

P/13/0919/FP

TITCHFIELD

MR RYAN & MRS CAROLINE
ALLEN

AGENT: AVITA PLANNING

NEW DWELLING WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING AND DRIVEWAY
247 TITCHFIELD ROAD TITCHFIELD PO14 3EP

Report By

Richard Wright - Ext.2356

Site Description

The application site lies to the west of Titchfield Road (B3334) between Stubbington and Titchfield and comprises a vehicular access track approximately 100 metres long leading to a parcel of land which in all is estimated to measure approximately 1.78 hectares. The site lies outside of the designated urban settlement areas of the borough within the countryside and within the strategic gap.

Crofton House, a grade II listed building, previously stood on the site before being demolished in 1974/75 following a fire which damaged the interior in 1972. The site now consists of the remains of the building's foundations and sub-terranean construction. Areas of concrete and asphalt hardsurfacing in poor state of repair are to be found at various points on the site with the ground otherwise being bare with some areas of rough grassland.

A dilapidated outbuilding stands close to the eastern border of the main part of the site. The main part of the site is bound by tree preservation order protected trees on its western, southern and eastern sides as well as peripheral shrubs and plants.

To the immediate west of the site lies the dwelling now referred to as 249 Titchfield Road, but previously understood to form an ancillary part of Crofton House and its surrounding estate. Further to the west lies a walled garden, again understood to have originally been part of the estate of Crofton House, within which construction work is currently being carried out to build a replacement dwelling at 251 Titchfield Road (see planning reference P/13/0505/FP).

Description of Proposal

Permission is sought to erect a new dwelling with associated car parking and driveway areas.

The new dwelling is proposed to be sited centrally within the plot within the footprint of the demolished Crofton House. The submitted designs show the house to be a six bedroom detached dwelling. The house would consist of two storeys with dormer windows in the roof providing accommodation at third storey level.

A hardsurfaced paved area would surround the house. To the front of the dwelling would be a new shingle driveway leading from the access track and providing parking and turning space. Access to the highway would be via the existing access track.

Policies

The following policies apply to this application:

Approved Fareham Borough Core Strategy

C18 - Protected Species

CS4 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

CS5 - Transport Strategy and Infrastructure

CS6 - The Development Strategy

CS14 - Development Outside Settlements

CS15 - Sustainable Development and Climate Change

CS16 - Natural Resources and Renewable Energy

CS17 - High Quality Design

CS22 - Development in Strategic Gaps

Approved SPG/SPD

RCCPS - Residential Car and Cycle Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document,

Fareham Borough Local Plan Review

DG4 - Site Characteristics

C18 - Protected Species

Relevant Planning History

The following planning history is relevant:

Representations

One letter of support has been received from the owner/occupier of 251 Titchfield Road with the following comments:

- The submitted plans are of a great design and would be aesthetically very pleasing to the general area.
- Utilising this land instead of leaving it as waste land would be of more general benefit.

One further letter has been received from the owner/occupier of 249 Titchfield Road supporting the proposal in principle but with the following concerns:

- Disproportionate scale of roof of proposed dwelling
- Design very different to a traditional Georgian building and not in keeping with no. 249
- Materials and landscaping details are critical in order to be in keeping with the area.

Consultations

Director of Regulatory & Democratic Services (Environmental Health) - No adverse comments.

Director of Regulatory & Democratic Services (Contaminated Land) -

It is noted that; the site was formerly used for car repair/storage/breaking, there are reports of fly tipping relating to the site, of regular bonfires at the site, there was a fire in the previous property on site, there is a dilapidated building on site which may have a corrugated asbestos roof (condition of which is unknown), it is adjacent to a large nursery site which may have used oil for heating the glasshouses and adjacent to a property that appears to have been used for vehicle repairs. It is not known to what extent these may have resulted in contaminants being present in the soil or if this is a risk to the proposed development and subsequent use.

This application could be approved subject to a planning condition.

Director of Planning & Environment (Highways) -

The access from Titchfield Road is generally of a good standard although it will be necessary for the applicant to be able to provide a visibility splay of 2.4m by 118m to the south by cutting back existing overgrowing vegetation. Additionally, to ensure convenient egress from the traffic flow along Titchfield Road, it will be necessary to resurface the entrance bellmouth back to the existing gates.

Subject to these aspects being covered, no highway objection is raised to this application.

Director of Planning & Environment (Arboriculture) -

There are no arboricultural grounds for refusal and I therefore raise no objection to the proposed new dwelling subject to conditions [tree protection method statement].

Director of Planning & Environment (Ecology) -

Awaiting updated comments following receipt of additional supporting ecological information on 17th January.

Planning Considerations - Key Issues

i) Site history

The planning history available for the site records the granting of permission for the conversion of Crofton House to a Children's Home in 1948 and the grant of Listed Building Consent for the demolition of the Grade II listed building following fire damage on 5 January 1973. The building was subsequently demolished in 1974 - 75.

Unauthorised uses took place on the site during the 1980s and into the 1990s. Council officers were evidently involved in investigating alleged breaches of planning control on the site. The following is a summary, but not exhaustive list, of submissions made in respect of development on the site during that time:

In 1985 an application for an Established Use Certificate for the storage, repair and breaking of vehicles and plant was submitted but refused (reference FBC.267/2). Following this, applications for planning permission for residential development on the site were submitted but refused in 1988 & 1989 (references FBC.267/3 & FBC.267/4 respectively).

Applications for Lawful Development Certificates for open storage (references FBC.267/5 & FBC.267/6) were refused in 1989 and 1990. An appeal against the Council's decision in respect of these two cases was dismissed in 1991.

ii) Current status of the site

It is acknowledged that the site was historically used residentially with the previous grade II listed Crofton House forming the main residential property on a wider site comprising its 'estate'. That building was however demolished almost 40 years ago and, besides the remains of the buildings sub-terranean construction, there is today no building that could be occupied for residential purposes. This period of time is equal to many examples of abandonment in case law. Despite the applicant's claims to the contrary in the submitted

supporting statement, there has been no intervening residential use of the site since at least the demolition of the building in 1974 - 75. Whilst residential development was sought through submissions made in the late 1980s this was 15 years after demolition. It is a further 24 years since those applications were refused. This does not represent an intention by the owner to continue the residential use of the property.

On the balance of the above considerations Officers consider that the historic residential use of the site has been abandoned. The land cannot therefore be considered to enjoy an extant residential use.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines previously developed land (PDL) as "Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure." Exclusions include "land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time."

Officers are not satisfied that much of the site falls within the description of previously developed land.

iii) Principle of development, visual impact on countryside and strategic gap considerations

The site is identified as being within the countryside and designated as part of a strategic gap.

There is a general presumption against new development in the countryside under Core Strategy Policy CS14 (Development Outside Settlements) which states:

"Built development on land outside the defined settlements will be strictly controlled to protect the countryside and coastline from development which would adversely affect its landscape character, appearance and function. Acceptable forms of development will include that essential for agriculture, forestry, horticulture and required infrastructure..."

The proposed development being residential does not fall under any of the above categories of acceptable development in the countryside and is contrary to this policy. There are no specific circumstances forwarded by the applicant to justify setting aside this policy stance. Whilst it is recognised there is an identified need for housing within the borough, Core Strategy Policies CS2 (Housing Provision) and CS6 (Development Strategy) explain that, in terms of land for residential development, priority will be for the reuse of previously developed land within the defined urban settlement boundaries. The application site is not within the urban area and it is arguable whether or not a large proportion of the site could reasonably be regarded as PDL.

Although there is some natural screening the site is open to view from Titchfield Road and a public footpath running alongside the fields to the south-east of the site from where a dwelling of the proposed size would be clearly visible. Views of the house from these locations would be harmful to the landscape character and appearance of the countryside.

Core Strategy Policy CS22 (Development in Strategic Gaps) explains that "development proposals will not be permitted either individually or cumulatively where it significantly affects the integrity of the gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements".

Saved Policy DG4 (Site Characteristics) of the adopted Fareham Borough Local Plan Review states that "development will be permitted, provided that it: (D) respects views into and out of the site".

The site has been devoid of any structure during the life of the Strategic Gap Policy so that its undeveloped character is significant. The views of the dwelling from the surrounding area would

significantly alter the perception of the undeveloped nature of the site to the detriment of the integrity of the strategic gap.

Officers consider the proposal is contrary to Policies CS14 & CS22 of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy and Saved Policy DG4 of the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review as set out in the above paragraphs. Consideration has been given to the guidance given in the NPPF, principally that "applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise", and also paragraph 55, but have concluded that there are no material factors which outweigh the harm to the countryside and strategic gap.

iv) Design and amenity considerations

Notwithstanding the fundamental policy objection as outlined above, Officers consider the design and appearance of the dwelling when considered in isolation to be of an acceptable standard. The proposed scale of the dwelling would not appear at odds with that of the adjacent dwelling at 249 Titchfield Road or the recently approved replacement dwelling at 251 Titchfield Road. The application gives little detail on the proposed use of materials, however this matter could be controlled by way of a suitable planning condition were the proposal considered to be acceptable in all other regards and permission granted.

There would be no adverse impact on the residential amenities of those neighbours living adjacent to the site.

v) Land contamination

The comments received from the Director of Regulatory & Democratic Services (Contaminated Land) recommend that, owing to the site's previous unauthorised uses and other observations made by Officers, further investigations into the potential for land contamination on the site should be carried out and necessary remedial works proposed where necessary. Had the proposal been found to be acceptable in all other regards it is considered such surveys and works should have been the subject of relevant planning conditions.

vi) Ecology

The supporting information submitted by the applicant was insufficient for Officers to be able to fully consider the potential implications of the development on protected species which may be present or their habitat. In response to feedback from Officers the applicant has prepared further information which was received 17th January 2014. At the time of writing this report this survey work is currently being considered. The full recommendations of the Director of Planning & Environment (Ecology) in respect of this information will be reported to the committee in the form of a written update prior to the scheduled meeting.

