

38/2006/539

T J S (ARCHITECT) LTD

**ERECTION OF 12 FLATS AND DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AT 86-88
PRIORY BRIDGE ROAD, TAUNTON**

323068/125078

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises the erection a building housing 12 flats to replace the existing pair of storey semi-detached properties currently used as offices at 86 - 88 Priory Bridge Road. The layout sites the building to reflect the existing building line along the road and provides a central access which initially served 4 parking spaces at the front and 8 to the rear via an archway. The revised proposal provides disabled parking only at the rear and provides for landscaped amenity space to the front and rear of the site.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST: The site lies in the Area of High Archaeological Potential as defined in the Local Plan. It is in the area of the known to be the Medieval Priory which recent excavations have shown to be well preserved. Normally I would advise an evaluation take place prior to development but as the site is already developed I accept that investigation can take place after permission has been granted. I recommend the applicant be required to provide monitoring and a report of any discoveries made. This should be secured by model condition 55.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY objects to the proposal on the following grounds – Recent modelling of the River Tone, undertaken by Black & Veatch for Project Taunton, has suggested the site is within flood zone 2. However flood levels show that the site would flood during the 1 in 100 year climate change scenario and therefore under the requirements of PPS25 the site must be appropriately defended against flooding for the lifetime of the development. The applicant has not provided sufficient detail regarding the nature of the proposed boundary wall. The wall will act as a defence and the applicant must therefore demonstrate that the structure would withstand such an event. The entrance driveway to the site may act as a flow path into the site from the main road and detail of how the applicant intends to protect the site from flooding via this route is required. The applicant has stated that the surface water from the site will drain into the combined sewer in the north east corner of the site. However comments from Wessex Water suggest that this sewer is foul only and therefore cannot receive surface water flows. Wessex Water has advised the applicant to investigate other means of site drainage. The Environment Agency would like to see the use of sustainable drainage systems to be incorporated where appropriate. The boundary wall is likely to cause surface water to become trapped on the site. The applicant needs to consider how the site will drain effectively without providing a means for fluvial flows to enter the site. WESSEX WATER the development is within a sewered area and it will be necessary to connect to the system which can be agreed at detailed design stage. According to our records there

is a public foul sewer crossing the site. An easement width either side is normally required for maintenance and repair. Diversion or protection measures may be needed. A condition or informative should be imposed to require the developer to protect the systems and agree arrangements for protecting the infrastructure crossing the site. There are no existing separate surface water sewers and it is advised the developer investigate alternative methods for the disposal of surface water (e.g. soakaways). Surface water should not be discharged to the foul sewer. You should be satisfied with any suitable arrangement for the disposal of surface water. There are water mains in the vicinity and connection can be agreed at detailed stage.

POLICE ARCHITECTURAL LIAISON I am concerned that the boundary protection to the site overall is very low, and feel that this leads to the building, residents and their vehicles in the car parking area being vulnerable to attack. Therefore, I would recommend that the boundary walls should be to at least 1.8 metres in height. I am concerned, on grounds of personal safety and site/vehicle security, that the access alleyway for vehicles and pedestrians appears to be insecure. This would allow those with criminal intent to simply walk/drive into this vulnerable area without any form for control. I accept that the ground floor flats on either side have windows that look out towards Priory Bridge Road, but I do not feel that this is sufficient. I would recommend that the entrance should be gated at the front of the building line. Separate pedestrian and vehicular gates could be considered if there is sufficient width. These gates, or gate, should be electrically operated, with remote control from residents' key fob or similar device. The gates should be to the same height as the perimeter walls, i.e.1.8 m. If this recommendation is followed, any intercom linked access control system will need to be installed outside the gating. Adequate security lighting, controlled by photo-electric cell (PE), should be considered to the entrance alleyway and the car park.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER it is important that space is allowed for at least two street trees at the front of the property and three at the rear and there is scope for some larger growing trees.

FORWARD PLAN a development of the site for residential use is acceptable in principle. As the site is located in the 1 in 100 year floodplain of the River Tone due consideration will need to be given to flood risk issues in accordance with policy EN28 of the Local Plan. Although this proposal addresses some of the issues raised in our comments on the earlier scheme we are still concerned about the proposed use of the land at the front of the building for car parking. The need to consult with Project Taunton with regard to the development of adjoining land remains.

LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER in accordance with Policy C4 provision for play and active recreation must be made. I would therefore request a contribution of £1785 for each 2 bed + dwelling towards children's play facilities within the vicinity of the development and £859 per each dwelling towards borough wide outdoor recreation.

1 LETTER OF CONCERN has been received raising the following issues:- over parking provision.

POLICY CONTEXT

RPG 10 – Regional Planning Guidance for the South West Policy EN4 – Quality in the Built Environment, Policy HO5 – Previously Developed Land and Buildings.

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 – Sustainable Development, STR4 – Development in Towns, Policy11 – Areas of High Archaeological Potential, Policy 33 – Provision for Housing, Policy 49 – Transport Requirements of New Developments

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 – General Requirements, S2 – Design, H2 – Housing within Classified Settlements, C4 – Leisure and Recreation, M4 – Residential Parking Requirements, EN28 – Development and Flood Risk

ASSESSMENT

The proposal is for the erection of 12 flats and the main considerations are the impact on the character and appearance of the area, the policy implications of the use, parking, recreation provision and flood risk.

The building proposed is three storey in brick and slate, which reflects the character of other similar flat developments in the area. The revised plans improve the landscape setting of the street scene to the front of the building and allow for improved amenity space to the rear. The rear and side boundary treatment to the site has been revised in light of the initial Police concerns to address security. The design is considered to reflect the amenity impact on adjacent properties and is considered acceptable in design terms.

The site is adjacent to the major development site at Firepool which is referred to under policy T3 of the Local Plan. While the site itself lies outside this area it does fall within the draft Taunton Area Action Plan boundary. However this is at an early stage of preparation and PPS3 advises that planning applications should not be refused on the grounds of prematurity alone. The site is potentially part of a site for a multi-storey car park, however if this were to proceed the application site would need to be acquired. The approval of this site would not prevent the larger development occurring.

The proposal initially provided for a parking layout for 12 vehicles. However, this left little amenity space for residents. The site lies close to the town centre and it is considered that the reduction in parking provision in this location would be acceptable, particularly as there is a public car park on the adjacent site. The revised plan provides 4 disabled parking spaces and allows adequate amenity space for the occupants and this is considered to comply with policy M4 of the Local Plan.

The site requires a contribution for play and active recreation and the applicant is aware of this need and is agreeable to a Section 106 requirement and to the potential provision of a Grampian condition in respect of this contribution. In light of this agreement it is considered appropriate in this case to impose a condition.

The site lies within a flood risk area and the Environment Agency has initially raised objection due to the need to adequately defend the site in times of flood. The applicant is proposing finished floor levels at 15.45 m to address the flood risk allowing for climate change and there is a bund wall proposed around the site to further address the flood protection issue. Further comments from the Environment

Agency are awaited in respect of these protection issues and the subject to the Agency being happy with the protection details and conditions the scheme is considered acceptable.

In summary the proposal is considered the appropriate re-use of a brownfield site in a sustainable location close to the town centre. The scheme is of an acceptable design and subject to the concern of the Environment Agency being addressed the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the views of the Highway Authority and Environment Agency on the amended plans the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, landscaping, drive materials, guttering, walls/fences, cycle parking, bin storage, meter boxes, floor levels, boundary flood protection, parking, archaeology, combined aerial and no development before provision of leisure and recreation contribution agreed.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal is considered to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan policies S1, S2, H2, C4 and M4 and material considerations do not indicate otherwise.

In the event that the Environment Agency maintain their objection permission be refused for reason of development in a flood risk area contrary to PPS25 and Taunton Deane Local Plan policy EN28 on 23rd February 2007.

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: