

38/2004/139

GADD HOMES LTD

**ERECTION OF PART 2, PART 3 AND PART 4 STOREY BUILDING
ACCOMMODATING 24 FLATS AND PROVISION OF GARAGES AT COUNTY
GARAGE, 2 PRIORY AVENUE, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY PLANS ATTACHED
TO AGENT'S LETTER DATED 17TH MAY 2004.**

23031/24881

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

The site comprises a vehicle repair garage located on the corner of Priory Avenue and Gyffarde Street and opposite the County Cricket Ground. Immediately to the west lies the large Malthouse building, whilst development to the east along Priory Avenue is more domestic in scale. Gyffarde Street comprises late 19th century terraced housing. The proposed building is predominantly three storeys along the Gyffarde Street elevations rising to four storeys to the corner, and is predominantly three storeys, with a smaller four-storey section when viewed from Priory Avenue. Vehicular access to garages and parking, together with maintenance of an access to the St. John Ambulance HQ is provided via an archway on to Priory Avenue.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY there is no objection in principle to this proposal, however the visibility access to the proposed development and also Gyffarde Street are substandard. The footway on the Priory Avenue frontage of the site has substandard width, minimum 1.6 m. The building should be set back to maximise the visibility at the proposed access at the Gyffarde Street junction and provide a footway with a minimum width of 1.8 m. The on-site road layout will not be adopted. The bin store should be relocated adjacent to the public highway. In the event of permission being granted, I would recommend that the following conditions are imposed:- 1. The area allocated for parking on the submitted plan shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted. 2. Before the dwellings hereby approved are first occupied a properly consolidated and surfaced access shall be constructed (not loose stone or gravel) details of which shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. 3. The gradient of the proposed access shall not be steeper than 1-in-10. Note: Having regard to the powers of the Highway Authority under the Highways Act 1980 the applicant is advised that a Section 184 Permit must be obtained from the Highway Service Manager, Taunton Deane Area, Burton Place, Taunton. Application for such a Permit should be made at least three weeks before access works are intended to commence. COUNTY ARCHEOLOGIST The site lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential as defined by the Local Plan Policy EN24. It is within the area

of the medieval priory and archaeological investigations have revealed that this is the lay cemetery. Indeed a skeleton was discovered recently (last week) on an adjacent site. It is very likely that further burials are located on this proposal site. For this reason I recommend that the applicant be asked to provide further information on any archaeological remains on the site prior to the determination of this application. This is likely to require a field evaluation. WESSEX WATER the development is located within a sewered area, with combined sewers available. According to our records, there is a public combined sewer crossing the site. Please find enclosed a copy of our sewer records indicating the approximate position of the apparatus. Wessex Water normally requires a minimum, three-metre, easement width on either side of its apparatus, for the purpose of maintenance and repair. Diversion or protection works may need to be agreed. It is recommended that the developer should agree with Wessex Water, prior to the commencement of any works on site, a point of connection onto Wessex systems. It is further recommended that a condition or informative is placed on any consent to require the developer to protect the integrity of Wessex systems and agree prior to the commencement of works on site, any arrangements for the protection of infrastructure crossing the site. The developer must agree in writing prior to the commencement of works on site, any arrangements for the protection of our infrastructure crossing the site. The developer has proposed to dispose of surface water to the main sewer. It will be necessary, if required, for the developer to agree points of connection onto our systems, for the satisfactory disposal of foul flows and surface water flows generated by the proposal. The connection point can be agreed at the detailed design stage. With respect to water supply, there are water mains within the vicinity of the proposal. Again, connection can be agreed at the design stage. POLICE ARCHITECTURAL LIAISON OFFICER my only concern was regarding the apparent solid structure of the gates at the entrance. The architect assures me that they will be of an open railing type construction which will allow visibility from both sides. Therefore I have no adverse comment to make.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH suggests contaminated land condition. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT the proposed development does not make provision for children's play, although it will generate additional needs. In accordance with the Council's policy, a contribution towards improving/providing recreational facilities should be sought from each dwelling.

PRIORY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION consider four-storey fronting Priory Avenue to be excessive terrace opposite two-storey housing. Majority of eaves to Oast House adjoining is at two-storey level - object to this item. Need to ensure landscaping at front is not substituted for pebbles set in concrete plus a selection of glass fibre service boxes to form litter trap - example see Priory Bridge Road/St. Augustine corner - service meters housing must be properly designed in to scheme. Bicycle storage needs to be larger and secure. Car parking barely adequate as this will put pressure on surrounding streets at saturation point overnight. Is this the right place to introduce a community car sharing scheme to limit number of vehicles to stored at premises and this is currently a commercial site and half a century ago the residential area had a variety of corner shops and small businesses perhaps some ground floor units could have been designed as small dual purpose units. The developers will be very keen to support local infrastructure and there is no play facility suggested by the external layout - there is a need for further funds to develop youth/park facilities in Victoria Park and the Cranmer Arts Centre at Archbishop Cranmer School

2 LETTERS OF OBJECTION received objecting to original submission on the following grounds: building on corner will be a highway danger; noise pollution; crime; loss of outlook; inappropriate to base design on scale of the Malthouse; will dominate and overpower surrounding houses; parking inadequate; fourth storey unacceptable; loss of light; will have adverse impact on nearby trees; residents will park in private road opposite.

1 FURTHER LETTER has been received in response to the amended proposals, suggesting that whilst the plans seek to marry the shape and bulk of the Malthouse with the external appearances of the local Victorian terraces, the resulting building would be disproportionate in scale with the neighbourhood. The fourth floor, high-pitched roof and the increased ground coverage would all serve to dominate and overshadow, dwarfing the surroundings.

POLICY CONTEXT

New residential development should be assessed against Policy H1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit H1 Housing development will be permitted within defined limits of settlements, provided that: (A) there is safe and convenient access by or on foot to facilities and employment. In the case of proposals of a significant scale, bus or walking access to a town centre or rural centre will be required, taking account of any off-site works proposed in accordance with criteria (B); (B) necessary provision is made for off-site public transport, cycling and pedestrian facilities and highway improvements to cater safely for the expected number of trips generated by the development and minimise the proportion of car trips; (C) traffic calming, pedestrian, cycle and bus measures are incorporated where necessary to give priority to safe and convenient access and circulation by means other than the car; (E) the layout allows people with impaired mobility or a disability safe and convenient access and movement to and between dwellings by careful positioning of potential obstructions, ramps, dropped kerbs, textured surfaces and reserved car parking; (G) small scale schemes in existing residential areas will increase the development density of these areas without individually or cumulatively eroding their character or residential amenity; (H) a coherent approach to the overall design is adopted, including layout, landscaping, building designs, materials, open spaces and circulation routes, to create locally distinctive developments well related to their surroundings; and (I) existing and proposed dwellings will enjoy adequate privacy and sunlight. Guidance on design matters can be found in Policy S2. Development must be of a good design. Its scale, density, height, massing, layout, landscaping, colour, materials and access arrangements will be assessed to ensure that the proposal will, where reasonable and feasible: (A) reinforce the local character and distinctiveness of the area, including the landscape setting of the site and any settlement, street scene and building involved; (B) incorporate existing site features of environmental importance; (C) reinforce nature conservation interest; (D) minimise the creation of waste in construction and incorporate recycled and waste materials; (E) include measures to reduce crime; (F) minimise adverse impact on the environment, and existing land uses likely to be affected; (G) include facilities to encourage recycling; (H) make full and effective use of the site; and (I) subject to negotiation with developers, incorporate public art.

ASSESSMENT

The principle of the site for a residential use is not disputed and a terrace wrapping around the corner of Priory Avenue into Gyffarde Street is considered an appropriate solution. Car parking for 34 vehicles is shown which is above the Council's requirement for such a central location and the Highways Authority does not raise objection to the access proposed. The determining factor in this case is the appropriateness of the scheme in terms of its scale, height and massing. Following negotiations, much of the fourth storey has been removed from the Priory Avenue frontage, although there remains some accommodation at this level. Notwithstanding these amendments the ridge line is still generally equivalent to that of the adjacent Malthouse. However because the eaves line is might higher than the Malthouse the impact from the street will be much greater. Whilst examples of three-storey development can be found in the area, the predominant form of the nearby terraces is two-storey. Whilst government advice encourages densities to be increased to between 30 and 50 units per hectare, this development is in excess of 100 units per hectare. It is therefore concluded that the building proposed by reason of its height, scale and massing represents an overdevelopment of the site which will have an overbearing impact upon the surrounding area.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED for reason that the proposed building by reason of its scale height and massing represents an overdevelopment of the site and will detract from the established character and appearance of the locality.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

CONTACT OFFICER: 356464 MR T BURTON

NOTES: