
Item No:	1	Reference:	B/10/00542/FUL
Parish:	LAWSHALL		
Location:	Willows Residential Home, Bury Road		
Proposal:	Erection of single-storey extensions to replace existing single-storey storage building to create 2 (no.) sheltered accommodation units.		
Applicant:	Willows Residential Home		
Case Officer:	Gareth Durrant	Date for Determination:	30 June 2010

The application is reported to the Development Committee because the recommendation is contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant planning permission.

THE SITE

1. The site supports the Willows Residential Home which has operated as such since the mid 1990's. Before that the building was used as a hotel (and previously a dwelling). The home has been extended previously in order to increase its bedroom capacity. This planning application relates to part of an existing outbuilding at the care home site positioned close to the existing vehicular access off Bury Road. It is a single-storey building currently used for low-key ancillary storage. It has cream painted render to its walls and a clay pantiled roof. The single storey range of this building is attached to a small weatherboarded barn with a slate roof.
2. The site is bounded on two sides (south and east) by agricultural land, including a modern agricultural building (south). To the north is 'Hawthorns', a dwelling on a large plot. The Bury Road Highway abuts the western boundary. The application site is situated within the countryside as defined in the Babergh Local Plan, although it is positioned in-between two built-up area boundaries (the edge of the first abutting the north site boundary and the second a short distance to the south).

THE PROPOSAL

3. The application proposes demolition of the existing single-storey range of the outbuilding and its replacement with a single-storey extension. Two small sheltered housing dwelling units would be provided within the new building to be operated in association with the residential home. The proposed extension would be of similar form, scale and appearance to the existing building, certainly with regard to its front (north) elevation. However, it would be slightly taller with a larger footprint (with two more obvious new single-storey projections to the rear). Each sheltered housing unit would have one bedroom with en-suite shower/wc room, and a kitchen/living room. One of the proposed units would slightly extend into the weatherboarded barn and would have slightly more internal space than the other unit. The replacement extension is proposed to be finished in painted render above a red-brick plinth. Existing pantiles would be re-used to the roof. The agent has confirmed a conversion/extension of the existing single-storey structure in this case is not feasible because of the need to meet certain space standards and the flexibility to meet wheelchair standards. Furthermore, the building is in poor condition and is unlikely to be capable of conversion without a significant amount of re-building.

4. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access statement, the content of which can be viewed in advance of the meeting by prior arrangement with the case officer.

RELEVANT HISTORY

5. 2009 – Planning permission granted for conversion of outbuilding to 2 (no.) sheltered housing units and erection of single-storey extension (existing store building to be demolished) (B/09/00568 refers).
6. 2004 – Planning permission refused for conversion and alterations to existing outbuilding to form 2 (no) holiday letting units. An appeal was made against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission and this was made (B/03/00524/FUL refers).
7. 2003 – planning permission granted for single-storey extensions to form 9 en-suite bedrooms, laundry, common room and increase in car parking facilities (B/03/00366 refers).
8. 2002 – Planning permission refused for single-storey extensions to form 9 en-suite bedrooms, laundry and common room (B/02/01626 refers).
9. 1998 – Planning permission refused for erection of 3 detached single-storey buildings for close care sheltered accommodation for the elderly (B/98/355 refers).
10. 1993 - Planning permission granted for 2-storey extension and second vehicular access (B/93/00963/FUL refers).
11. 1993 – Planning permission granted for change of use from hotel to residential home (B/93/00635 refers).
12. 1989 – Planning permission granted for side conservatory (B/89/00807/FUL refers).
13. 1989 – Outline planning permission refused for the erection of a dwelling (B/89/01754 refers).
14. 1985 – Outline planning permission granted and, subsequently, reserved matters approved for change of use to hotel and restaurant with extensions and other alterations (B/85/00654/OUT and B/85/00988/RES refer).
15. 1981 – Outline planning permission refused for the erection of a bungalow. A subsequent appeal was dismissed (B/81/00244/OUT refers).
16. 1972 – Planning permission refused for the erection of 3 dwellings. A subsequent appeal was dismissed (B/72/01587/FUL refers).
17. 1965 – Planning permission granted for extension to existing Dutch barn (S/64/950/M refers).

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

18. **PPS1** – Delivering Sustainable Development.
19. **PPS3** – Housing.
20. **PPS7** – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

PLANNING POLICIES

21. The Development Plan comprises saved policies in the Suffolk Structure Plan, adopted 2001, and saved policies in the Babergh Local Plan (Alteration No. 2) adopted 2006. The following policies are relevant to this proposal:

Suffolk Structure Plan, 2001

22. No saved policies relevant.

Babergh Local Plan (Alteration No.2) 2006

- **HS02** (New housing in villages)
- **HS03** (Sustainable and non-sustainable villages)
- **HS04** (New housing in the Countryside)
- **HS32** (Public open space provision)
- **HS39** (New nursing, residential care, rest homes and sheltered housing).
- **CR01** (Landscape quality)
- **CR07** (Landscaping of new development in the countryside)
- **CN01** (Design standards)

The relevant policies can be viewed on line. Please see Page 3 for details.

CONSULTATIONS

23. PC – Application supported.
24. LHA – Does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission.

REPRESENTATIONS

25. None received.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

26. Planning permission has previously been granted for the replacement of this single-storey building with two sheltered housing units (paragraph 5 above). That planning permission remains live and is capable of being fully implemented. The current application proposes a very similar development of two sheltered housing units as a replacement for the same building, albeit the units within the revised scheme are marginally larger (larger footprint) than the approved scheme. If planning permission is granted for this revised scheme, it would not be possible for the applicant to implement both planning permissions; the applicant would be in a position to choose which permission to implement (four sheltered housing units could not be constructed).
27. In light of the above, the principle of two sheltered housing units being erected at this site is established and it is not appropriate to consider the principle (or appropriateness) of the provision of these units at this countryside location (HS04 and HS29) as part of this latest application. The key considerations are the differences between the approved and currently proposed schemes.

28. The proposed 'extension' to provide the two sheltered housing units would have a deeper plan than both the existing structure and the previously approved extension. The building would have a deeper gable (5.4m deep in comparison to 4.9m as previously approved) providing a larger internal floorspace to each unit. Furthermore, each unit would have a small projecting 'extension' (2m x 3.55m) not proposed in the approved scheme. With the exception of these 'enlargements' and other minor changes to window and door positions, the application proposal takes on a similar external appearance to the previously approved building.
29. The larger replacement extension to provide the 2 sheltered housing units would not have a significantly greater impact than the approved scheme. There would be no adverse impacts upon the character and appearance of the countryside and no neighbouring properties would be affected. Furthermore, ample parking would be provided within the communal parking area as a whole for the residents and visitors of the proposed units.

Planning Obligations

30. Policy HS32 of the adopted Local Plan requires all applications proposing new dwellings to make provision for public open space. This is either in the form of on-site provision (minimum of 10% of the application site area) or off-site provision in the form of a commuted payment. In this case, given the nature of the application, it is unlikely the occupiers of the sheltered housing units would place additional demands upon the existing public open spaces and other public recreation facilities in the village. It is more likely the residents would share the gardens of the care home with existing residents and use their private garden space which is to be provided for both units. Accordingly, a payment towards off-site public open space provision/improvement open space provision is not considered appropriate in this case and, indeed, was not secured from the previous planning permission at this site for a similar development of 2 sheltered housing units.

Other issues

31. The planning permission already granted for two sheltered housing units at this site was subject to conditions, one of which required the units to be occupied for purposes ancillary to the use of the Willows Care Home. It is recommended that the same condition is imposed upon the fresh proposals, should planning permission be granted.

REASON FOR APPROVAL

32. The proposal for the erection of a replacement extension to an existing barn to form 2 (no.) sheltered housing units in association with the existing residential care home operating from the site accords with the provisions of policies HS39, CR01 and CN01 of the Babergh Local Plan, Alteration No.2 (2006). The provision of 2 (no.) sheltered housing units represents acceptable expansion of the existing care facilities at this site. The proposals would have no significant impacts upon the character or landscape qualities of the surrounding countryside, nor upon the amenities of occupiers of nearby dwellings. Furthermore, the form, design and external materials of the proposed extension are acceptable and there would be no significant effects upon highway safety or traffic convenience. There is currently ample provision for off-street parking for the occupiers and visitors of the proposed development within the existing communal car parking areas.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to conditions, including:

- Occupation of the sheltered housing units ancillary to the use of the Willows Residential Care Home.