

38/2007/259

MR HABIB FARBAHI

DEMOLITION OF PUBLIC HOUSE AND ERECTION OF 9 ONE BEDROOM FLATS, SITE OF ALMA INN, SILVER STREET, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY LETTER DATED 10TH JULY, 2007 AND PLAN NO. 4001-2B AND LETTER DATED 25TH JULY, 2007 AND PLAN NO. 4001-3C

323194/124311

FULL

PROPOSAL

The application is to demolish the existing two storey public house building and to erect a 2.5 to 3 storey block of 9 one bedroomed flats in its place on this prominent corner site.

The proposal is before Members as the applicant is a Councillor.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY the site lies mostly within flood zone 2 where risk of flooding is low to medium. The Agency recommends that the sequential test be carried out for the proposal. According to latest government policy, PPS25 residential development in this zone is deemed appropriate, but would still be subject to the application of the sequential test. The responsibility for applying the test lies with the Local Planning Authority when allocating land and reviewing individual applications in flood risk areas. There are no objections to the development subject to conditions of floor levels and surface water drainage and note re flood resilient construction. WESSEX WATER the development is in a foul sewered area and the developer will need to agree a point of connection at detailed design stage. There may be a sewer crossing the site which by virtue of its age could be deemed a public sewer and if so a statutory easement would be required. The developer proposes to dispose of surface water to mains. There are no existing public/separate surface water sewers in the vicinity of the site and it is advised the developer investigate alternative methods of disposal e.g. soakaways. Surface water should not be discharged to the foul sewer. The Council should be satisfied with the arrangement of surface water disposal. There are water mains in the vicinity and connection can be agreed at the design stage.

CONSERVATION OFFICER the existing building sits rather well at a prominent location within the townscape, however the development will not impact particularly on listed buildings or the conservation area. I would note that the elevation to Alma Street is handled rather less well than that to Silver Street. Turning the corner without a gable and continuing the run of the ground floor windows from the Silver Street elevation would harmonise much better with the neighbouring two storey houses. DRAINAGE OFFICER no observations. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT in accordance with Local Plan policy C4 provision for active recreation should be made for the residents of these dwellings. A contribution of £1,023 for each dwelling should

be made towards the provision of facilities for active outdoor recreation. The contributions should be index linked and would be spent in the vicinity of the development for the benefit of new residents.

4 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- lack of parking and will make parking in the area worse, visibility at the junction with Silver Street is poor and may be worsened, 9 units is too many and too dominating and design next to Alma Street housing not in keeping.

1 LETTER OF NO OBJECTION has been received.

1 LETTER OF REPRESENTATION has been received raising the following issues:- concern over damage to adjoining property during construction/demolition; disturbance during construction; adequate surface drainage being provided and the developer being insured and able to carry out necessary remedial work.

POLICY CONTEXT

RPG10 – Regional Planning Guidance for the South West Policies SS5 – Principal Urban Areas, EN4 – Quality in the Built Environment, HO5 – Previously Developed Land and Buildings.

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 – Sustainable Development, STR4 – Development in Towns, Policy 33 – Provision for Housing, Policy 48 – Access and Parking.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 – General Requirements, S2 – Design, H2 – Housing in Settlements, H4 – Self-contained Accommodation, M4 – Parking, C4 – Play and Recreation, EN28 – Development and Flood Risk.

ASSESSMENT

The proposal is to demolish the public house at the Alma Inn on the corner of Silver Street and Alma Street and the erect a new block of 9 flats. The building is not listed and does not lie in the conservation area. The developer has undertaken a consultation with local residents as required by the Statement of Community Involvement and found general support for the scheme. The public house has been vacant for over 7 months and recently has changed hands a number of times. It is in a poor state of repair and is no longer considered viable as a public house having no off street parking and with restrictions on adjacent roads.

The main consideration is the design and the impact on neighbouring properties. The development proposed is two and a half and three storey and this reflects the 10 m height of the development on Silver Street. On Alma Street this height projects approximately 2 m above the height of the adjoining terrace, although the floor plan does not project back as far. It is considered that the provision of a higher building at the end of the terrace as a stop is not out of keeping in terms of the street scene and would be acceptable. While the removal of the gable has been suggested the design is not considered to be out of keeping or to detract from the street scene here. The new building will impact on the neighbouring property in terms of light and privacy

but not to an extent where this is considered refusable. The new windows on the rear of the Silver Street section of the building have been amended and serve lobbies and bedrooms and have the ability to overlook the rear gardens of Alma Street and it is considered necessary to ensure these windows are obscure glazed to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy. The neighbour on one side has raised concerns over damage and disturbance during construction, however this is not an issue that can be controlled, although a note is proposed to draw the developer's attention to this.

The site is one that lies within the central area and would be considered appropriate for the provision of a car free scheme and there is no scope to provide off street parking here. The site is on previously developed land within flood zone 2 and the 'more vulnerable' use is considered to be an appropriate one in Zone 2 according to the guidance in PPS25. There is a requirement for recreation provision in line with policy C4 of the Local Plan and the developer has agreed to this. Consequently a condition is considered appropriate in this instance. The surface water disposal is currently being investigated with Wessex Water as it is suggested this is disposed of in a different manner to the current drains. However the developer points out that the new build floor plan is no bigger than the existing so surface water run off should not be increased from the proposal.

In summary the re-development of this urban site for flats is considered an acceptable one in principle and the design and impact of the scheme is considered to have an acceptable impact and to comply with policy.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, obscure glazing, balcony details, window design, recessed windows, guttering, meter boxes, communal aerial, bin and cycle storage and no development until written agreement to provide outdoor active recreation facilities, landscaping, floor levels, surface water drainage. Note re need to protect and reinstate any damage to neighbouring properties during demolition/construction, Section 106 agreement and flood resilient construction.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed development is considered to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, H2, H4, C4 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.

CONTACT OFFICER: 356398 MR G CLIFFORD

NOTES:

