

## CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

**Notes of a Development Control  
Forum**

**Former St Colettes Preparatory  
School, Tenison Road, Cambridge**

**17<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

**10.00am – 11.30am**

**Application No:** 09/1142/FUL

**Site Address:** Former St Colettes Preparatory School, Tenison Road,  
Cambridge

**Description:** Erection of 12no 4 bed houses and 1no 5 bed house, internal  
access road and hard and soft landscaping following  
demolition of all existing buildings on site.

**Applicant:** ORO Ventures Ltd

**Agent:** Januarys Consultant Surveyors

**Lead Petitioner:** Irene Elia

**Case Officer:** Tony Collins

### **Present:**

<b>For Applicant</b>	<b>For Petitioners</b>
Colin Brown (Agent)	Irene Elia (Resident)
Chris Exley (Architect)	Andy Harter (Resident)
Mgeran Payeh (Architect)	Charles Norris (Resident)

### **Members of the Planning Committee**

Councillors Baker, Blair, Blencowe, Hipkin and Stuart.

### **Other Members in attendance**

Councillor Walker.

### **Declarations of Interest by Members**

Not applicable.

### **Officers**

John Summers (Head of Development Services - Chair), Tony Collins (Planning Officer) and James Goddard (Committee Manager).

### **Text of Petition**

#### **09/1142/FUL**

We, the undersigned homeowners and neighbours of the proposed development on the St Colette's School site strongly object to the building of the

three storey houses in this location.

Some of us fear being overshadowed and overlooked. Some of us fear a loss of privacy and of light. We are concerned about an increase in congestion on the surrounding roads and parking.

Some of us would prefer a school to replace St Colette's, as the neighbourhood is growing.

### **Case by Applicant**

Colin Brown made the following points:

- 1) The Agent has met and discussed the proposed design with City Council and resident representatives.
- 2) Buildings on-site are tired so now is an opportune time for redevelopment.
- 3) The site is owned by Jesus College who are considering a residential rather than education purpose in future.
- 4) The site has D1 usage and is 'white land' (not specified for a particular future use) according to the Cambridge Local Plan 2006.
- 5) The Agent is mindful of the impact of site redevelopment, such as on local trees.
- 6) There are no prescribed standards concerning amenities in the Cambridge Local Plan 2006.

Chris Exley made the following points:

- 7) Noted that existing buildings on site are single storey and surrounded by mature trees. However, neighbouring properties are two to three storeys high.
- 8) The close and wider neighbourhood around the site has influenced the application's design so it is sympathetic to the area.
- 9) The site design and layout are influenced by the style of neighbouring properties.
- 10) Properties are two storeys to the eaves, with a third in the roof, thus the same height as a normal two storey building.
- 11) Lime trees will be retained on the west of the site. Some other trees will be protected. Others on the north and south boundaries will be removed and replaced with smaller/semi-mature trees.

### **Case by Petitioners**

Charles Norris and Irene Elia spoke as local residents and raised concerns about the development. They made the following points:

- 12) Tenison Road is a quiet location where residents are close neighbours.
- 13) The proposal is an over development of a small site, with too many houses planned. This could affect quality of life for existing and new residents.

14) It was asked if the application could be rejected due to the following concerns:

- Noise.
- Overlooking/shadowing.
- Pollution and parking problems.

Andy Harter expanded on colleague's points. He made the following observations about resident's concerns:

15) The Petitioners feel the design contravenes local planning policies set out in section 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 concerning:

- Impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties.
- Inadequate amenity space, or vehicular access arrangements and parking spaces for the proposed and existing properties.

16) The separation of existing properties is different to the proposed layout for new properties. This leads to a sense of enclosure. It was suggested the site plan was based on out of date ordnance survey data.

17) Loss of privacy through overlooking and overshadowing from new properties into existing homes and gardens.

18) Traffic concerns – each new property has one allocated space and there are an additional five for visitors. Where can additional cars be parked for homes that have more than one car? This will add noise and stress to local parking issues.

19) Light pollution - light from windows will illuminate the rear aspect of Tenison Avenue properties.

20) Tree removal appears to be commercially motivated, rather than respecting environmental and planning policy.

21) Unacceptable visual impact - too tightly packed and visually overpowering for its setting.

22) The Petitioners feel the design contravenes local planning policies set out in section 5/11 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 concerning community facilities. They do not feel that it has been demonstrated that local need for a school has ceased.

23) There is a large body of opinion against the development from residents.

#### **Case Officer's comments:**

24) Plans for the development have been received and circulated to local residents and a major development notice published in local media. From this, responses have been received raising the following concerns:

- Principle of development.
- Character, design and appearance.
- Impact on neighbourhood amenities.

- Highways issues.
  - Insufficient car and cycle parking.
  - Opposition to tree felling and impact of construction
  - Lack of security for adjacent sites.
  - Impact on local water table.
  - Other site usage suggested.
- 25) Policy consultations have been undertaken with:
- Planning Policy Manager – raised objection as policy 5/11 not met.
  - Highways Agency - no objection, but conditions suggested concerning layout and site dimensions if application goes ahead.
  - Environmental Health - no objection, but conditions suggested if application goes ahead.
  - Environment Agency - no objection, but conditions suggested if application goes ahead.
  - Sustainable Urban Drainage Engineer - no objection, but conditions suggested concerning surface run off if application goes ahead.

**Members' questions and comments:**

26) Members raised concern that policy 5/11 was not met. The County Council has stated capacity issues are expected in reception and primary school classes. The nearby CB1 development will lead to additional pressure. Councillors asked the Case Officer to include details in his report to a future Planning Committee concerning County Council views on whether the site should be used for housing or education purposes.

The Case Officer undertook to provide details in the report. He has received advice from the Planning Policy Manager that the County Council has identified a deficit in reception and primary school places. This and supplementary advice from the County Council Education Department will be set out in the report.

Colin Brown acknowledged the Applicant has not met policy 5/11, as the site had not been marketed for education purposes. However liaison had been undertaken with the County Council Education Department and no issues were raised. The applicant felt residential rather than school use was more appropriate for the site. The relocation of the school to a similar site should meet some of policy 5/11 requirements. Colin Brown will also liaise with the school to provide evidence that others are being met.

27) Clarification was sought concerning the design configuration and layout.

Inspiration had been taken from adjacent streets.

The Design & Access Statement was signposted as a summary of options considered.

The client's preference was for a traditional style of building.

28) Clarification was sought on parking provision.

It is County Council policy not to include new residents in parking schemes for existing residents.

Nine properties have parking spaces allocated in the confines of the dwelling. Colin Brown acknowledged that garages were converted into living accommodation elsewhere on occasion. As the Tenison Road site would be a managed development, which a management company would oversee, conditions could be included in resident's contracts to enforce non-conversion of garages or on-street parking.

A car free site was considered, but the applicant took advice that it was desirable to provide one car parking space per property in line with market expectations. The applicant is looking to comply with Council policy on cycle parking provision, a bike and bin enclosure is available on the proposed site.

29) Clarification was sought on housing density.

Colin Brown answered that there was little difference in density of units per hectare when comparing site plans to existing housing. However he acknowledge that density would increase if the development went ahead.

Tony Collins noted Councillor's request for his report to contain advice about overlooking and overshadowing of planned homes onto existing ones. Also comparison details between proposed Tenison Road site housing density and that in Highsett to give a comparison. The site has a density of 40 dwellings per hectare, which meets PPS3 guidance.

30) Clarification was sought on the size of the proposed site.

The site is 0.32 hectares. Tony Collins noted Councillor's request for his report to contain details on housing height with reference to existing buildings.

### **Summing Up by the Applicant**

31) The Applicant acknowledged resident's concerns and is keen to discuss these. After discussions with the College, there maybe some scope to amend the proposal to bring the scheme forward.

32) It was suggested that parties concerned may wish to engage with the County Council Education Department concerning policy 5/11 in the context of developing a privately owned site.

### **Summing Up by the Petitioners**

33) Reiterated concerns previously raised with regards to:

- Over development of site.
- Potential to overlook neighbours.
- Configuration and orientation.

34) There maybe scope to overcome some objections if these concerns are addressed.

### **Final Comments of the Chair**

35) The Chair observed the following:

- Minutes of the Development Control Forum will be circulated to relevant parties.
- Application to be considered at a future Planning Committee.

The Meeting concluded at 11.30pm