

Proposed Development
Land to Rear of 135 and 137 Fronks Road
Dovercourt
Essex
CO12 4EF

Background

This full planning application seeks planning consent for the construction of five new bungalows on land to the rear of 135 and 137 Fronks Road. The proposed site is at the rear of the existing long gardens to the south of the properties and has an area of 0.19 hectares.

The proposal has been the subject of a pre-application submission (23/30060/PREAPP) with the council's officer's and the conclusion was that the principle of the development was acceptable in this location.

Site and Context

The application site slopes from the north to the south and abuts the rear boundary of properties in Gordon Road that are around 20 metres from the boundary. The gardens of the houses facing Fronks Road are generally over 100 metres in depth and can easily accommodate development whilst retaining good sized garden commensurate with the sizes of the properties.

To the west of the site a new development is under construction, known as Orchard Gardens. This scheme was granted planning consent in 2020 for the construction of 9 dwellings (ref 20/01153/FUL) and varied in 2022 (ref 22/01227/VOC) to allow a change on some plots from houses to bungalows. The scheme under construction is now predominantly bungalows.

The site is within the Settlement Development Boundary for Dovercourt and can be considered as a sustainable location with good access to local services and facilities.

The area of land around the application site benefits from well established planting including some protected trees. The proposal has been carefully designed to avoid any impact on the existing mature trees.

Access

Access to the site will be from the new Orchard Gardens development. The applicants have reached an agreement, with the developers of that site, for access over the new road that links with Fronks Road, subject to the granting of planning consent for this proposed development. The new access will be a private drive serving the five new bungalows and incorporating a size five turning head. Parking spaces for two vehicles for each property are to be provided in accordance with the council's policy and provision made for cycle storage where garages are not provided with the house.

Design

The design of the proposed scheme for bungalows has been carefully considered to minimise any impact on the neighbours and to be consistent with the design approach taken on the

Orchard Gardens development adjacent. The location, layout and the inclusion of good quality landscaping contribute to the creation of a sense of place.

The single storey nature of the proposals with good separation distances to all nearby dwellings reduces any impact of overlooking or loss sunlight or daylight to neighbouring dwellings.

It can be considered that the proposal may constitute a form of back land development. The councils Policy LP8 of the adopted Local Plan requires that proposals for the residential development of back land sites comply with certain criteria. We believe that the proposals do meet the necessary criteria, as agreed within the pre-application response from the council, and as set out below.

- a) Where the development would involve the net loss of private amenity space serving an existing dwelling, that dwelling must be left with sufficient area of private amenity space having regard to the standards in this local plan.*

135 Fronks Road and 137 Fronks Road will retain 580 m² and 940 m² respectively, of private amenity space, well in excess of the council's minimum standard of 100 m²

- b) A safe and convenient means of vehicular and pedestrian access / egress must be provided that does not cause undue disturbance or loss of privacy to neighbouring residents or visual detriment to the street scene. Long or narrow driveways will not be permitted.*

The proposal creates an extension off the existing road on the adjacent development that is constructed to current highway standards. The possible noise disturbance that might be created by the five additional dwellings, to the dwellings in Orchard Gardens, will not be significantly above that from the use of the road as laid out now.

- c) The proposal must avoid "tandem" development using a shared access.*

The proposal using the existing road network does not result in tandem development.

- d) The site must not comprise and awkwardly shaped or fragmented parcel of land likely to be difficult to develop in isolation or involve development which could prejudice a more appropriate comprehensive development solution.*

The application site is a regular shape parcel of land with a comprehensive development proposal which meets these criteria.

- e) The site must not be on the edge of defined settlements where likely to produce a hard urban edge or other form of development out of character in its particular setting; and*

The application site is well within the settlement boundaries. There is existing development sited to the north, east and south with a development under construction to the west therefore meeting this requirement.

- f) The proposal must not be out of character with the area or set a harmful precedent for other similar forms of development.*

The development of the Orchard Gardens scheme adjacent to the application site established the principle of development behind the established building line and as noted the site is surrounded by other development. The proposed design follows the design features of the adjacent development and will have the feel of a continuation of that scheme, and thus very much in character with the area.

The design and layout of the scheme has also taken into account the points raised by officers in the pre-application response.

Trees and Landscape

As noted, the proposals do not have a particular impact on the existing trees with just the removal of several fruit trees and a section existing hedge. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment accompanies this application, and this has informed the layout of the proposed scheme to avoid impact on the root protection areas of the existing trees.

A landscape proposal for the site also forms part of this planning application.

Ecology

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is included with this application that concludes that the site is of low ecological value, with limited habitats and with limited scope for protected species other than nesting birds. Opportunities for enhancement have been included within the landscape proposals.

Flooding and Drainage

The site is within Flood Zone 1 indication a low probability of flooding from rivers or sea. As shown on the Environment Agency mapping likewise the risk of flooding from surface water or from reservoirs is also very low.

Contamination

The site has been in garden use since the construction of the houses in the 1930's and there is no evidence of contamination on the site or sources of contamination. We are advised that no contamination has been encountered during the construction works on the abutting Orchard Gardens site. A watching brief will be kept on site during the construction works in accordance with usual practice.

Energy and Sustainability

Due consideration has been given to the design of the bungalows that will be constructed to the new Building Regulation standards. These standards are a step change in requirements from the previous regulations relating to thermal performance. In addition to high thermal efficiency each bungalow will incorporate 3.2kW of photovoltaic panels that will represent a 25.53% renewable energy contribution to each property.

Electric car charging points or provision for it will be provided to each property.

An energy statement prepared by NRG Consulting accompanies this application.

Conclusion

This proposal for five new bungalows is sited within the established settlement boundary of Dovercourt, with easy access to shops and local facilities and good access from the neighbouring development. As noted in the council's pre-application response that while the proposal represents a form of back land development, no significant harm has been identified.

The proposals now submitted have addressed the need for careful landscaping and it can be seen that there is no harm to neighbouring amenities. The proposal contributes to the need for this type of housing within the district, and has been carefully considered to take account of ecology and sustainability. We hope that this detailed application will be supported by the council.

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