

KNIGHTSTONE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

**DEMOLITION OF 31 NO. DWELLINGS AND ERECTION OF 64 NO. DWELLINGS,
PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AT 1-32
VICTORIA GATE, TAUNTON**

Grid Reference: 323563.124739

Full Planning Permission

RECOMMENDATION AND REASON(S)

Recommended Decision: Conditional Approval subject to no further comments raising new issues by 21 October 2010 and a legal agreement to provide a contribution to local leisure and recreation provision.

The proposal, for residential development, is located within defined settlement limits where the principle of new housing is considered acceptable. The proposed access would be satisfactory and the development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties in accordance with Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR4 and 49 and Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 (General Requirements), S2 (Design), and M4 (Residential Parking Provision).

RECOMMENDED CONDITION(S) (if applicable)

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

(A4) DrNo. 2888/PL/100 Site Location Plan
(A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/01 Rev H Proposed Site Layout A
(A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/02 Rev H Proposed Site Layout B
(A3) DrNo. 2888/PL/03 Rev A House Type A
(A3) DrNo. 2888/PL/04/Rev B House Type B
(A3) DrNo. 2888/PL/05 Rev C House Type C
(A3) DrNo. 2888/PL/06/Rev C Proposed House Types Type D1 - 3b 5p
(A2) DrNo. 2888/PL/07 Rev C Flats Over Garages Plots 60-61
(A2) DrNo. 2888/PL/08/Rev B FOG Type H1 Plots 33-36
(A3) DrNo. 2888/PL/09 Rev C FOG Type H3 Plot 11
(A3) DrNo. 2888/PL/10/Rev A FOG Type H4 Plot 10
(A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/11 Rev D Flats 12-32 Floor Plans

- (A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/12/Rev C Flats 12- 32 Elevations
- (A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/13 Rev D Gr/1st Floor Plans Flats 44-59
- (A2) DrNo. 2888/PL14/Rev C Flats 44-59 2nd Floor Plans
- (A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/15 Rev C Flats 44-59 Elevations
- (A2) DrNo. 2888/PL/16/Rev B Flats 62-63
- (A3) DrNo. 2888/PL/18 Rev B Flats 44-59 Bin Stores
- (A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/19/ Rev B Street Scene 1
- (A1) DrNo. 2888/PL/20/Rev B Street Scene 2
- (A0) DrNo. 4838 Site Survey

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No construction shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out and thereafter retained as such, in accordance with the approved details as above, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the character and appearance of the existing building in accordance with Policy S2 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan.

4.
 - (i) Before any part of the permitted development is commenced, a landscaping scheme, which shall include details of the species, siting and numbers to be planted, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 - (ii) The scheme shall be completely carried out within the first available planting season from the date of commencement of the development, or as otherwise extended with the agreement in writing of the Local Planning Authority.
 - (iii) For a period of five years after the completion of each landscaping scheme, the trees and shrubs shall be protected and maintained in a healthy weed free condition and any trees or shrubs that cease to grow shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of similar size and species, or the appropriate trees or shrubs as may be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development makes a satisfactory contribution to the preservation and enhancement of the local character and distinctiveness of the area in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy S2.

5. Before development commences (including site clearance and any other preparatory works) a scheme for the protection of trees to be retained shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall include a plan showing the location of the protective fencing, and shall specify the type of protective fencing, all in accordance with BS 5837:2005. Such fencing shall be erected prior to commencement of any other site operations and at least two working days notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority that it has been erected. It shall be maintained and retained for the full duration of works or until such time as

agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. No activities whatsoever shall take place within the protected areas without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Note: The protective fencing should be as specified at Chapter 9 and detailed in figures 2 and 3 of BS 5837:2005.

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S2 and EN8.

6. No dwelling shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the submitted plan for cars to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review and relevant guidance in PPG13.

7. The front boundary walls to the dwelling units shall be retained as indicated on the submitted drawing unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the character and appearance of the development in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan policy S2.

8. None of the dwellings shall be occupied until a drainage strategy for the site has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the agreed works have been completed in accordance with the details approved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent risk of surface water flooding in accordance with PPS25.

9. No dwelling shall be occupied until cycle and bin storage has been provided for within the site in accordance with the submitted plan unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle and bin storage areas shall thereafter be retained as agreed.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the amenity of the area in accordance with policy S1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan.

10. The proposed roads, footpaths and turning spaces where applicable, shall be constructed in such a manner as to ensure that each dwelling before it is occupied shall be served by a properly consolidated and surfaced carriageway and footpath to at least base course level between the dwellings and highway.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed estate is laid out in a proper manner with adequate provision for various modes of transport in accordance with Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy 49.

11. The applicant shall ensure that all vehicles leaving the site are in such condition as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. In particular (but without prejudice to the foregoing), efficient means shall be installed, maintained and employed for cleaning the wheels of all lorries leaving the site, details of which shall have been agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority and fully implemented prior to commencement, and thereafter maintained until the construction of the site is completed.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review.

12. The proposed estate roads, footways, footpaths, tactile paving, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, surface water outfall, vehicle overhang margins, visibility splays, accesses and car parking shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with details to be approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing before their construction begins. For this purpose, plans and sections, indicating as appropriate, the design, layout, levels, materials and method of construction shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed estate is laid out in a proper manner with adequate provision for various modes of transport in accordance with Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy 49.

13. Prior to commencement of any trenching works within the canopy spread of existing trees all trenching works shall be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. All trenching works should be hand dug and no roots larger than 20mm in diameter should be severed without first notifying the Local Planning Authority. Good quality topsoil should be used to backfill the trench and compacted without using machinery.

Reason: To avoid potential harm to the root system of any tree leading to possible consequential damage to its health which would be contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies EN6 and EN8.

14. The windows shown to be obscure glazed on the submitted residential elevations of the buildings shall be carried out and be fixed or limited opening in a manner to be agreed and glazed with obscure glass of a level to be agreed in writing prior to installation and this shall thereafter be retained. There shall be no alteration or additional windows in the elevations without the further grant of planning permission.

Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby dwellings in accordance with Policy S1(E) of the Taunton Deane Local Plan.

15. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until details of a strategy to protect birds, bats and reptiles has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall be based on the advice of Aardvark's Ecological Consultant's submitted report,

dated December 2009 and include:

- Details of protective measures to include method statements to avoid impacts on protected species during all stages of development;
- Details of the timing of works to avoid periods of work when the species could be harmed by disturbance;
- Measures for the replacement and enhancement of places of rest for the species.

Once approved the works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timing of the works unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter the resting places and agreed accesses for nesting birds shall be permanently maintained. The development shall not be occupied until the scheme for the maintenance and provision of the new bird boxes **and** related accesses **have** been fully implemented

Reason: To protect birds, bats and reptiles and their habitats from damage bearing in mind **these** species **are** protected by law.

Notes for compliance

1. The condition relating to wildlife requires a mitigation proposal that will maintain favourable status for these species that are affected by this development proposal.

WILDLIFE AND THE LAW. The protection afforded to wildlife under UK and EU legislation is irrespective of the planning system and the developer should ensure that any activity undertaken on the site must comply with the appropriate wildlife legislation.

BREEDING BIRDS. Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and if discovered must not be disturbed. If works are to be carried out during the breeding season (from February to August, possibly later) then the tree(s) should be checked for nesting birds before work begins.

BATS. The applicant and contractors must be aware that all bats are fully protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (as amended 2007), also known as the Habitat Regulations. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to structures or places of shelter or protection used by bats, or to disturb bats whilst they are using these places.

Trees with features such as rot holes, split branches or gaps behind loose bark, may be used as roost sites for bats. Should a bat or bats be encountered while work is being carried out on the tree(s), work must cease immediately and advice must be obtained from the Government's advisers on wildlife, Natural England (Tel. 01823 285500). Bats should preferably not be handled (and not unless with gloves) but should be left in situ, gently covered,

until advice is obtained.

2. Where works are to be undertaken on or adjoining the publicly maintainable highway, a licence under Section 171 of the Highways Act 1980 must be obtained from the Highway Authority. Application forms can be obtained by writing to Mr Roger Tyson, Transport Development Group, Environment Department, County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY, or by telephoning him on 01823 356011. Applications must be submitted at least four weeks before works are proposed to commence in order for statutory undertakers to be consulted concerning their services. A proposed start date, programme for works and traffic management layout will be required prior to approval being given for commencement of works on the highway.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to demolish the existing 30 flats and 1 house on two parcels of land at Victoria Gate and erect 64 replacement units including 17 dwellings and 47 flats. Provision of car parking, bin and cycle storage is included in the development. A Design & Access Statement, Ecology Report, Tree Report and Flood Risk Assessment are also included in the submission.

The mix of units include 1 x 5-bed house, 14 x 3-bed houses, 2 x 2-bed houses, 6 x 1-bed flats and 41 x 2-bed flats. All of the units will be affordable.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The site consists of two areas of land, the larger site A includes a group of 11 two storey brick and white panelled houses, subdivided into flats, off a central cul-de-sac. To the south lies an open area of ground long disused and overgrown with brambles that may have been used as allotments during the war. Site B around 100m to the north west consists of a smaller area of 5 similarly designed units off another cul-de-sac. Apart from one dwelling the remainder are flats currently occupied by the over 55s.

CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION RESPONSES

Consultees

SCC - TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT GROUP - The proposal relates to the demolition of the existing houses to be replaced with 64 new dwellings with associated parking.

It should be noted that part of this proposal would require the stopping up of part of the existing highway. I have spoken to the Area Highways Office in regards to this matter and they would have no objection to the 'stopping up' of this part of the adopted highway. The stopping up of a highway can be carried out under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This will need to be applied for through the Government Office for the North East and they are contactable on 0191 2023714 the process should take up to 6-8 weeks.

When comparing the proposed internal layout within drawing 2888/PL02/G with the highway records plan it appears that an area of public maintained highway is to

revert back to private ownership. It also looks like part of the existing footway that front the application site is to be removed and replaced with widened site entrance. The Area Highway manager should be made aware of this proposal. All necessary notices will need to be obtained if the area is not to remain as highway.

The Design and Access Statement makes reference to the fact that the existing adopted internal access road will remain in situ. However, drawing PL01/G shows the proposed access road being a type 5 adopted shared surface construction but the existing road is a type 4 bitumen macadam carriageway with footways. I would suggest that the applicant amends the application so that the submitted drawings and the 'Design and Access Statement reflect each other. From the submitted drawings it is apparent that the proposed works will be within the existing public highway limits as such these works would need to be secured under a section 278 legal agreement.

The submitted drawings for both Victoria Gate and Somerset Place were passed to our Estate Roads Team for comment; there observations are set out below. It should be noted that these comments apply to both Victoria Gate and Somerset Place unless otherwise indicated.

In terms of the site layout the applicant will need to be made aware that the full width of Victoria Gate will need to be resurfaced where it is been disturbed by the proposed works and to overlap each construction layer of the carriageway by a minimum of 300mm. It also appears that there will be a slight narrowing of the existing footways adjacent to plots 4 and 5 upon entering the site. I would prefer to see the footways kept at their existing width. Rather than having block paved shared surface roads abutting the existing carriageway and increasing the possibility of the blocks becoming dislodged, it would be preferable to lay a 6.0m bitumen macadam carriageway from the edge of both Victoria Gate up to the commencement of the shared surface road. The existing footways should be extended slightly into the shared surface road to allow pedestrians a means on/off the shared surfaced road.

In regards to Somerset Place it should be noted that the minimum vertical clearance beneath plot 60 should be less than 4.1m to accommodate a large service vehicle. If it is the intention that deliveries will be walked into the development from Somerset Place then the minimum height may be reduced. Please notify Somerset County Council of the proposed intention. Whilst the Type 5 block paved shared surface carriageways should be constructed with longitudinal gradients no slacker than 1:80. Any gradient slacker than 1:80 will have a detrimental effect of surface water drainage.

Finally the applicant should be aware no doors, gates or low-level windows/utility boxes/down pipes or porches are to obstruct footways/shared surface roads. The Highway limits shall be limited to that are of the footway/carriageway that is clear of all private service boxes, inspection chambers, rainwater pipes, vents pipes and meter boxes (including wall mounted).

