

38/2007/154

MR MARK MASTERS

CHANGE OF USE OF 20 MALVERN TERRACE, TAUNTON TO FOUR ONE BEDROOM UNITS

322867/125524

FULL

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for the conversion of an existing Victorian end of terraced dwelling to provide four one bedroom units. The dwelling is two storeys, with additional accommodation within the roof, and features an external brick finish and slate roof. The property incorporates a two storey rear wing which is a traditional characteristic of this terrace. One parking space per unit is proposed.

The proposed design elements incorporate a new external staircase on the south elevation and three rooflights within the roofslope.

A Design and Access statement has been submitted with the application.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY no comments received.

9 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- design and access statement incorrect, it states that 'most' houses have been converted to multiple occupancy, this is less than 20%; concern over parking arrangement; end of the street currently acts as a natural turning circle; on street parking; out of character with the area, which is predominantly family housing; precedent for further conversions; problems of siting of refuse; children currently play in the street - this proposal would increase road users; properties devalued: site notice and neighbour notification letters not in sync; welfare of existing residents; dwelling sold at half market rate; residents do not want to jeopardize the neighbourhood watch scheme; development would attract tenants incompatible with family element of this residential area: garden to be converted to car park: residents have twice rejected the idea of parking permits.

ONE LETTER OF SUPPORT has been submitted by the agent in response to the representations received on behalf of local residents.

POLICY CONTEXT

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) PPS3 (Housing).

PPG13 (Transport).

Somerset & Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 (Sustainable Development), STR4 (Development in Towns), Policy 33 (Provision of Housing), Policy 48 & 49 (Access and Parking).

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 (General Requirements), S2 (Design), H2 (Housing in Settlements), H4 (Self-Contained Accommodation), M4 (Residential Parking Requirements).

ASSESSMENT

It is considered the main issues for determination relate to the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; residential amenity; and highway implications.

The site lies immediately adjoining the Taunton Town Centre Central Area within settlement limits where the principle of new residential development is accepted subject to consideration of, amongst other things, the relationship to surrounding development. The site is an end of terraced plot. The locality is characterised by substantial two storey terraced houses, set within their own curtilage. It is considered the proposed external alterations would have no material impact upon the character or appearance of the area. The external staircase has been designed to integrate with the appearance of the property using traditional materials proposed.

Some local residents have expressed concern about the proposed conversion of this property. However, national planning guidance in the form of PPS3 (Housing) encourages the creation of mixed and inclusive communities which offer a choice of housing and lifestyle. Furthermore, there is no evidence put forward to substantiate the suggestion that the proposal would lead to undue noise and disturbance in the area. As for the concerns that the scheme would set a precedent for other developments, the proposal has been considered on its individual planning merits in relation to the development plan for the area and all other material considerations and any future applications would be determined in a similar way.

The application makes provision for parking within the site for each of the proposed units. However, it is considered by reason of the close proximity of the site to the Town Centre and a range of modes of transport, and government guidance which seeks to achieve sustainable development, it would be likely that even if parking provision was omitted the proposal would be acceptable. As such whilst the well intentioned objections of local residents to the scheme on highway grounds are noted, it is considered that it would be difficult to substantiate the refusal of the scheme on such grounds.

County Highway response - no highway objections. Ideally it would be recommended to condition that the existing boundary wall be lowered to 600 mm for a distance of 1.5m adjacent to the site access.

To conclude, careful consideration has been given to the nature of the site, amenities of local residents and the character and appearance of the area. For the reasons outlined in the report it is recommended that permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, cycle storage, refuse storage, materials external staircase, boundary wall.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed development would not adversely affect residential or visual amenity of the area. The proposal does not, therefore, conflict with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, H2, H4 and M4 and material considerations do not indicate otherwise

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

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NOTES: