OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 24/01926/HHFUL **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: Re-building of dovecote building following the collapse of the original. (Partially Retrospective)

Location: 87 High Street Earith Huntingdon

Applicant: Andrew Hunter-Blair

Grid Ref: 538348 274810

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site at 87 High Street is occupied by a three-storey detached dwellinghouse located within a residential area in Earith. The application site consists of a large plot of land and includes a number of outbuildings which are ancillary to the main dwelling. The site falls within the Earith Conservation Area, and the dwelling itself as well as the buildings ancillary are classed as Grade II Listed Buildings.

This application seeks permission for the re-building of the dovecote building to the north of the application site following the collapse of the original (partially retrospective).

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area. It has been noted by officers that the works have been partially constructed prior to the submission for planning permission, therefore, the description of the application has been amended to reflect this. As this has been presented in the Design and Access statement submitted as part of the application, on the balance of fairness further consultation was not considered to be necessary on this occasion. Additionally, revised plans have been submitted which correctly reflect the scale and height to rebuild the dovecote with greater accuracy. On the balance of fairness, additional consultation was also not considered to be necessary regarding this matter.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies where applicable

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles parts 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing

Earith Conservation Area Character Assessment (2008)

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Given the historic nature of the property there is an extensive planning history associated with it. The history from 1979 onwards is available to view on HDC's Public Access Site. The most recent, relevant planning history is detailed below:

23/02336/TRCA - T1 and T2 - Spruce trees - Fell due to proximity to neighbouring bungalow in Whybrows Lane Earith and the Conservation work being carried out rebuilding the Dove Cote. T3 - Yew - Reduce height by maximum of 1 metre, can be found in small garden near house (Consent)

24/01927/LBC - Re-building of dovecote following the collapse of the original (partially retrospective) (Pending Consideration)

CONSULTATIONS

Earith Parish Council - No objections, recommend approval.

HDC Conservation Team - Support with conditions as appropriate revisions of drawings have been submitted.

Historic England - Support the careful reconstruction of the Grade II Listed Dovecote.

National Amenities Society - No comments received at the time of determination.

REPRESENTATIONS

91 High Street, Earith - Made neighbour comments in support of the application.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity

* Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

The application site at 87 High Street is occupied by a detached Grade II Listed building with a number of Grade II Listed Buildings ancillary to the main dwelling, located in Earith Conservation area. The surrounding area depicts the character of a typical rural town, and there are a number of additional Listed Buildings along High Street on which the application site is located. The works which are proposed concern a dovecote building at the north of and located at the rear of the application site and does not impact the dwelling itself. The dovecote is Grade II Listed, and has fallen into disrepair after collapsing twice. The proposed works involve the re-building of the dovecote, to replicate the appearance of the original building. Due to the location of the dovecote at the rear of the application site and not visible from the street, it is considered that the proposal would not result in a negative impact upon the design or visual appearance of the street scene or wider area.

Considering the development, the walls of the dovecote building have already been partially reconstructed on the existing foundations. The materials make use of reclaimed bricks from the original building, alongside reclaimed bricks from a wall within Earith that match those of the original dovecote building. The walls have been partially rebuilt as per the submitted Design and Access Statement, currently measuring approximately 3.2 metres in height. As the proposed walls have been built on existing foundations and the appearance is to be replicated as close as possible as per the submitted plans, is also measures the same as that of the original, square in footprint at approximately 6.2 metres in width and 6.2 metres in length. The proposed dovecote roof is to measure a maximum height of approximately 7.5 metres with eaves at 4.2 metres. The materials used will also replicate that of the previous dovecote building and reflect the design and appearance of the original roof, with the use of reclaimed tiles and secondary tiles which match the remaining as close as possible. In terms of the design and layout of the proposed rebuild considering its scale, location, and use of materials to match existing, the proposal will not negatively impact the appearance of the wider area and is acceptable in this regard.

Overall, taking the above factors into consideration the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regard to design and visual amenity and would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the area. It therefore accords with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

As detailed in the previous sections of this report, the application site lies within Earith Conservation Area, and the proposed development also lies within the curtilage of the Grade II Listed Building '87 High Street' on the application site. With the building itself also being Grade II Listed, it is necessary to consider the impact of the development on its designated heritage assets.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Para. 205 of the NPPF sets out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'.

Para. 206 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification'

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

As this is the case, HDC's Conservation team have been consulted and having reviewed the documents supports the application subject to conditions, as a result of revised plans submitted. HDC's Conservation Officer had previously stated how submitted drawings prior did not reflect the advice given during the pre-application stage, and in that form was unacceptable and caused substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II Dovecote. Further comments state that the original collapse of the structure resulted in a total loss of significance and substantial harm. As such, with the revised plans which have now been received, HDC's Conservation Officer deems the revised plans as the recreation of a faithful replica, therefore acceptable with regards to the design and reflects the original building with greater accuracy, maintaining the significance of the wider group of Listed Buildings. Whilst it is acknowledged there is less than substantial harm from the proposed development, this outweighs the total loss of significance and substantial harm resulting from the complete collapse of the original structure. Therefore, on balance, alongside the public benefit of reinstating a full group of Listed Buildings, the proposal is considered acceptable in this regard.

Due to the complete collapse of the Grade II Listed Dovecote and the requirement by the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special architectural and historic interest of a Listed Building, Historic England have also been consulted. They have stated that whilst the reconstruction of the Dovecote cannot entirely compensate for the loss of the original building, it will largely sustain the aspects of significance which inhere in the building's essential form, historic materials, and functional legibility, as well as preserving the group value of the buildings on the wider site. As the reconstruction of the building will prevent the total loss of its significance, the application meets the requirements set out in the NPPF, particularly paragraph 213, and as such Historic England support the application.

Therefore, given the above assessment, subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable with regards to its impact on the designated heritage assets. It therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990.

*Residential Amenity

Given that the proposal consists of the rebuilding of the Dovecote at the rear of the property, and taking into consideration the scale of development, it is not considered that there will any unacceptable material impacts in terms of overbearing or loss of light. Having regard to the proximity and separation to the adjacent dwellings, it is also considered that there would not be any issues regarding loss of privacy or overlooking.

Overall, taking these factors into account the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design

* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the designated heritage assets;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Josh France**