The proposed internal layout may result in the relocation of existing highway lighting units together with traffic signs. Works to lighting columns must not commence without prior discussions being held with the Highways Authorities Street Lighting Manager. It would be advisable to contact the Traffic Engineer (Area Highways Office) in regards to the relocation of any traffic signs. Only contractors on the 'Register of Accredited Contractors' will be permitted to carry out works on the

Highway. Application for inclusion on the Register should be made to Mr Gerald Lush on 01823 483032.

It is proposed that surface water drainage for the site will be into existing drainage systems via the means of attenuation storage areas. The applicant must be made aware of the fact that no attenuation system will be permitted to be placed within the prospective public highway. The applicant will need to obtain written permission from the owner of the existing surface water drainage system into which the proposed site will be drained granting consent for such discharge. Somerset County Council will require a copy of any permission granted. Section 50 NRSWA 1991 (Sewer Connections) – where works have to be undertaken within or adjoining the public highway a Section 50 licence will be required. These are obtainable from Mr John Nicholson, Streetworks Co-ordinator (01823 483103). In relation to the existing carriageway gullies within the site if a block paved shared surface road is to be constructed then it will be necessary for the existing gullies to be replaced with pedestrian friendly gullies.

In regards to parking the proposal will provide an average of 1.4 spaces per unit. The reduction in parking is justified as the site is located in close proximity to the town centre and the alternative means of transport are provided from this location i.e. cycle paths and regular bus routes. The parking bays provided within the site provide a standard length of 5.0m. These dimensions should be increased to 5.5m wherever parking bay immediately but up against any form of structure (walls/plants etc). A 6.0m long aisle should be provided in front of all parking bays to aid vehicular manoeuvrability. The minimum length of tandem parking bays should be 10.5m. Therefore the bays allocated to plots 3, 41-43 should be amended accordingly.

Taking into account the above information I raise no objection to this proposal and if planning permission were to be granted I would require conditions to be attached.

HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE OFFICER - My main concerns are several of the better quality higher amenity trees will be lost to development with little opportunity for good replacement trees. Where building works are proposed within root protection areas a method statement should be provided. If approved a tree protection plan should be submitted. Landscape details need to be submitted. Proposed service runs should be checked to avoid damaging tree roots.

NATURE CONSERVATION & RESERVES OFFICERS - As with all developments of this nature there are opportunities for biodiversity gain. In accordance with PPS9 I would like to see wildlife protected and accommodated in this development and suggest a condition to address this.

WESSEX WATER - I refer to your letter of 9th August inviting comments on the above proposed development and can confirm the following:

- There is adequate capacity within the public foul sewer system and receiving sewage treatment works to serve the proposed development.
- The principles as set out in the FRA for surface water drainage are acceptable in principle (max rate of discharge capped at 6 l/s)
- The site is split into two distinct catchments: the site storage and attenuation will need to be similarly and proportionately split which is not indicated in the proposals.
- The existing water main on the site will need protection on the retained part

and diversion over most of the length. The land appears to be contaminated in the area so appropriate mains to be provided.

DRAINAGE ENGINEER - I have concerns that the ratio of impervious to pervious areas are incorrect. According to my calculations the existing impermeable area is in the region of 35% not 65% as suggested by the developer. The attenuated storage calculations are therefore incorrect. I also note that in 3.2 of the FRA the comment is made that 'all surface water appearing to infiltrate naturally into the soil'. Whereas in 6.2 Drainage Strategy the comment is made that 'no soakaway tests have been carried out as the site is assumed to be 100% impermeable'. These comments are at variance and therefore until revised calculations and a SUDS strategy is outlined in more detail I object to the proposal.

HOUSING ENABLING MANAGER - The Housing Enabling Lead fully supports this application for all affordable housing. The demolition of the existing properties which are mainly one bed flats will enable a fully integrated mixed community providing family homes, sheltered housing and accommodation for disabled persons. This scheme involves demolition of existing Council owned sheltered housing.

