

38/2006/113

SUMMERFIELD DEVELOPMENTS (SW) LTD

ERECTION OF 24 NO. 1 BEDROOM FLATS WITH CYCLE PARKING AND BIN STORES, 5 - 7 COMPASS HILL, TAUNTON

322252/124281

FULL

PROPOSAL

The application is a detailed submission of reserved matters for 24 one bedroomed flats following the granting of outline permission in March this year. The site is in a town centre location where no parking provision is proposed and service access is proposed in line with previous outline. There are a number of 3 storey developments in the area and the proposal has a similar ridge height to the existing dwellings on the site. The form of the development follows the alignment of Compass Hill with a link at first and second floor level and turns the corner on the northern side of the site to avoid an unsatisfactory juxtaposition of the forms between existing and proposed properties. The scheme has been revised to lower the element of the building adjacent to Cann Street to two storey and to simplify the use of materials to be brick and render.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY observations awaited. WESSEX WATER the development is located in a foul sewerred area. It will be necessary for the developer to agree a point of connection at detailed design stage. The developer has proposed to dispose of water to 'existing surface water sewer'. As there are no existing public/separate surface water sewers in the vicinity it is advised the developer investigate alternative methods for satisfactory surface water disposal, eg. soakaways. Your Council should be satisfied with any suitable arrangement. It should be noted that there is a private combined sewer crossing the site, although this is not Wessex Water responsibility. The developer should agree a point of connection prior to commencement on site.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the details of landscaping are only in indicative form. Details of the trees and shrub species, sizes etc should be submitted for consideration. CONSERVATION OFFICER the architectural design statement relies heavily on those of Dovetail Court, a modern development which would not be sanctioned today in the context of the setting of a Conservation Areas advised in PPG15. The design statement therefore is insular and does not address the wider architectural features of the adjacent Conservation Area, which should be an inherent aspect of the approach to any redevelopment proposals. The proposal represents an overdevelopment of the site and does not incorporate the established characteristics of the adjacent conservation area. That is 1. the mixture of materials is inappropriate with render being generally unrepresentative of the locality and timber cladding alien. 2. inappropriate shallow pitched roofs, dictated by width and depth of buildings which in turn are dictated by proposed density. 3. hipped roofs are used extensively as a

foil to diminish massing. Whilst hipped roofs are evident in the adjacent area they are not characteristic. 4. quality of materials here is all important and fibre cement slates are not appropriate/acceptable. 5. scale and massing not deemed to respect the adjacent properties or be compliant with the character of the characteristics of the area.

12 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- impact on private car park and requirement to install gates which would disrupt traffic; developer should provide suitable access gates to private parking; access will cause problems; inadequate parking; concern that old services will not cope and drainage will be affected and concern over subsidence and impact on retaining wall; the 3 storey development will adversely impact on Dovetail Court; loss of views; overcrowding; inadequate landscaping; height adjacent to Cann Street should be reduced to one or two storey; no parking will impact on traffic; problem with pedestrians crossing; imposing building; loss of light; loss of value; concern over creating crime hot spot and they should be 'safer by design'; overlooking; loss of privacy, amenity and greenery; demolition of houses loss to environment and character of town; increase of pollution and noise with tree loss.

POLICY CONTEXT

RPG10 – 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, POLICY 9 – The Built Historic Environment, POLICY 33 – Provision For Housing, POLICY 39 – Transport and Development, POLICY 48 – Access and Parking, POLICY 49 – Transport Requirements of New Developments.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 – General Requirements, S2 – Design, H2 – Housing within Classified Settlements, H4 – Self-Contained Accommodation, M4 – Residential Parking Requirements, EN6 – Protection of Trees, Woodlands, Orchards and Hedgerows, EN8 – Trees in and Around Settlements, EN14 – Conservation Areas.

ASSESSMENT

The proposal is for a two and three story development to provide 24 one bedroomed flats on this site that lies within the central area of Taunton that previously has had outline permission. The main consideration with the current scheme is the design, materials and impact on the adjoining properties.

The proposal has been designed as a terrace of two and three storey development progressing down Cann Street and returning across the north of the site to provide an enclosed courtyard area. A revised plan submitted improves the impact of the development on the Compass Hill street frontage with the lowering of the building to two storeys at the Cann Street end. The rear of the site backing onto Dovetail Court has also been amended to three storey to maintain 24 units on the site, however this is not considered to have an adverse impact on neighbours in Dovetail Court,

although it will make the development more visible from the Cann Street properties. The reduction in storeys on Compass Hill addresses the concerns of some of the Cann Street residents, a 12 m gap between buildings is provided on the Compass Hill frontage at the Cann Street end of the site and the windows that are proposed in the eastern elevations are to be conditioned to be obscure glazed as these are either small secondary windows to living areas or windows to staircases. On the down slope side a distance of 10m is provided between the new building and Dovetail Court, a reduction in 1m over the existing situation.

The hipped roof design is not considered to be out of keeping with the character of the area and the materials have been amended to delete timber cladding and to provide brickwork and render. The applicant has been asked to revise the roof materials to provide natural slate not fibre cement and confirmation of this is awaited. The mass of the building is large as it steps down the hill and there is an argument that this should be broken up. However, terraced properties are characteristic of the area and on balance the impact of the development is considered to be an acceptable one.

The issue of access and parking has been raised by objectors. The site was considered at outline stage to be one within the town's central area and suitable for a car free development. The Highway Authority agreed that a service access was to be provided in conjunction with a marginal widening of the road and the access and frontage was designed on this basis. The access now proposed is in line with this outline approval. Both bicycle storage and bin storage is provided within the site. Provision of access controls over nearby private car parks is suggested by an objector as part of any approval. However, this cannot be conditioned on a reserved matters application and in any case is not considered reasonable. If the applicant was willing to provide this, then this would have to be considered as a private matter between the parties concerned subject to any necessary planning permission.

In summary the design is considered one that makes best use of a brownfield site in this town centre location. It provides 24 one bedroomed units in a terraced design with associated bin and cycle storage. The proposal will impact on adjacent properties but this is considered to be to an acceptable degree and the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Details be APPROVED subject to conditions of obscure glazing of eastern side elevations, windows recessed. Notes re compliance with outline conditions, meeting secure by design and attention drawn to Section 106 Agreement relating to the site.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal is considered to be an appropriate redevelopment and to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan policies S1, S2 and H2 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: