

DESIGN BRIEF

FOR

THE FORMER POWELL'S GARAGE SITE WOOLLARDS LANE GREAT SHELFORD





PREPARED BY: Hill Residential Limited

FOR: South Cambridgeshire District Council

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Hill Residential Limited has prepared a Design Brief in order to inform the proposed residential development at the Former Powell's Garage, Woollards Lane, Great Shelford.

This site has been allocated for residential development under the terms of policy SP/7 of South Cambridgeshire District Council's Site Specific Policies DPD. Item 4 of SP/7 states that "a Design Brief is required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to granting of planning permission."

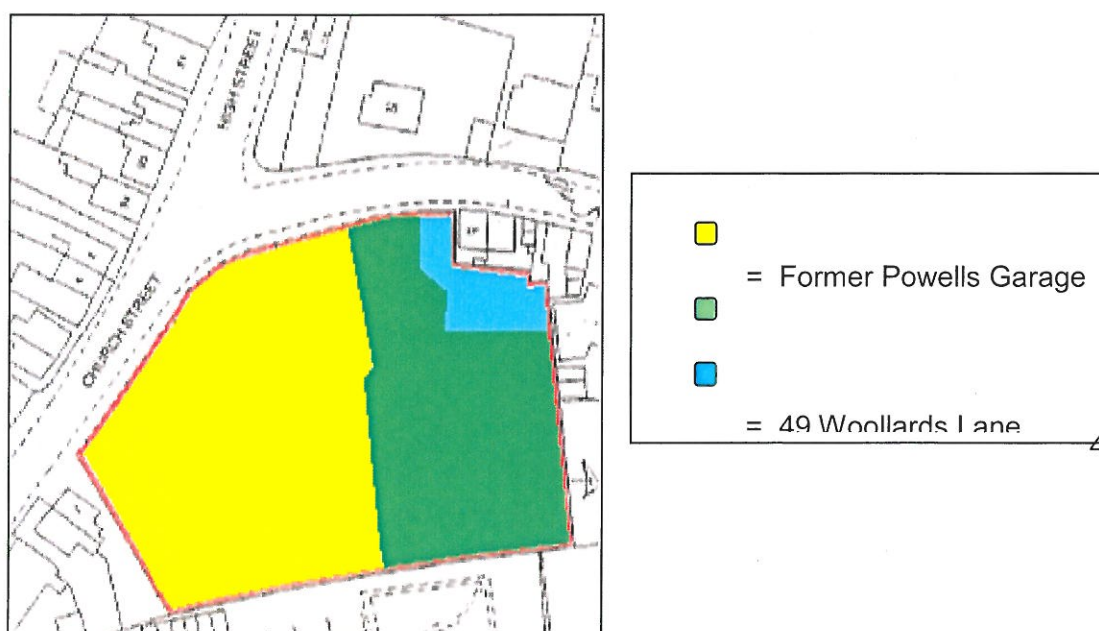
The purpose of this Design Brief is to provide guidance and information to South Cambridgeshire District Council of Hill Residential Limited's thought process regarding the constraints and opportunities when considering the future use of the Former Powell's Garage site. The will Brief inform future development plans for the site.

1.2 Site Background

This brownfield site, located within Great Shelford's Conservation Area and village framework, occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Woollards Lane, Church Street and the High Street in the village. The site comprises a former garage forecourt, the Old British School Building (until recently used as a garage workshop) and the former garage owner's house at 49 Woollards Lane. For the purposes of this brief we have also included the small greengrocers shop between 47 and 49 Woollards Lane which is currently just outside the site allocation in the Site Specific DPD. The current tenant is vacating the property to pursue an alternative venture with an existing retailer on Woollards Lane.

In total the site is around 0.45 hectares (1.24 acres).

The plan below indicates the site and the three component parts:





1.3 Planning Background

The permitted use of the Old British School building is a commercial vehicle repair shop. As this does not fall within any use class, it is *sui generis* and thus any other use will require planning permission.

This is evident in the previous planning application history for the garage site which has included forecourt sales, car washing, vehicle repairs and general garage use.

Since the 1991 the garage site and part of 47 Woollards Lane have been the subject of a number of successive outline planning applications (ref. S/1495/91/O, S/110/97/O, S/00/0396/O, S/2450/02/S, S/0148/06/O) for retirement flat schemes.

All of these previous applications, with the exception of the most recent outline submitted in March 2006, have been approved. Indicative schemes submitted with the applications have shown unit numbers in excess of 30, although a reserved matters application was never submitted.

2. Site Use

The corner of the site at the junction of the three roads is dominated by the Old British School building, which dates back to the 1870's. After the closure of the school in 1906, the use of the property was changed to a motor vehicle building and in the 1920's it began trading as 'The Shelford Garage.'

Between 1970 and 1990 the Old School building was extended to the front, side and rear with reception, car wash and workshop extensions and has since then been known as 'Powell's Garage'.

The garage has recently closed and the site is therefore now awaiting redevelopment. 49 Woollards Lane is currently occupied by the former garage owner's daughter and the greengrocers shop is occupied under a short term tenancy agreement.

The site (encompassing all three elements) is in a transitional location moving from the commercial activities on Woollards Lane through to the established residential area on Church Street. Until the recent introduction of fencing around the site, there have been three vehicle access points, two off Woollards Lane and one from Church Street.

The current garage building consists of the converted former school building and a number of single storey additions on three of the four elevations. Even with the numerous additions to the building, it continues to be a visually important focal point at the junctions of the three main roads in the centre of the village.



47 Woollards Lane is a large 2-storey residence set back away from the main road, behind a small retail unit and store, currently being used as a greengrocers shop.

To the south of the site is an existing development known locally as Peacocks, which is a popular supported housing development.

The photos below are of the site when the garage was still operational. The main white painted building is the Old British School.



3. Planning policies affecting the site

The Development Plan policies that are relevant to the site are as follows:

3.1 LDF Adopted Site Specific Policy Development Plan Document (2010)

POLICY SP/7 Powell's Garage, Woollards Lane, Great Shelford

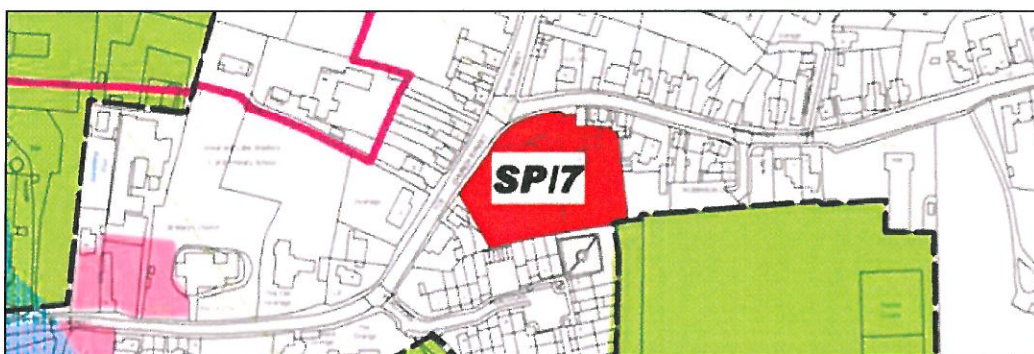
1. An area of 0.44 hectares on Woollards Lane, Great Shelford, as shown on the Proposals Map, is allocated for residential development.
2. Development must preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The Old British School building should be retained and restored as part of



any scheme. Any proposals for demolition of the building must demonstrate that it is not viable to retain the building and that there are substantial benefits for the community that decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition, particularly in terms of the architectural merits of the replacement building, which must provide a high quality landmark design in this sensitive location.

3. Due to the historical use as a commercial garage, an investigation into land contamination will be required prior to the granting of any planning permission. Should this indicate that remediation should be undertaken, this must be done to a standard agreed with the Council and conditions will be imposed on any planning permission to ensure that development does not commence on site until satisfactory remediation has been undertaken and a validation report is provided.
4. A Design Brief is required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to granting of planning permission.

The site allocated for residential development is shown highlighted in red below on the Adopted Proposals Map extract for Great Shelford.



The Site Specific Policies Inspectors' Report on the Examination states at paragraph 11.57, '*The proposed allocation does not include the shop on the frontage forming part of the local centre, and this seems to us to be justified as it appears to be a well used and valuable asset to the village.*' The Inspector has set out a presumption in favour of retention of the existing shop unit. Policy SF/1 of the Development Control Policies DPD also sets out a presumption in favour of the retention of village services.

3.2 LDF Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2007)



ST/4: Rural Centres – Development and redevelopment without any limit on individual scheme size will be permitted within the village frameworks of Rural Centres, provided that adequate services, facilities and infrastructure are available as a result of the development.

3.3 LDF Adopted Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2007)

DP/1: Sustainable Development

DP/2: Design of New Development

DP/3: Development Criteria

DP/4: Infrastructure and New Developments

DP/7: Development Frameworks

HG/1: Housing Density

HG/2: Housing Mix

HG/3: Affordable Housing

ET/4: New Employment Development in Villages

ET/5: Development for the Expansion of Firms

ET/6: Loss of Rural Employment to Non Employment Uses

NE/1: Energy Efficiency

NE/3: Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development

CH/5: Conservation Areas

TR/2: Car and Cycle Parking Standards

SF/1: Protection of Village Services and Facilities

NE/6 Biodiversity



NE/8 Groundwater

NE/9 Water and Drainage Infrastructure

NE/12 Water Conservation

NE/14 Lighting Proposals

TR/1 Planning for More Sustainable Travel

SF/1 Protection of Village Services and Facilities

SF/4 Retailing in Villages

SF/6 Public Art and New Development

SF/10 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments

SF/11 Open Space Standards

3.4 Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents

Development Affecting Conservation Areas (2009)

Open Space in New Developments SPD (2009)

Public Art SPD (2009)

Trees & Development Sites SPD (2009)

Biodiversity SPD (2009)

Affordable Housing SPD (2010)

District Design Guide: High Quality and Sustainable Development in South Cambridgeshire SPD (2010)

Landscape in New Developments SPD (2010)



3.5 Supplementary Design Guidance

Great Shelford Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

Great Shelford Village Design Statement (2004),

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste Management Design Guide SPD (2010)

3.6 Conservation Area

The site is located within Great Shelford's Conservation Area. The Great Shelford Conservation Area Appraisal adopted in 2007, identifies the Former British School as being a '*positive and focal point*', which forms part of an important view in the village. It also identifies the existing greengrocers shop as a 'positive building'.

Whilst not listed, the school building has been identified as a building of "local historical value". The Conservation Officer has confirmed that that the modern single-storey extensions to the building could be demolished. The British School building could also be demolished if the retention is shown not to be viable, and if the proposed redevelopment scheme would result in the enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This approach is set out in Policy SP/7, where an expectation of a landmark design for the replacement building is indicated. The policy principles set out in 'Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment' should be followed

4. Design Issues

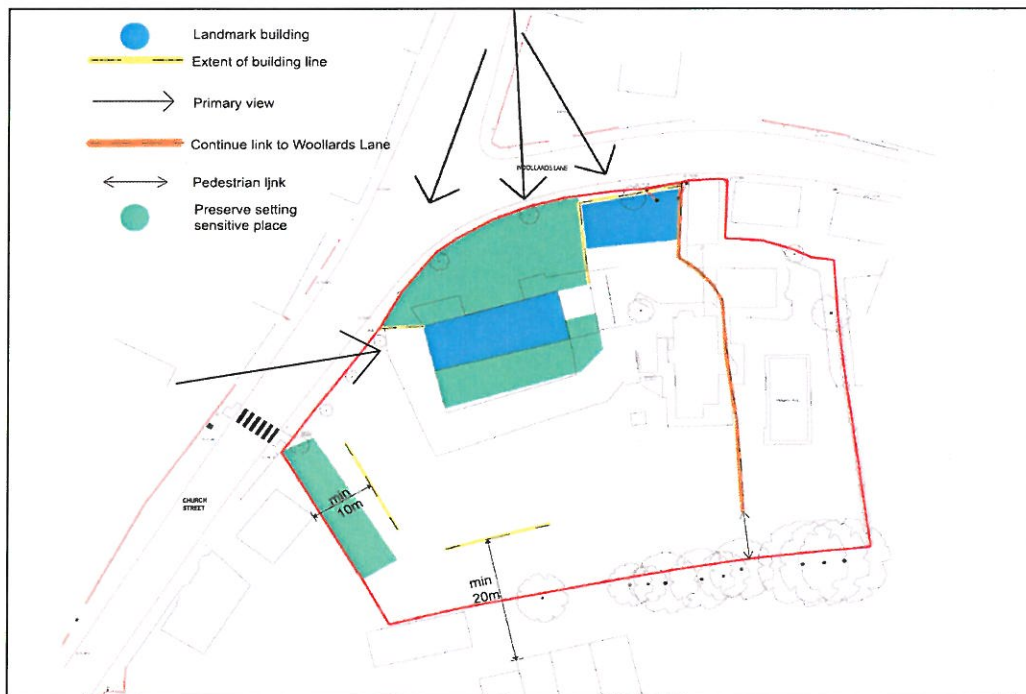
4.1 Site Boundaries

The site is adjoined on three sides by existing residential development. Any proposed scheme should be sympathetic to these surrounding uses and minimise disturbance/loss of amenity to the surrounding neighbours. There are opportunities to open up the southern boundary and provide access through the site for the residents of Peacocks to minimise the walking distance to the shops and services on Woollards Lane. The northern boundary is defined by the junction of the three main roads, which provide expansive views of the site and provide the setting of the former British School building.



4.2 Building lines

It will be important to generally maintain established building lines, on Woollards Lane where, as a predominately commercial street, the buildings front directly onto the footpath. Along Church Street, and the High Street, a mixture of building lines are seen, where dwellings either front directly onto the footpath or strips of planting are in place. Future development on the site will need to reflect the transitional location of this site.





4.3 Existing Building/Retaining Buildings

The Former British School building holds a prominent position and a primary view at the corner of a main junction within the village. It can be considered a landmark building, and therefore it is recognised that the retention of this building is important. Because it is designated as a positive element in a conservation area, it is necessary to preserve its setting, and retain the design features of the existing building that enable it to contribute positively to the area.

The main form of the existing building can be picked out among its more modern extensions. It has been painted white and has numerous new and unsympathetic recent openings. The extensions do not enhance the form of the building which could be improved by their removal. The Conservation Officer advises that no new additions should be considered for the front of the British School, and as far as possible the building should be restored to its original form.

The main focus of the building has changed little over the years, apart from these additions, and as such sympathetic refurbishment could enable the building to continue to contribute positively to the area.

The many intrusive additions and alterations that have taken place to the building would require considerable work to rectify, particularly with regard to the applied painted finish which may or may not be able to be successfully removed. The original brickwork may be retained with the existing applied painted finish. If the paint is to be removed, this should be carried out so as not to damage the building. The Conservation Officer acknowledges that, where alterations to the external fabric of the building are made, a painted finish may be necessary to ensure a consistent appearance. A detailed scheme should be prepared to support any such proposal.



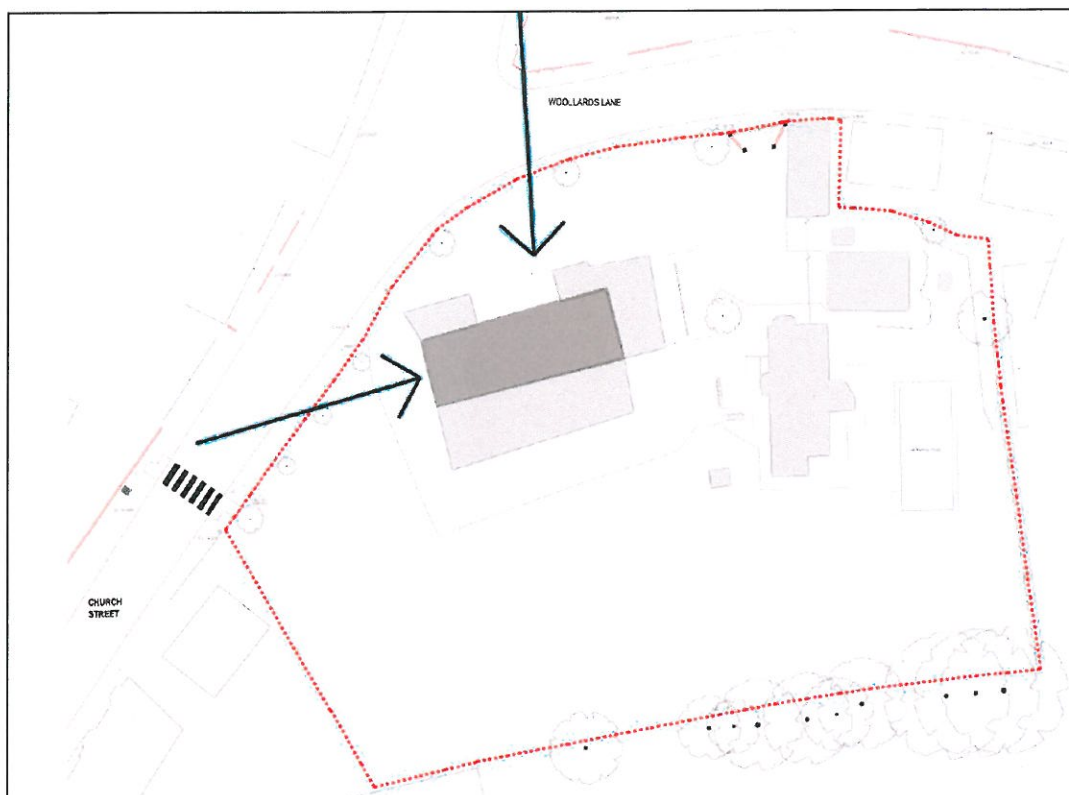
4.4 Key Views and Focal Points

The view from the junction of Woollards Lane, Church Street & High Street onto the site is considered to be a key view of local importance. Whilst the former school building forms a focal point to the site, the scale and size of the northern boundary should be taken fully into account. Careful consideration must be made to frame the building and provide other key focal features which do not visually compete with it.

Another important view to consider is that of the western boundary of the site on the Church Street frontage. Currently a view onto the rear of the existing building, this area has been identified as an area which should be of particularly high quality in terms of the design and detailing and provide a coherent continuation of the existing street scene.



The plan below indicates the main views of the site and the prominence of the former school building.



4.5 Visual Impact

Care must be taken to minimise any impact on the close neighbours of the site. It is predominantly a corner site with an open aspect and an intersection between residential and commercial areas. There is an opportunity to provide a landmark development which enhances the visual amenity of this corner of Great Shelford.

4.6 Overlooking

The boundaries of the site to the south and west are predominantly onto residential dwellings, with flats over retail/commercial space to the east.



Potential overlooking is therefore considered a design constraint for this site, and must be managed carefully.

Guidance on distances to minimise overlooking is given in the District Design Guide Chapter 6 'The Elements of Design'. The guidance suggests window-to window distances of 25 metres and preferable window-to-boundary distances of 15m .

4.7 Private amenity

Dwellings and apartments will be expected to provide adequate private outdoor amenity space for future residents. The District Design Guide Chapter 6 'The Elements of Design' gives guidance on minimum provision amounting to 40 square metres for each one or two bedroom house, 50 square metres for each house with three or more bedrooms. For apartments, on the ground floor there should be minimum provision of 10 square metres immediately outside their living accommodation or use of a communal garden where 25 square metres is allowed for each apartment. Subject to their appearance in the Conservation Area, upper floor apartments should have use of a private balcony of a minimum of 3 square metres, plus use of a communal garden where 25 square metres is allowed for each apartment.

4.8 Open space

Open space should be provided in accordance with guidance contained in the Open Space in New Developments SPD. The Local Planning Authority will require a financial contribution towards the provision and maintenance of formal play space in the village. Single bedroom dwellings, sheltered dwellings and residential homes are not required to contribute towards children's play space but must still provide informal open space.

4.9 Access and Rights of Way

The property benefits from three vehicular rights of way – two for the garage and one for 49 Woollards Lane. There are obvious benefits to rationalising these access points and increasing the safety aspects regarding Woollards Lane and the junction. Studies have indicated that the safest access is onto Church Street (confirmed by the County Highways department) and that this should be sited as close as possible to the existing pedestrian crossing to maintain maximum sight lines for vehicular traffic.

There are currently no public footpaths or rights of way over the property. There is an opportunity to establish new pedestrian routes within any future development.

4.10 Land uses



The land immediately around the development site is predominantly residential, although because of the close proximity to the village centre there are an increasing number of commercial and retail buildings adjoining the eastern boundary and further along Woollards Lane.

The site has been an area of employment for many years, with a car garage and small retail unit both on site. Future development should be encouraged to blend the residential and commercial uses through a transitional built phase to ensure a sympathetic termination to the Woollards Lane commercial area. The site (excluding the existing shop) is allocated for residential use in the Local development Framework and this is the preferred use for the site.

4.11 Housing mix and Affordable housing

LDF Policy HG/2 indicates that residential developments should contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes and affordability to meet local needs. Market properties should provide at least 40% of homes with 1 or 2 bedrooms.

Proposals for housing should provide 40% or more net additional dwellings as affordable housing, in order to comply with LDF Policy HG/3. The appropriate mix in terms of housing tenures and house sizes will be determined by local circumstances at the time of the planning application. In exceptional circumstances the District Council may accept financial contributions towards an element of off-site provision.

4.12 Energy Efficiency and Renewable energy

Developers are required to demonstrate a high degree of energy efficiency in any scheme compared to the minimum Building Regulations requirement, particularly for new buildings. Developers should refer to LDF Policy NE/1.

Development will be required to include technology for renewable energy to provide at least 10% of the predicted energy requirement, to comply with LDF Policy NE/3.

4.13 Water Conservation

Development will be expected to incorporate all practicable water conservation measures. This should be shown in a water conservation strategy prior to the commencement of development to show how this can be achieved.

4.14 Scale and Massing



A study into the scale of existing buildings around the centre of the village has determined that buildings are predominantly 1 ½ and 2-storey and very occasional 2 ½-storey. Many of the buildings sampled revealed a variety of large and small footprints and differing scales of massing within these parameters.

Those buildings closest to and within the site are 1 ½ - and 2-storeys and are of traditional spans and forms. The School Building should remain the predominate building within the site and the scales of adjoining buildings should respect this.

Certainly, no development on the frontage should exceed 2 ½-storeys, and any buildings of this scale should be sited towards the Woollards Lane area of the site and avoid visual domination of the British School Building. Developers should refer to the District Design Guide: High Quality and Sustainable Development in South Cambridgeshire SPD (2010) and Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD (2009).





4.15 Highways and parking

The Local Highway Authority has indicated that, in the interests of highway safety, the existing access to the site should be no longer used for this purpose, and the footway and kerbing should be reinstated. Access should be gained from Church Street, where visibility splays of 2.4m by 43m should be achieved, measured from and along the back of footway in both directions. Any trees within the visibility splay should have a minimum 2 metre crown clearance height. A survey of the existing footpath width will be required. The Local Highway Authority has indicated that it would be seeking a widening of the footway to a minimum 1.2m or 1.8 m and to improve the definition and safety of the junction by narrowing Woollards Lane at the junction with Church Lane.

Parking should be provided up to a maximum standard of 1.5 car parking spaces per dwelling with a further 0.25 spaces per dwelling for visitor parking. A minimum of 5% spaces should be suitable for the disabled. Parking for retail uses should be provided at a level of 1 space per 14 square metres of gross floor area. Account will be taken of the sustainable location of the site and the availability of public transport in the vicinity in assessing provision. Reference should be made to policies TR/1 and TR/2 and the standards set out in LDF Appendices 1 and 2.

Covered and secure cycle parking should be provided at a level of 1 space per dwelling and 1 space per 25 square metres gross retail floor area.

4.16 Provision for the collection of waste/recycling

Adequate refuse and recycling storage should be shown on the plans. Please refer to the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide which is available to view via the Council's website.

This Guide contains the *RECAP Waste Management Design Guide Toolkit* that will allow a developer, in consultation with the Local Authority, to make an effective evaluation of the waste management requirements upon them and demonstrate compliance as necessary. All proposals must demonstrate use of the toolkit.

4.17 Crime and Design

Consideration should be provided for crime prevention such as natural surveillance. Please refer to the section on Community Safety in The District Design Guide SPD, Chapter 8 'The Elements of Urban Form'. Developers may wish to seek advice from the Police Architectural Liaison Officer, based at Parkside Police Station, Parkside, Cambridge CB1 1JG.



4.18 Biodiversity

The design of the scheme should take opportunities to achieve a positive gain to biodiversity. Development proposals will be expected to include measures that maintain and enhance important features whilst incorporating them within any development of the site. The site is bounded by mature trees adjacent to the southern boundary, and mature hedgerow along the eastern boundary, which should be safeguarded in any proposal. Developers should refer to Trees & Development Sites SPD and Biodiversity SPD.

4.19 Existing Vegetation

The site in its current form is predominantly hard landscaped, to the western side of the site, with the garden of the existing house on the site laid to lawn. Large lime trees currently border the southern perimeter of the site, creating a natural boundary with Peacocks to the rear of the site.

Future landscaping to the proposed site would be required to enhance the biodiversity and ecology of the site.

There is also an opportunity for further tree planting around the northern site perimeter to soften and enhance the boundary between the road edge and the former school building. This would reflect the open nature of the junction as seen on the opposite side of Woollards Lane.





4.20 Disability and Access

Suitable access for disabled and partially sighted should be designed for the retail unit and apartments. The development should be designed in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

4.21 Public Art

The inclusion of public art in any scheme proposed for the site can add to local distinctiveness and assist in creating a sense of place. The involvement of a lead artist at an early stage in the planning and design of any development is encouraged. Developers should refer to Public Art SPD for further guidance.

5. Future development options for the site

Possible alternative uses for the site have been considered, notwithstanding the planning history and the allocation for residential development. Being an important interface between residential, retail and commercial uses the site in theory could be developed for many alternative uses.

The obvious use would be to reinstate the garage and forecourt however this is not the best use of the land and proved an unsustainable business in the village. The business also had a significant impact on the old school building, which was not ideal as a garage workshop. New car salesrooms require modern buildings and therefore this site would restrict commercial redevelopment of this kind. A garage would also be a negative visual impact on the street scene and on the Conservation Area.

There is also the issue of onsite contamination and initial findings have highlighted possible issues with underground fuel tanks. Future development on the site will have to take into account remediation for the proposed use. Similarly the tanks are unsuitable for reinstatement as a petrol station and costly and expensive works would be needed to remove the existing tanks and replace them with modern equivalents. This might therefore rule out some garage/commercial uses on economic grounds.

Turning to residential development the site is in an excellent location in terms of proximity to shops, services and transport links. There are however downsides to residential development, namely car movements and increased traffic.



An over 55s use as previously consented on the site is the logical end use, as on the whole, traffic and car movements are reduced. Similarly due to the location and the demographics of the occupiers, walking to the shops and services is relatively easy thus supporting and maintaining the local economy especially during the working week. Due consideration should also be given to replacement retail to mitigate the loss of the greengrocers shop.

6. Developer Contributions

In considering proposals to develop the site, financial contributions are likely to be sought by the District Council for improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. Contributions may also be sought towards the future upkeep and maintenance of facilities. The following elements are likely to be included:

Affordable housing; education; public open space, sport and recreation facilities; community facilities; arts and cultural provision; waste management and the provision of waste receptacles; legal agreement monitoring. The necessary costs of preparation of legal agreements will be required of the developer.

7. Conclusion

The most obvious redevelopment use for this site is for residential homes, as concluded by South Cambridgeshire District Council in their Local Development Framework review. The success of Peacocks on the adjoining site is proof that Great Shelford remains as popular as ever for all ages and homes in the village are still in demand. There is an opportunity to create a transitional development with small scale commercial or retail use to define the extent of Woollards Lane as a commercial district before transcending into the residential area on Church Street and High Street at the junction beyond.

All future development must be sensitive to the location of the site and its prominence on three of Great Shelfords main thoroughfares. Sympathetic and considerate development must be undertaken to preserve and restore the historic fabric of the British School. Any future development would also need to encompass extensive land contamination remediation works.