POLICE ARCHITECTURAL LIAISON OFFICER –

Site A

- Re-orienting Plots 35 & 36 to face Plots 33 & 34 should improve resident surveillance of both blocks including the proposed undercroft parking.
- Plot 43 - side access should be fenced or gated near the front building line in order to prevent unauthorised access to the rear garden.
- A number of parking spaces appear to be divorced from owners' premises e.g. parking spaces, 4, 12, 31, 32, 42 & 43 seem to be some distance away from the plots they serve. Where vehicles are not garaged or parked within curtilage, Secured by Design guidance is that parking spaces should be within view of routinely occupied rooms in owners' premises. Otherwise, there is a strong likelihood that the spaces will not be used. I accept that some of these parking spaces are overlooked by other dwellings. Natural surveillance of the parking spaces adjacent to Plot 5 would be enhanced by a window in the gable end of that plot.
- Security of the sheds within the proposed allotments should be taken into account as they are a common target for thieves stealing tools etc.

Site B

- Plots 44 to 59 - the apparent lack of any wall/fence between the building and perimeter wall near parking spaces 47 and 48 potentially allows unlawful access to the Amenity Space and the block itself. In my opinion, an appropriate form of access control should be provided at this location.
- The drive-through should also be provided with some form of access control and lighting, as it allows access to the rear of dwellings and parked vehicles. Ideally, it should be gated using electrically controlled gates operated by key-fob or similar. Manually operated gates are likely to be left open.

To date, I have not received any response from Mr Martin to my further comments. Until the above queries are resolved and the additional information required for the

SBD Application Form provided, it is not possible to say whether the development will achieve full Secured by Design accreditation in due course.

LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER - In accordance with Local Plan policy C4, provision for play and active recreation should be made for the residents. A contribution of £1100 for each additional dwelling should be made towards the provision of facilities for active outdoor recreation and a contribution of £2200 for each additional 2+bed dwelling should be made towards children's play provision. The contributions should be index linked and would be spent in locations accessible to the occupants of the dwellings. A public art contribution is also required in accordance with the Taunton Deane Public Art Code, either through commissioning and integrating public art into the design of the buildings and the public realm or by a commuted sum to the value of 1% of development costs.

PRIORY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - We have seen details of this proposal at the Deane office and generally support. With solar energy and small individual gardens, this housing seems much more sustainable than the currently proposed Firepool Housing at Priory Bridge Road.

Three points of comment arise :

1 North end of Victoria Gate the Housing has been designed to be extended into the park in future. The Leisure Officers interpretation signs mounted in the green flag park omit the green quadrant area abutting the housing. There will be massive local objection to this extension and loss of green space. Boon Brown have made a good case in the application for new housing sitting well with the present park.

2 Access road through the park - currently there is an obtrusive roadway through the park linking Victoria Gate with Somerset Place. This is a 1960s design with a road width to suit lorries accessing commercial premises so two articulated vehicles can pass on the bend. This was an issue at the Public enquires in the early 1980s and the closure of Alfred Street was only secured after a second enquiry.

Today the road serves a pub and domestic dwellings and could either be scaled down or better still diverted around the edge of the park close to the housing in this application, as our attached letter to Forward plan in 2007, seeking to unify the two sections of the park. This will preserve a Mitre Court view of the park but there may be some trees lost against your elevation. Note the road bends needed at Victoria Gate would be similar to those shown now on the Somerset Place development.

Had we been a parish council and drafted a parish plan this may have been considered at your scheme early in the design stage. Do these current building proposals allow or preclude these changes to a very obtrusive road in future?

Thirdly it is important that the increase in dwellings will create more demand for our Victoria Park. The Victoria Park Action group work hard to assist the green flag status but there are no funds to improve the existing Pavilion premises or toilets for better community use. Local use town centre public buildings such as the Municipal Hall, The Youth and Community Centre Tangier, the Market Hall and the Chestnut Tree have all been lost.

In the recent wider housing planning consultation, areas in the parish areas around Taunton generated a gain for Communities. For each family dwelling, 100 metres

square of new green space and contributions to extend or build new Parish Halls and other support for parish councils was offered. We cannot find any residents community building within your scheme.

We would think it appropriate for the Council to discuss with the Victoria Park Action Groups Committee what financial support for our local community park and pavilion facility is appropriate to link to this application. We think this needs to happen before the planning committee decide this application.

There is a limit to space for new community provision in a fairly mature densely populated area but both the existing requested Pavilion and future Roadway improvements would be a significant factor in improving the town centre infrastructure and environment as our population inevitably grows.

I do not have a copy of the latest projection of areas of relative deprivation but the 2008 survey information we used in the Town Centre Action Plan enquiry showed there were growing levels in East Gate Ward of the town centre.

Representations

1 letter of no observations

2 letters raising issues over stress for elderly, junction with Victoria Gate and need for a right turn filter, concern over fence damage with car park construction, bin store too close to residence, loss of sunlight, loss of house value, concern over increase in noise and anti-social behaviour.

1 letter from Victoria Park Action Group advising generally in favour but there are concerns over preservation of the green wedge on the corner of Mitre Court and need to provide financial support for facilities in the area.

PLANNING POLICIES

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development,
PPS 1 SUPP - Planning and Climate Change,
PPS3 - Housing,
PPS9 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation,
STR1 - Sustainable Development,
STR4 - Development in Towns,
S&ENPP33 - S&ENP - Provision for Housing,
S&ENPP35 - S&ENP - Affordable Housing,
S&ENPP49 - S&ENP - Transport Requirements of New Development,
S1 - TDBCLP - General Requirements,
S2 - TDBCLP - Design,
M4 - TDBCLP - Residential Parking Provision,
C4 - TDBCLP - Standards of Provision of Recreational Open Space,
EN8 - TDBCLP - Trees in and around Settlements,

DETERMINING ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The main considerations with the proposal are the design and impact on the

character of the area, the parking provision, play and recreation provision and drainage.

Design and impact on the character of the area

An amended plan has been submitted to address the concerns of the Highway Authority and Secure by Design and the issue over amenity impact to a specific property in Mitre Court. The plan staggers a terrace to prevent an overbearing impact on 43 and 44 Mitre Court. The dwellings have defensible space in front of them and parking is provided for each unit in courts set to the rear and side of the properties in areas that are overlooked. Potential overlooking from the new properties has been considered and certain windows are obscure glazed to address direct overlooking concerns. A condition to control such windows is therefore recommended.

The materials intended to be used are a mixture of brick, render and cladding and the design is carried through from the housing to the flats to ensure a comprehensive development of a distinctive character to comply with advice in PPS1 and S2 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan. Roof space for renewable solar technology is provided for. The layout increases the house numbers on site to provide more affordable dwellings, however to achieve an adequate layout with gardens, allotments and parking a number of trees have to be removed across the two sites. This includes a couple of larger specimens and the Landscape Officer has raised concern over this tree loss. Replacement tree planting is proposed and subject to conditions to secure this and tree protection the amenity impact of the development is considered acceptable.

Parking provision

The sites utilise the same means of access into them, although the internal layout is varied to provide adequate parking and turning areas. The parking provision complies with policy M4 of the Local Plan. Bin and cycle storage for the units is also provided within the layout to meet policy requirements. The access road from the main road traffic lights is not affected by the proposal and is retained as is access to the car park and Alfred Street.

Play and recreation provision

The Community Development Team require contributions for play and active recreation to comply with policy C4 as well as a public art contribution. The scheme adds an additional 33 units of accommodation with 2 or more bedrooms in each and this equates to £108,900 for play and recreation. The public art provision is only a policy requirement under the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan, consequently it is not a requirement that can be insisted on under the present proposal as the policy does not apply to this site. The provision of the leisure and recreation contribution to be spent locally will be a requirement that will need to be dealt with by legal agreement.

Drainage

The site is not one that falls within an identified flood risk area, although a FRA has been submitted with the scheme. Details of the means of adequate surface water drainage for the site needs clarification and a condition relating to the securing of a

suitable drainage scheme prior to commencement is considered necessary.

In summary the development is considered an appropriate redevelopment of an existing residential site in a sustainable location that is a high standard of design that addresses residential amenity and parking provision and complies with the development plan and government guidance and is recommended for approval.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1988.

CONTACT OFFICER: Mr G Clifford Tel: 01823 356398