

EN/E Orchard Close: HN8

Alternative use.

If the site is acquired for alternative use, the policy is set out by SD 25.2 which is in very general terms and applies to all development in the National Park, outside the settlement boundary. Orchard Close however has a number of individual characteristics which should inform of the landscape-led design of proposals for new development and which justify a more focused policy. These are:

- The Edwardian gardens as described by Hampshire Gardens Trust.
- The trees both surrounding and within the site
- Bourne Lane is a historic sunken Lane
- Bourne Lane has no footway or lighting and is substandard width
- Bourne Lane is heavily used
- The existing community focussed use for the elderly
- The continuing need for elderly provision Including downsizing within Twyford

Applying these to an alternative use for the site there should in the first place be no new vehicular access to Bourne Lane to accord with MA 5 and SD 21.2. There should be no increase in traffic generation above that already associated with the care home; this allows for a small amount of residential development.

There are several dwellings close to Orchard Close, so the change to residential use is acceptable. However, because of its current use for the elderly and the need for new provision for the elderly shown for instance in the Twyford Housing Needs survey, the continued use of the site for provision for the elderly is to be preferred to general housing, subject to demand.

Residential use may take place by conversion of one or both of the existing buildings. If redevelopment is proposed, new building should be limited to the footprint of the existing buildings, or to the immediate surrounds. The aim of this is to minimise the impact on the historic garden which was designed around a building near the top of the garden. Proposals both protect the integrity of the garden and its features and secure its continued management are to be addressed in all proposals and to be preferred.

The requirements for affordable housing will be in accordance with HN4 and SD 28.

The improvement to pedestrian access would be an advantage but is likely to require third party land.

The location outside the settlement boundary, associated with the constraints of access and the sensitivity of the historic garden and its trees all indicate a small scale scheme, determined in part by viability to secure the design objectives and the reuse of the site.

As an alternative to a care home, an alternative use of the site for the elderly or as residential use for a different form of institution, may also be acceptable, subject to the same criteria and considerations set out above.

Proposed addition to Policy HN8:

2. The change of use or redevelopment of Orchard close to residential or other institutional use will be permitted provided :

- a) A landscape led design brief is first prepared retaining the existing landscape garden with its trees*
- b) Any new buildings to be within or close to the footprint of the existing buildings*
- c) There is no increase in traffic generation from the current use*
- d) No new vehicular access point is formed*
- e) The Edwardian house may be retained or replaced as a private house*
- f) New dwellings to be for the elderly*
- g) Affordable housing to accord with SD 28 and HN4*

Note: Hampshire Garden Trust research on this Garden is at HGT/ Orchard Close