

SIDMOUTH SIDFORD  
(Sidmouth)

08/00950/FUL

Target Date: 30/05/2008

Applicant: Hartford Care (Southern) Ltd

Location: Malden Retirement Home 69 Sidford Road Sidmouth

Proposal: Two storey extension

### **CONSULTATIONS**

#### **County Highway Authority**

Recommends REFUSAL for the following reason:

“The increased use of the access onto the Public Highway, resulting from the proposed development would, by reason of the limited visibility from and of vehicles using the access and substandard geometry, would be likely to result in additional dangers to all users of the road and interference with the free flow of traffic contrary to policy TR10 of the Devon County Structure Plan.”

The development would result in an increase of nine bedrooms in addition to the existing 19. With regards to parking the provision of seven off-road car parking spaces for 28 bedrooms (residents) would comply with the Local Plan policy (TA9) on parking.

It is a concern that no provision within the site would be made for service/delivery vehicles but it is noted that no such facilities appear to exist at present. Presumably all operations of this nature take place from the road.

I am concerned that the existing access is substandard in that while visibility to the right when emerging could be made to full standard by setting back the premises sign and cutting back the surrounding vegetation, visibility in the opposite direction is totally obscured by a roadside boundary hedge. In addition, the geometry of the access is poor in that the junction radii are substandard and the gradient of the drive is steep.

It may be possible to relocate the access slightly (to improve its geometry) and providing the necessary 2.4m x 60m visibility in the northerly direction by securing control of the adjoining hedgerow, but as the application stands I would recommend refusal on the grounds that the development would lead to an increase in use of a substandard access.

### **TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL**

APPROVE subject to conditions that:

1. No trees and/or vegetation be removed
2. Protection of the amenity to 11A is essential and any overlooking windows must be opaque and non-opening.

NOTE: Trees must be protected prior to any commencement of work. A landscaping scheme might well alleviate some fears of residents nearby and be worthwhile.

### **WARD MEMBER(S)**

No comments received.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

### **Objections**

from six households on surrounding sites raising the following points:

- Loss of privacy/overlooking of private gardens;
- Scale and design of building out of proportion and character with immediate neighbourhood;
- Overdevelopment of the site – original building already extended many times;
- Worsening of existing parking problems on Malden Road opposite site;
- Additional use of dangerous access;
- No access for emergency vehicles to rear of building;
- Increased noise disturbance, and
- Potential damage to foul drain on adjoining site.

### **Comments/Support**

From one household raising the following points;

- Design avoids overlooking
- Screening trees on north east boundary must stay (although their height could be trimmed by about 2 metres)
- The ground floor sluice room should have its window fixed and obscured.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

<b>App. No:</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Date</b>
05/P1232	Conservatory	Approved	21.06.2005
01/P1530	Extension (revised)	Approved	27.09.2001
01/P0015	Extension	Approved	14.02.2001
98/P0080	Alterations and extension	Approved	23.02.1998
92/P0837	Two storey extension to form lift enclosure	Approved	26.06.1992
88/P2300	Loft conversion to form owners accommodation	Refused	16.12.1988
88/P0047	Dining room extension	Approved	15.02.1988
86/P0453	Erection of detached dwelling and re-siting of existing vehicular access	Refused	29.04.1986
86/P0374	Bedroom extension	Approved	08.04.1986
84/P0580	Extension	Approved	21.05.1984
82/P0834	Extension	Approved	20.08.1982
75/C0349	Change of use from private abode to old persons home	Approved	09.03.1976

## **PLANNING POLICIES**

### **Government Guidance**

PPS1 – (Delivering Sustainable Development)  
PPG13 – (Transport)  
PPS23 – (Planning and Pollution Control)  
PPG24 – (Planning and Noise)

### **Devon Country Structure Plan (2001-2016)**

Policy ST1 – (Sustainable Development)  
Policy ST3 – (Self Sufficiency of Devon's Communities)  
Policy ST4 – (Infrastructure Provision)  
Policy ST15 – (Development Priority 2001 to 2016)  
Policy CO6 – (Quality of New Development)  
Policy CO11 – (Conserving Energy Resources)  
Policy CO16 – (Noise Pollution)  
Policy TR1 – (Devon Travel Strategy)  
Policy TR2 – (Co-ordinating Land Use/Travel Planning)  
Policy TR5 – (Hierarchy of Modes)  
Policy TR7 – (Walking and Cycling)  
Policy TR10 – (Strategic Road Network)

### **East Devon Local Plan (1995-2011)**

Policy S4 – (Development Within Built-up Area Boundaries)  
Policy S7 – (Infrastructure Related to New Development)  
Policy D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness  
Policy D2 – (Sustainable Construction)  
Policy D3 – (Access for the Disabled)  
Policy D4 – (Landscape Requirements)  
Policy EN15 – (Control of Pollution)  
Policy EN18 – (Adequacy of Foul Sewers and Sewage Treatment Works)  
Policy EN21 – (Surface Run-Off Implications of New Development)  
Policy TA1 – (Accessibility of New Development)  
Policy TA7 – (Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access)  
Policy TA9 – (Parking Provision in New Development)

## **SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

The Residential Home subject of this application was originally a two storey dwelling to which has been added a number of extensions, in part on the south east, and with a two storey rear wing extending along the south western boundary (aligning with Malden Lane). A collection of single storey buildings (garage, glass house, sheds) are set on the north side of the building.

Surrounding properties are residential, comprising detached dwellings set within reasonably sizable gardens.

