

**7 DCCE2005/0032/F - RETIREMENT VILLAGE/
INDEPENDENT LIVING SCHEME WITH VILLAGE HALL
AND RESTAURANT, WELFARE AND RECREATIONAL
FACILITIES, ADMINISTRATIVE AND CARE FACILITIES,
SELF-CONTAINED ACCOMODATION UNITS AND CAR
PARKING. LEDBURY ROAD NURSERIES, LEDBURY
ROAD, HEREFORD**

**For: Elgar Housing Association Ltd, Hulme Upright
Manning, Highpoint Festival Park, Stoke On Trent,
Staffs, ST1 5SH**

Date Received: 7th January, 2005 Ward: Aylestone Grid Ref: 51997, 39932

Expiry Date: 4th March, 2005

Local Members: Councillors D.B. Wilcox and A.L. Williams

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site comprises a substantial roughly rectangular plot located in a set back position to the north of Ledbury Road. The site known as Unity Gardens was formerly occupied on a temporary basis as a community garden but is now disused, being characterised by a range of vacant buildings previously used in connection with its historic use as a nursery. A large area of land to the west of the complex of the buildings is laid to grass and whilst the site is predominantly undeveloped the buildings are visible from public vantage points around the site. It is however relatively well screened from the surrounding area by mature trees and coniferous hedgerows.
- 1.2 The site lies within the settlement boundary of Hereford and is designated as an Established Residential Area. Its residential context is principally defined by the properties forming Highgrove Bank and Bladon Crescent which occupy an elevated position to the east and north of the site respectively and provide a backdrop in views across the site from the south and west. In views from Ledbury Road, a landscaped context is provided by Unity Garden, which is designated as Public Open Space. The western boundary is defined by the Eign Brook and as such a proportion of the site lies within an area at risk of flooding. The Eign Brook is also designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- 1.3 Detailed planning permission is sought for the redevelopment of the nursery site in order to create an 'extra care village'. The scheme as proposed incorporates a total of 102 units (predominantly 2 bed apartments) to provide accommodation for elderly residents. The proposal takes the form of a roughly H-shaped block comprising a range of single, three and four storey elements utilising brick render and glazed elevation under a concrete tiled roof.
- 1.4 In addition to the residential element, the accommodation will incorporate a restaurant/bar and lounge, a communal hall space, a shop, health and fitness facilities,

a craft/hobby room, greenhouse, beauty salon, jacuzzi and sauna, IT suite, an assisted bathroom, library and reading room, woodwork room and an on site laundry.

- 1.5 The village facilities would be made available to non-residents living in the local community through a membership scheme and the supporting information provided with the application identifies that the accommodation within this scheme would be made available through a range of tenure options including long lease and affordable rent arrangements.
- 1.6 Access would be derived via the existing service road, which would be widened and provide an enhanced entrance to the proposed parking area. The scheme would retain public access routes through the site serving Bladon Crescent. A service road would be constructed along the north boundary of the site providing access for refuse and possibly emergency vehicles. The parking area which offers provision for a total of 45 cars would be located on the eastern side of the 3 storey accommodation block.
- 1.7 The scheme has been the subject of a number of objections from local residents, the City Council and Unity Gardens (the former occupiers of the site) and it is advised that at the time of writing there are a number of outstanding issues including submissions in respect of flood risk and nature conservation interest. However in view of the local sensitivity of this proposal and its relative scale, it is considered that Members of the Central Area Planning Committee would benefit from a site visit.
- 1.8 It is therefore recommended that the site viewing Sub-Committee visit the site during its next round of visit(s) in April/May 2005.
- 1.9 It is not at present clear when the full report and recommendation will be before the Central Area Planning Sub-Committee but it is anticipated that this would be at its meeting on 4th May, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

That a site inspection be held on the following grounds:

- **The character or appearance of the development itself is a fundamental consideration (encompassing scale and design issues)**
- **A judgement is required on visual impact**
- **The setting and surroundings are fundamental to the determination or to the conditions being considered (impact on neighbouring amenity in particular)**

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.