

38/2007/299

MR R CRIDDLE

DEMOLITION OF HOUSE AND ERECTION OF 12 NO. ONE BEDROOM FLATS AT 74 SOUTH STREET, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY PLANS NOS. 5606/10A, 14A AND 15 RECEIVED 22ND AUGUST, 2007

323482/124316

FULL

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for the erection of 11 No. one bedroom flats on the site of an existing two storey residential dwelling. The scheme has been amended and reduced from 12 flats following concerns to the impact of the development. The existing building measures 8.0 m to the ridge. The proposed building would be three storeys high and measure 10.0 m at its highest point, 9.0 m above ground level. The footprint of the building would be 12.3 m in width and 15.8 m in depth. To the front, the proposed building would extend beyond the building line of the existing dwelling and be positioned in line with row of terraced properties to the north. The footprint of the building would be within 1.0 m from the boundary with the adjoining dwellings. Proposed materials are indicated to be agreed at a later stage, although the design and access statement refers to the use of faced brickwork of similar colour and texture to the older surrounding buildings. The site is located within the designated Taunton Central Area and as such the site is well related to essential facilities and services. No parking is provided within the scheme.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the site lies within the town centre and consequently the proposal not to provide car parking can be considered acceptable. However, with a new build and the extent of the site it ought to be relatively easy to provide adequate cycle parking. Therefore in the event of any permission being granted a condition require secure and sheltered cycle parking for 12 cycles should be imposed. WESSEX WATER the development is located within a sewered area and the developer will need to agree points of connection. In respect of water, there are water mains and connection point can be agreed at detailed design stage. Although not shown on the public sewer record drawing, we understand there may be a sewer crossing the site that, by virtue of its age, could be deemed a public sewer under the former Section 24 provision of the Public Health Act 1936. Public sewerage apparatus is covered by statutory easement and no new building or similar works will normally be allowed within a minimum of 3.0 m if this apparatus.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER previous comments - subject to suitable tree planting it should be possible to soften the impact of the proposals within the street scene. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT TEAM MANAGER in accordance with Policy C4 provision for play and recreation must be made. As each dwelling in the proposed development consists of one bedroom a contribution of £1023.00 per dwelling towards active recreational facilities and playing fields. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

OFFICER the applicant is requested to investigate the history and current condition of the site

9 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- overdevelopment of the site; footprint of the built form getting physically closer to the road frontage and the boundary; significant increase in depth: loss of privacy; loss of amenity due to lack of parking provision; East Reach is below national air quality standards and the additional congestion would compound the problem; South Street is part of an environmental area; design out of character; little consideration for the people living next door; out of scale with surrounding properties; loss of light: overshadowing; inadequate parking; noise; reduce views; no need to demolish a family house; when originally built it was first proposed to be a bungalow but this was refused on the grounds of being out of character, so how can a block of flats be considered acceptable.

WARD COUNCILLOR supports the representations made by the local residents of South Street. The proposed building is out of scale with the existing street scene and does not reinforce the area. Indeed with listed property so close this proposal would be detrimental to the ambiance and character of the street. It is an overdevelopment of a small plot, taking away a perfectly satisfactory existing family home with off street parking. The proposal fails to provide any car parking or even storage for pedal cycles. There is also no facility for satisfactory storage of refuse/recycling. It is naive to think that not one of the proposed new residents will have a vehicle and this can only make worse the already difficult parking situation in this area. The block is large and will cause significant loss of light and a feeling of enclosure to No. 71 adjacent.

POLICY CONTEXT

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development).

PPG3 (Housing), PPG13 (Transport).

RPG10 - Regional Planning Guidance for the South West Policy HO 5: (Previously Developed Land).

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

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 (General Requirements), S2 (Design), H2 (Housing in Settlements), M4 (Residential Parking Requirements), C4 (Open Space Requirements).

ASSESSMENT

It is considered the pertinent issues for consideration in the determination of the application relate to the visual appearance of the building and its impact upon the character and appearance of the area; impact upon residential amenity; and highway safety implications.

This application has sought to address previous concerns to the scale and design of the building and its impact on the street scene. It is considered that the revised design is acceptable and the use of matching materials would help to assimilate the development into the locality. The site does not lie in a conservation area and the building proposed to be demolished is of no particular architectural merit. The predominant building pattern is of two storey dwellings of a smaller footprint and scale, in rectilinear form. However, by digging down the building would be of similar height to the row of terraced properties and would provide an efficient use of land without causing any demonstrable harm to the appearance of the street scene, especially given the existing context of the site.

In terms of assessing the impact of the development on the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers, it is considered the revised scheme has addressed the previous concerns to the development. The internal arrangement has been designed to avoid any unreasonable overlooking to adjoining properties. It is considered that the proposal given its orientation and separation distances would not be so harmful to the residential amenities of No. 76 as to warrant a refusal of the scheme. In assessing the impact of the development on No. 72 it is noted that the scale of the development, to the rear, has been amended significantly. The rear wing has been set down considerably on the boundary with No. 72 and as such it is considered the proposal would not appear so over dominating or reduce light as to be harmful to the living conditions of No. 72.

One of the recurring concerns from local residents is that of the lack of parking provision within the site and the knock on effect this will have on the locality. The Highway Authority considers that by reason of the location of the site close to the services and amenities of the town centre, it is acceptable to have zero parking provision on site. The site is therefore considered appropriate for car free development. However, as part of any consent a requirement would be imposed to provide safe cycle storage for cycles within the site.

The provision of 12 flats requires a contribution towards off site play and open space provision in compliance with policy C4 of the Local Plan. In accordance with standard provisions this equates to £1023.00 per one bed unit. Should Members consider the development to be acceptable then a Section 106 Agreement or suitable condition would be required to ensure that the required contribution was made.

It is accepted that national planning guidance seeks to make the best use of brownfield land, especially in sustainable locations such as town centre locations. Furthermore it is accepted that the proposed development has addressed previous design concerns and reduced any impact upon local residents as such it is recommended the application be approved.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, cycle parking, meter boxes, aerals, landscaping, contamination and no development without prior

written agreement to secure leisure and recreation contributions. Notes re Wessex Water systems, contamination.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed development is considered acceptable and material considerations do not indicate otherwise. The development accords with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies H1, H2, S1 and S2.

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

CONTACT OFFICER: 356586 MR A PICK

NOTES: