired: 19 March 2018

## **Summary of Representations Received**

Two of the representations received object to the proposal. The concerns raised can be summarised as follows:

- Increased parking problems
- Construction works would cause congestion/parking problems

In addition to the two letters of objection, a neutral representation has been received, seeking confirmation that access to the bowling club compound to the west of the site would not be adversely impacted.

## **PLANNING POLICY:**

SD3: " Sequential Test" land allocation should have regard to the promotion of sustainable development; social inclusion, quality of life and wellbeing; preference given to previously developed land and existing buildings; facilitation of regeneration and there should be no loss of BAPs or damage to valuable ecology or biodiversity.

H4: "House Types" new housing and conversions will be required to accommodate a range of dwelling types which reflect the housing need requirements for Harlow.

H7: "Special Needs Housing" all new developments will be required to take account of the needs of those with disabilities and special needs.

H10: "Existing Housing Areas" planning permission will be granted for infill development if: the proposal does not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the character of the locality, the appearance of the street scene or the amenities afforded to occupiers of adjacent dwellings; off street parking and access arrangements are acceptable and do not prejudice the potential for comprehensive development of adjacent land.

T9:"Vehicle Parking" parking shall be provided in accordance with the adopted vehicle parking standards. Justification is required for the amount of car parking proposed on an operational need and, if applicable, a Green Commuter Plan.

NE11:"Trees and Hedgerows" in considering applications for development affecting trees or hedges the following may be required: a survey of the site and trees and hedges concerned; oppose the loss of trees and hedgerows of amenity value and wildlife importance; serve TPO's to protect trees with public amenity value; may impose conditions to ensure the retention or replacement of trees and hedgerows of amenity value or wildlife importance and their protection during construction.

BE1:"Character and Identity" new and extended buildings should relate to their setting to strengthen, enhance, protect or create local character. Permission will be granted for new development providing: it is well connected to and integrated with the wider settlement; the height massing, layout, appearance and landscape makes an appropriate visual relationship with that of the form, grain, scale, materials and details of the surrounding area; building design is specific to the site and its context; it enhances the character, image and perception of the area when highly visible.

BE3:"Sustainable Development" development on previously developed land at a higher density than that existing will be supported providing; it is accessible by public transport or is in a sustainable location relative to proximity to supporting services and/or employment sites; does not result in over development; is compatible with the character of the area and urban design policies and guidance.

## **PLANNING STANDARDS:**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018) - sets out the Government's key economic, social and environmental objectives and the planning policies to deliver them. These policies will provide local communities with the tools they need to energise their local economies, meet housing needs, plan for a low-carbon future and protect the environmental and cultural landscapes that they value. It seeks to free communities from unnecessarily prescriptive central government policies, empowering local councils to deliver innovative solutions that work for their local area.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents/Current Planning Guidance**

The Harlow Design Guide SPD (2011)

The Essex Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (2009)

Essex County Council's Adopted Development Management Policies (2011)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

### **Harlow Local Development Plan Pre-Submission Publication (2018)**

Harlow Council is in the process of submitting a new local plan to the Secretary of State for examination.

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF sets out that weight may be given to relevant policies in emerging local plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given); the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight may be given); and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The 'Harlow Local Development Plan Pre-submission Publication' (the 'emerging Local Plan') is the final version of the plan for consultation before it is submitted for examination.

The consultation closed on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

It is considered that the policies within the emerging Local Plan are consistent with the policies in the NPPF and that limited weight should be given to relevant emerging local plan policies at this stage. Relevant policies are discussed within the Planning Assessment section.

## **PLANNING ASSESSMENT:**

The key issues for consideration in the determination of the application are: the principle of the development; layout, design and the character and appearance of the area; landscaping; neighbour amenity; and access, parking, and highway safety.

### **Summary of Main Issues**

#### **Principle of development**

The application seeks planning permission for 3 no. infill dwellings on previously developed, brownfield land.

Policy H10 of the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan 2006 (ARHLP) states that planning permission for residential infill development will be granted provided that: the development proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the character of the locality, the appearance of the streetscene, or the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbour dwellings; off-street parking and access arrangement can be provided for both existing and proposed dwellings and that the proposal would not prejudice the potential for comprehensive development of adjacent land. Policy H2 of the emerging Local Plan reflects this.

It is therefore considered that the proposal should be accepted in principle, subject to the planning considerations highlighted in the following sections of this report.

#### **Design, layout and impact on the character and appearance of the area**

The proposed end of terrace dwelling would broadly replicate the proportions and design features of the existing terrace. The terrace will be extended, incorporating the same front and rear building lines as the existing dwellings, replicating the roof form and pitch. Matching materials would ensure that this new dwelling responds well to the architectural language of the remaining terrace, as well as the wider surroundings.

The bungalows to the rear would be lower in height than the surrounding properties, screened from the wider streetscene, and given their location to the rear of 49-52 The Readings, are considered appropriate because of their subordination to these dwellings. Subject to conditions to require full details of all external materials to be provided, it is considered that the development would be of high quality, and integrate well with the character of its surroundings. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with ARHLP policy BE1 and the Harlow Design Guide.

#### **Landscaping**

There is very little existing soft landscaping within the site, with two small trees at the access. These are proposed to be removed, with new landscaping proposed throughout the site.

The Local Planning Authority's Consultant Arborist does not consider the trees to be significant. The applicant has proposed to plant new trees as part of a detailed landscaping scheme which would be secured by way of condition. This could increase the amount of soft landscaping and trees throughout the site.

A further condition has been requested which would secure an arboricultural method statement in order to ensure that the proposed development works do not adversely harm the retained vegetation on site whilst ensuring that suitable access to the bowls club is retained.

Subject to conditions, there are no concerns regarding landscaping. The application is considered to accord with ARHLP policy NE11.

### **Neighbour amenity and living conditions**

The proposed end of terrace dwelling would be of a similar scale to those that exist in the existing terrace whilst the bungalows would be single storey structures. The size and siting of the new dwellings would have little effect on sunlight or daylight receipt to nearby residential properties.

The locations of windows and doors to all three of the proposed properties have been designed so as to ensure that no overlooking of existing properties would result. Neither would there be a loss of privacy or an undue sense of enclosure.

The living conditions and levels of amenity afforded to the future occupiers of the residential units would be of a good standard. In addition, the bungalows are wheelchair accessible which weighs in favour of the scheme, which accords with ARHLP policies H4 and H7.

A condition to control construction hours is recommended to ensure works are undertaken at appropriate times.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to neighbour amenity and living conditions and in accordance with ARHLP policies H4, H7, H10 and BE1 and The Harlow Design Guide.

### **Access, parking, highway safety and servicing**

The proposed end of terrace dwelling would be accessed directly from The Readings, in keeping with the remainder of the terrace. The two bungalows would be accessed from the widened access road.

The Essex County Council Parking Standards state that properties with 2 or more bedrooms should provide a maximum of 2 off street car parking spaces. One visitor space should be provided for every 4 dwellings.

The proposal provides 6 resident spaces (including 2 disabled spaces) and 1 visitor space. The proposal complies with the standard.

The Highway Authority has been consulted on the application and they have raised no objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of a condition ensuring that the parking, access, and turning areas are provided prior to first occupation.

It is noted that objections have been raised with regard to the reduced opportunities for parking in the immediate area, with particular concern given for those who use the hardstanding areas in front of the garages for parking purposes. The existing garages are too small to house most modern day cars and the hardstanding areas to the front of these are not designated as overspill parking. The loss of this area does not impact on the existing authorised parking capacity in the local area.

Access to the bowls club is to remain unaltered and a condition would be attached to ensure that access remains possible during construction.

With the above in mind, the parking standards have been complied with for the new dwellings and the scheme is considered to be acceptable in terms of access, parking, and highway safety and in accordance with ARHLP policy T9.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

The application would increase the supply of affordable housing and makes better use of underused brownfield land. The scheme would have a high quality design and layout and an extensive landscape scheme would be provided. No concerns are raised regarding neighbour amenity, access, parking, or highway safety matters.

The scheme is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework and is in accordance with the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan.

The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to the following conditions.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Committee resolve to: GRANT PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

**REASON: In order to comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.**

- 2 No development shall take place until samples of all external facing materials (including roofing, windows, doors, balconies and rainwater goods) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The relevant works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved sample details.

**REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with policy BE1 of the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan 2006.**

- 3 No development shall commence until details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:

- i) Means of enclosure and retaining structures;
- ii) Boundary treatments;

- iii) Hard surfacing materials;
- iv) Details to minimise discharge of surface water onto the highway
- v) Large canopied tree species within the car park areas and the use of subterranean crate planting systems;
- vi) Detailed method statement, including site preparation, planting techniques, aftercare and programme of maintenance for a period of 3 years following completion of the scheme.

The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details during the first planting season following completion of the development.

**REASON: To ensure satisfactory landscape treatment of the site in the interests of visual amenity and to prevent hazards caused by water flowing onto the highway, in accordance with policy NE11 of the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan 2006 and the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies 2011.**

- 4 No development shall take place on site, including site clearance, tree works, demolition or any other works, until an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The AMS shall be in accordance with current BS5837 recommendations. The AMS shall include a detailed Tree Protection Plan showing the positions and dimensions of protective fencing (including temporary ground protection and arboricultural supervision) to safe guard all retained vegetation whilst ensuring access to the bowls club is retained. The AMS shall include details such as level changes, demolition and construction techniques, location of services and drainage, design detail of structures, foundations and the control of potentially damaging operations such as burning, storage and handling of materials and access and parking of vehicles during construction.

The AMS shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

**REASON: To ensure that damage to vegetation identified for retention is avoided in compliance with policy NE11 of the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan 2006 and to ensure that mitigation measures do not block access to the adjacent bowls club.**

- 5 Prior to the first occupation of the development the access, vehicle parking and turning areas as indicated on the approved plans shall be provided, hard surfaced, sealed and marked out. The parking and turning areas shall be retained in perpetuity for their intended purpose.

**REASON: To ensure that appropriate parking and turning is provided in accordance with policy T9 of the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan 2006.**

- 6 Prior to the commencement of development a Construction Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall detail arrangements to ensure access to the adjacent bowls club is maintained throughout the construction period.

**REASON: To ensure that appropriate access to adjacent land is retained.**

- 7 No demolition or construction work shall be undertaken outside of the hours of 07.00 to 19.00 Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 on a Saturday. No work shall be carried out on a Sunday or public/bank holiday.

**REASON: In the interest of protecting nearby residential amenity, in accordance with policy BE17 of the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan 2006.**

- 8 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as shown listed in the table below.

<b>Plan Reference</b>	<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Plan Type</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
16/073/A/001	A	Location Plan/Existing Site Plan	28.02.2018
16/073/A/002	--	Existing Elevations	28.02.2018
16/073/A/003	B	Proposed Floor Plans	14.08.2018
16/073/A/004	A	Proposed Roof Plan	28.02.2018
16/073/A/005	A	Proposed Elevations/Sections	28.02.2018

**REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.**

#### **INFORMATIVE CLAUSES**

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address these concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

# PLANS:

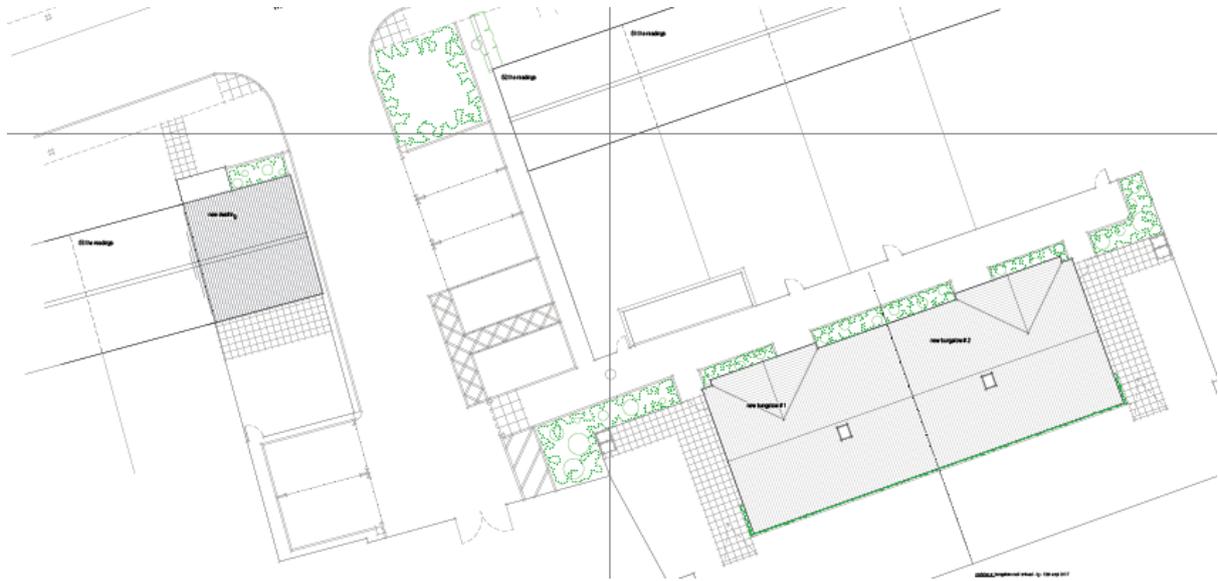
## Location plan



## Proposed site and Floor Plans



## Proposed Roof Plan



## Proposed Elevations