A row of dense conifers runs along almost a third of the length of the site's boundary with no. 11A Newlands Close, on the north side of the plot. Other significant vegetation is located on the site frontage and towards the rear of the site adjoining Malden Lodge. The site is located within the built up area of Sidmouth, but outside Sidford's Conservation Area. It has a 30m frontage onto Sidford Road (the A 375) with a vehicular access at the north eastern point dropping down to the carriageway level (and separated from it by a narrow footway on this side of the road). Public views into the site are principally from Sidford Road to the south east and from the

carriageway of Newlands Close to the north, from which the most recent rear wing extension can be most clearly seen.

## **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of the numerous outbuildings on the north side of the plot and the erection of a two storey mainly rear wing extension, of rendered walls, slate roof and with sash windows to match those on the principal building. The new accommodation would comprise 9 new bedrooms, all with en-suite facilities, an additional first floor bathroom and store and a further sitting area and conservatory, new store and office rooms. The block would be between 1 and 5 metres from the site boundary. Only two windows and one unglazed door (to serve a first floor landing, a ground floor sluice and a garden store respectively) are indicated for the north east-facing elevation of the new block (towards the rear gardens of nos. 11, 11A, 15 and 17 Newlands Close). Other fenestration, including three first floor and three ground floor sets of French windows, would face onto the inner courtyard that would be created by the development. A further first floor French window pair would be set in the north west of the development, with a balcony above the large windows serving the new sitting room, facing towards the rear of the plot, some 19 metres from this boundary with a neighbouring residence (Malden Lodge). The new block would be cut into the rising ground of the plot.

Five car parking spaces are indicated at the front of the building to be finished in grasscrete. No trees or hedges are marked for removal.

## **CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT**

The main planning considerations relevant to this application are:

- the principle of the development;
- the design of the proposal;
- its impact on the amenity of the area and of nearby residents;
- parking, access (including disabled access) and transportation issues; and
- drainage matters.

### Principle of Development

The site lies within the built up area of Sidmouth where development will be permitted (Policy S4) if it would be compatible with the character of the site and its surroundings (among other criteria).

### Design and Sustainability

The proposed extension picks up a number of themes from the original host building: - wall and roof materials, a common eaves line with earlier extensions (subserving to that of the main house) and a vertical emphasis for the windows. However, the proposed block would be a rather more uniform element (length of unbroken ridge, common eaves, and regular span) than the other parts of the existing Home, in particular when viewed from the north east.

From Sidford Road, the front and part side of the new block would be read with the building, against the skyline. From Newlands Close, the proposed extension would be seen behind and between the detached houses on the southern loop of the close, in front of (and so obscuring) the presently visible façade of the existing wing along the south western boundary. Trees on the Malden Lane site edge would provide some backdrop to the development.

### Amenity Impact

The proposed extension would present a stark two-storey and roof plane built edge onto the rear gardens of property in Newlands Close, at very close range to the boundary. While no habitable

room windows are proposed in the north east elevation of the building, so that overlooking is considered not to be a problem, the mass and form of the proposed block would be oppressive in comparison with the aspect from these private garden spaces currently enjoyed. The retention of a line of conifers on this boundary is cited by the affected neighbours as being crucial to their agreement to the scheme – the loss of this important visual baffle would result in an objection being lodged. The application states an intention to retain these conifers, but the proximity of the proposed building to this vegetation (shown on plan as less than a metre to the boundary centre line) indicates that some at least may be damaged and lost by the construction work. The prominence of the new building would be exaggerated further by such vegetation loss.

The concern relating to potential overlooking of property to the north west is not supported, as distance to this boundary from the proposed development (nearing 20 m) is adequate, and the build project would not appear to jeopardise the existing tree and hedge screening on this boundary.

Noise disturbance from the proposed development is also not felt to be a likely problem, as only passageways and office/store rooms would be placed on the “outer” side of the building, with little fenestration and only one door onto the small space between the extension and the boundary through which noise could be conveyed.

#### Access and Transportation

Delivery vehicles do encounter problems at the property, as without a turning head on site reversing onto the A 375 is particularly dangerous. Instead, delivery vehicles block one side of the carriageway when making a delivery, which also causes danger and inconvenience. The objection of the Highways Officer to the increased use of this substandard access is supported.

#### Disability Discrimination Act

The development would need to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations with regard to disabled access.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

It is considered that the proposed extension would be an unacceptably bulky and bland structure within the overall retirement home complex, visible from and damaging to the appearance of the public realm, and to the enjoyment of the private residential amenities of neighbouring residences. The highway objection to the scheme is supported.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The increased use of the access onto the Public Highway, resulting from the proposed development would, by reason of the limited visibility from and of vehicles using the access and substandard geometry, would be likely to result in additional dangers to all users of the road and interference with the free flow of traffic contrary to Policy TR10 (Strategic Road Network) of the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016.
2. The proposed extension would be an unacceptably bulky and bland structure within the overall retirement home complex, visible from and damaging to the appearance of the public realm, and to the enjoyment of the private residential amenities of neighbouring residences.  
By reason of its form, scale, aspect, design and proximity to the site boundary the proposed extension would comprise a cramped development of the plot, which would damage the privacy, tranquillity and outlook of the occupiers of nearby residences, and which would make an unattractive, bulky imposition on the character and appearance of

the street scene. The proposal would fail to achieve a satisfactory standard of design and neighbourliness, and would not comply with the requirements of national and local planning policy and guidance as set out in PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development, and Policy CO6 (Quality of New Development) of the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 and Policies S4 (Development Within Built-up Area Boundaries), and D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the East Devon Local Plan 1995 - 2011.

#### List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report.

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