vii) Other matters

The Director of Planning & Environment (Highways) has raised no objection to the proposal subject to the provision of improved surfacing at the entrance to the site from Titchfield Road and adequate visibility splays at that junction. Such matters could be controlled by condition in the event that planning permission was forthcoming.

viii) Summary

The erection of a dwelling in this location would be contrary to countryside policy which seeks to prevent additional dwellings in the countryside for which there is no justification or overriding need. Furthermore the proposed dwelling would harm the landscape character and appearance of the countryside and would both physically and visually diminish the separation of settlements to the detriment of the integrity of the strategic gap. The proposal is contrary to Policies CS14 & CS22 of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy and Saved Policy DG4 of the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review.

Recommendation

Subject to revised comments from Director of Planning & Environment (Ecology) in respect of the submitted ecological information received 17th January;

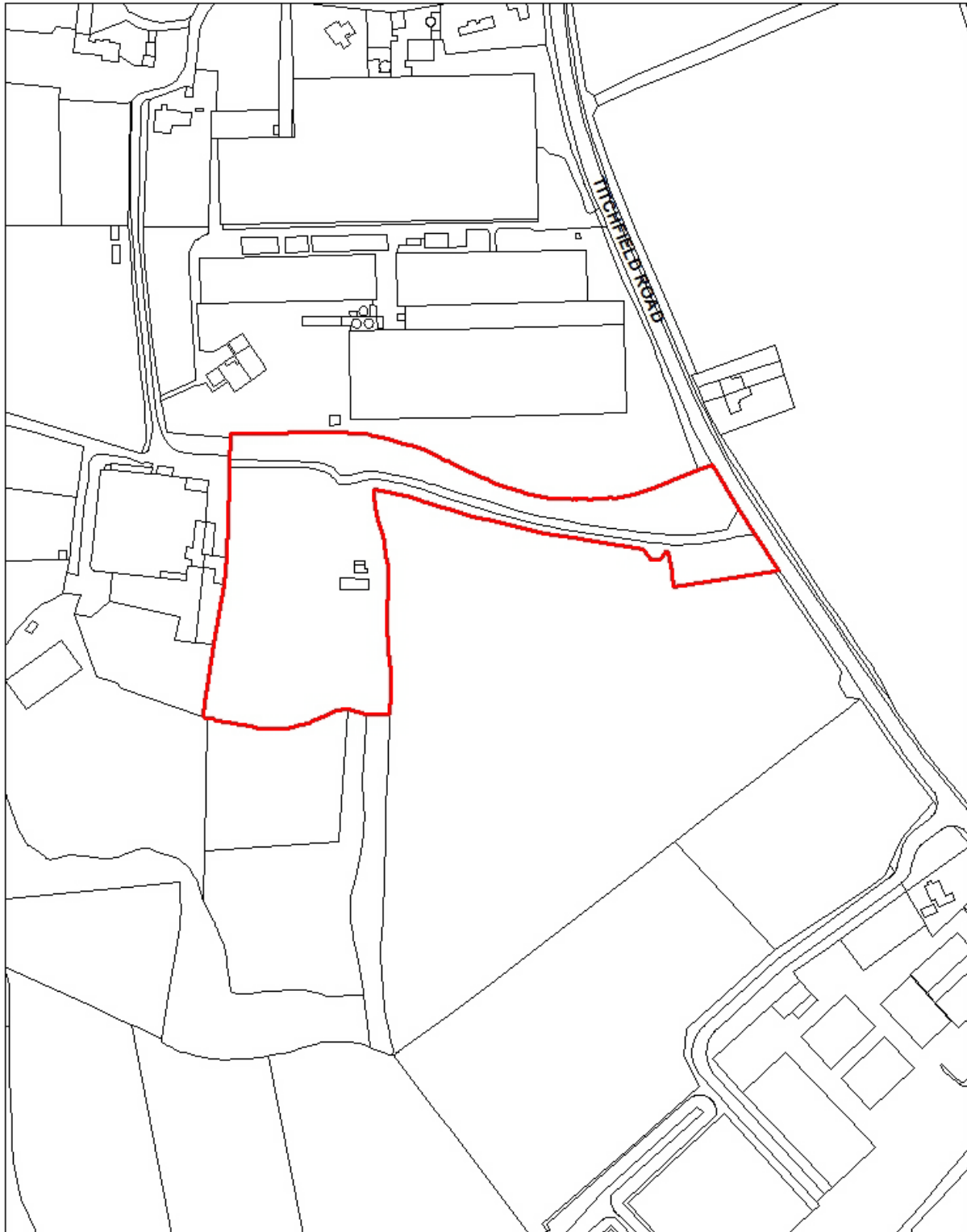
REFUSE: contrary to Policies DG4, CS14 & CS22; no overriding need for a dwelling in the countryside; harmful to landscape character and appearance of countryside and integrity of strategic gap.

Background Papers

P/13/0919/FP

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL



247 Titchfield Road
Scale 1:2,500



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