PLANNING POLICY COMMENTS

Location: Christian Science Church 117 Grand Avenue

Proposal: Demolition of church and erection of five 2-bedroom apartments and three 3-bedroom houses

App no.: WB/11/0151/OUT

Officer dealing: Matthew Porter

Sent to policy: 16 March 2011

Main policies (Submission Core Strategy adopted 12 April 2011):

Policy 7 Meeting Housing Need
Policy 8 Getting the right mix of homes
Policy 10 Affordable Housing
Policy 11 Protecting and enhancing recreation and community uses
Policy 16 Built Environment and Design
Policy 17 Sustainable Construction

Worthing Local Plan 2003

H18 Residential amenity

Housing

The development of 8 dwellings including 3 houses contributes to the housing supply and assists with meeting the housing need and housing mix as set out in Policy 7 and 8 of the Submission Core Strategy.

Affordable housing

The Submission Core Strategy sets out affordable housing requirements. On a site of 6-10 dwellings this would be 10% of affordable housing that will be sought by financial contribution.

Loss of community use

The site is currently occupied by a large modern church and is in need of repairs.

Policy 11 of the Core Strategy states amongst other things that the loss of the community use will not be permitted unless:

- it has been demonstrated that there is no need for the existing use.
- the land / premises are unsuitable for the use.

The church was vacated by the Christian Science Community in September 2010 and no marketing evidence has been submitted regarding the lack of interest in a building for community use or the unsuitability of the land/premises. The only evidence submitted with the application was that one

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church community (Jubilee Church) had approached the church but the church building did not meet their requirements.

Parking

There is provision for 11 car parking spaces on-site which is considered appropriate for this sustainable location. Cycle storage has not been included and should be provided in line with the West Sussex County Council Parking Standards SPG. The required provision is storage for 17 bicyles based on two spaces per 2-bedroom dwelling plus 1 space per 8 dwellings for visitors. Please note that cycle storage is also covered by the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Weight of Submission Core Strategy policies

The Core Strategy was adopted by Worthing Borough Council on 12 April 2011 and all policies contained in the Core Strategy apply.

Conclusion

From a planning policy point of view comments cannot be provided until more evidence has been provided.

The following needs to be established:

- whether there is marketing evidence by a reputable local or regional agent;
- whether sufficient time has been allowed for the marketing exercise eg. at least a year similar to marketing exercises for commercial properties
- has the site/property been marketed at the right price for the right use (eg community use)
- has there been contact with the Council's Economic Development Unit

A financial contribution of 10% for off-site affordable housing is required.

Laura Rheiter
Planning Policy
29 April 2011