

Proposed Redevelopment

Parkside, London Road, Ipswich

13th November, 2017

Project No: 1765

Concept Statement



1.0 Introduction

The site is the grounds of a former residential villa that lies adjacent to the southwest boundary of Chantry Park. The former house is currently used as an office for a publishing company and its cellular nature and domestic floor plan are not well suited to modern office use and are well below the standards of accessibility that purpose built offices provides. The business is also looking to expand so requires additional accommodation. With this in mind Nicholas Jacob Architects have been appointed to look at the options for releasing value from the site to assist in the expansion of the business, whether at the current location or relocating. Due to the current conditions in the property market residential use offers the best return on investment to assist with the growth of the business.

2.0 Background

The use of the site as a house, Parkside, and grounds seems to have started between 1904 and 1926 based on Ordinance Survey historic mapping. The house was originally sited in substantial landscaped grounds. It seems that the tree planting that related to the South Lodge that served the former estate of "The Chantry" was extended over what now forms part of the proposed site during this period. The grounds of Parkside has been subdivided over the years to the west of the house. The original outbuildings that lay to the east of the house has been demolished and now their site is used as car parking.

The site contains a large number of mature trees, with a number of Tree Protection Orders relating to groups of trees. Lying in close proximity to the Ipswich Borough Council public park the groups of trees contribute to the landscape although not to the specific heritage of the park. As such the need to work with the setting and mitigate the impact of any development is key to any proposals for the site is identified as the prime concern. These considerations prompted the commissioning of an arboricultural report that will allow developed design solutions to take account of those trees in condition to be retained or of significance in the landscape.

The site is generally of low habitat potential other than the roosting potential of the mature trees as the ground cover is either gravelled car park or mown grass and there is little undergrowth under the tree canopies.

The site is on the periphery of the county town and is served locally by both a large scale retail park and local services in walking distance and within the District Councils area of control. The location would suit a mix of sizes for the houses to serve a range of family sizes and demographics.

With this information a preliminary scheme has been drawn up for the purposes of entering into pre-application discussions with the planning authority.

3.0 Proposals

The proposal allows for the retention of the existing office, although as this benefits from the current Permitted Development Rights from the change of use from office to residential the scheme submitted allows for both options. The proposals are for four new dwellings as noted below.

- 2No. four bedroom 2 storey detached dwelling houses
- 1No. three bedroom 1 ½ storey detached dwelling house
- 1No. two bedroom detached 2 storey dwelling house

This mix offers the opportunity for properties that could serve standard family units, smaller/young families and older people looking to downsize, and aims to give a viable mix that is both economically sound and meets local housing demands. It is noted that the location currently favours higher status dwellings with a bias to larger homes.

The site plan retains those trees and hedgerows that are in viable condition for retention and to maintain the strong treeline to the east and north boundary of the public park and the mature trees screen the site. The frontage to London road will be largely unchanged due to the change in level from the road to the majority of the site, which falls away from the road. The proposed houses shall be designed to have controlled outlook at first floor level to ensure that there is no greater (and

possibly enhanced) privacy given to the adjoining dwelling, which currently had an open aspect to the car park.

The layout will be subject to detailed development once a detailed tree survey is carried out.

The design aims to look to limit the visual intrusion of cars by using undercroft parking where appropriate.

The scheme will also have defined bin collection points and makes provision for visitor parking on site.

Access will be by a shared drive utilising the existing access to the highway, we note that at the point of access it is already shared with two adjoining properties. As the use of the site for an office has a fairly high number of vehicle potentially using it the intensity of use may be diminished if the office is converted to a dwelling house.

All new planting is to be with native species to keep the habitat potential high, and the new hedge to Hog's Kiss will run back along the new drive to provide an equal run of hedge to that removed.

Permeable surfacing will be utilised where viable to limit the impact of surface water runoff.

Currently the layout indicates the predominance of narrow plan, wide frontage houses on the basis of the aim of a developed scheme utilising high quality design drawing in the style of the Suffolk architectural vernacular, although a contemporary solution could also be explored subject to the views expressed in the Pre-Application process.

4.0 Conclusion

The site offers the opportunity to add sensitively designed housing to an existing residential area that benefits from access to both the centre of the county town and is within walking distance of a high number of local facilities. It should be noted that these are within the same district so the development will not rely on the services within the adjoining Ipswich Borough.

Noting the relationship of the site to Ipswich Borough we would request that they are consulted as part of the pre-application enquiry and they have informally stated they are happy for this to happen.

With this in mind we seek to engage with key parties to ensure that a developed scheme offers the best solution to balance the need for housing while respecting the sensitivities of the site.

James Francis

Nicholas Jacob Architects

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