

38/2006/600

GREATWORTH PROPERTIES LTD

ERECTION OF 2 NO. (TWO AND A HALF STOREY) BLOCKS TO PROVIDE 12 FLATS (4 NO. 1 BEDROOM AND 8 NO. 2 BEDROOM) , PARKING AND TURNING ON WASTE LAND TO THE REAR OF 30 ILMINSTER ROAD, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY AGENTS LETTER DATED 21ST FEBRUARY, 2007 WITH ATTACHED PLAN NOS. 1274/100A, 101B, 102B AND 104B

325024/124941

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the erection of two blocks of flats on land to the north of Iminster Road and to the rear of Charles Crescent, Newton Road and Lambrook. The proposed flats would be three storeys in height, the third storey being provided within the roof and would provide 2 No. 2 bed roomed flats on the ground floor of each block, 2 No. 2 bed roomed flats on the first floor and 2 No. 1 bed roomed flats in the second floor of each block resulting in a total of 12 flats in total. To the south of the site lies a recently completed row of 4 semi-detached houses with a new access off Iminster road and between 30 and 32 Iminster Road. The flats would be accessed via the new road with a turning area and parking for 14 cars on the site.

To the west of the site lies the rear of dwellings in Charles Crescent. The gable ends of the flats would face these elevations. Block A would have one bathroom window at ground floor and one obscure glazed kitchen window at first floor level facing the rear of these dwellings. Block A would be located at a distance of 6 m from the boundary with their gardens and a minimum of 14 m from the rear of the dwellings. Block B lies further away from the dwellings in Charles Crescent and would be located at a distance of 6 – 10 m from the boundary with their gardens and 21 – 25 m from the rear of the dwellings. Block A would have one obscure glazed bathroom window at ground floor to protect the amenity of future occupants. The first floor kitchen and bedroom window would face the rear of Charles Crescent and would be glazed with clear glass. The second floor living room and bedroom window would face the rear of these dwellings and would also be clear glazed. To the south of the site lies the gable end of one of the new dwellings recently constructed. Block B would be located to the north approximately 4.5 m away from the gable wall of the dwelling. There would be four windows in the ground floor elevation but only two first floor bathroom windows in that elevation and these would be obscure glazed to protect neighbours from any overlooking. There would be no second floor windows in that elevation.

To the east of the site lies the rear of 2 No. two-storey block of flats in Newton Road. The flats are approximately 15 m from the side of the proposed buildings with their rear wall and windows facing over the site. In order to protect their privacy, block A would not have any windows above ground floor level in the facing gable and block B would have 1 bedroom and 1 kitchen window at first floor level and one bedroom window at second floor level. These would all be obscure glazed.

To the north of the site lies a garage courtyard with the rear of existing dwellings beyond. These dwellings would be 20 – 25 m away from the rear of block A.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY raise no objection. WESSEX WATER water mains and foul water disposal is available to the site, surface water is to soakaways and the Local Planning Authority should be satisfied that this is acceptable. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY views awaited.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER there are no trees of amenity value, subject to the parking layout there may be potential for the planting of some larger growing trees. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER no observations. NATURE CONSERVATION AND RESERVES OFFICER no objection subject to a note on badgers and timing of works. BUILDING CONTROL OFFICER no response. HOUSING OFFICER as the number of units is below 25 there is no requirement for affordable housing. LEISURE AND RECREATION OFFICER views awaited .

10 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- the estate road is narrow (5 m) and sufficient for only two cars to pass; inconsiderately parked cars make it almost impossible to pass particularly larger service vehicles; the sweep path required to enter our drive is such that access into our private drive is difficult and this situation is repeated for all 4 of the existing cars; any extra parking on the roadway will make this impossible; the junction of the road with Ilminster Road is shared with the public footway and there have been conflicts between cyclists/pedestrians and drivers exiting the site; access not suitable for the additional traffic that would be generated by proposal (approximately 20 movements at peak times); the development is for 12 flats residents will own 2 or more cars; proposal for 12 parking spaces is inadequate, overspill will park along adjacent estate road causing increased parking and access difficulties for emergency and service vehicles; at holiday times likely to result in cars parking along Ilminster Road; the only available overspill parking available at evenings and weekends is along the small stretch of estate road by the entrance; 2 problems:- 1. road should be left clear to enable entry on the correct side of the road. 2. the resident of 30 Ilminster Road owns a removal company and requires the ability to use the lower end of the estate road as a sweep path to park his lorry in his driveway which is to the rear of his property; the design and access statement that accompanies the application discusses the provisions for refuse and emergency vehicles but the sweep path assumes:- 1. vehicles have been parked considerately and within the designated spaces; 2. that the parked vehicles are cars; 3. there are no parked cars on the existing estate road; refuse vehicles are approximately 2.5 m wide, but the estate road is only 5 m wide, a van or truck parked in either spaces 11 or 12, would make it very difficult, if not impossible, to pass; in addition, cars parked outside our property would severely restrict the movement of traffic along the estate road and would restrict our parking options, with 2 cars many visitors have to park in the estate road; the design and access statement also makes reference to the narrowing of the road at the entry to the development; it says, "A vehicle approaching the narrowing would be able to see an oncoming vehicle at the narrowing and would have sufficient space to allow the other vehicle passage through the narrowing", this makes assumptions,

not least that a line of sight is available; as stated previously, cars already using/parking on the estate road plus overspill will create significant problems and obstructions; the narrowing does not provide for pedestrian access, and gives access to a blind corner where vehicles' and pedestrians' use gives rise to potential conflict with vehicles entering the development; the safety of pedestrians are at risk as neither the proposed development, nor the existing estate road has a footway; residents of properties on the existing estate road have young children; increase in use of the estate road means pedestrians have no alternative but use the road; the estate road will serve a total of 17 properties, contrary to planning guidance and policy; if cars are not parked tight to the road, vehicles from the road side edge will enter the access from the centre of the road, putting pedestrians at risk; the inability to gain access from the roadside edge will inevitably encourage cars to be parked out from the edge, thereby squeezing the available passing room even further; Policy M4 of the Taunton Deane Borough Local Plan states:- the need for residential car parking will be assessed against the following criteria:- (A) the impact on urban design; (B) the location of the development, and its accessibility to employment opportunities and services; (C) the type and mix of the proposed dwellings. The Borough Council will not permit more than an average of 1.5 car parking spaces per dwelling on any residential development. A significant reduction in this average will be expected for elderly persons, student and single persons accommodation, and for residential proposals involving the conversion of buildings where off-road parking provision may be difficult to achieve. Car-free residential developments will be sought in appropriate locations, such as within or adjoining Taunton and Wellington town centres. The Borough Council will require all residential developments to make provision for the parking and storage of bicycles with a minimum provision as follows: (D) 1 space for all residential units with between 1 and 3 bedrooms; (E) 2 spaces for residential units with four bedrooms or more; whilst fully supportive of these sustainable policies reduced parking will have knock-on effect, it will cause significant nuisance and potentially hazardous situations and I consider that the development is unacceptable and that the maximum of 1.5 spaces per property should be provided; there is no reason for a lower limit; the proximity of block B to our boundary, and the resultant loss of light, is unacceptable and it should be reoriented along the eastern boundary; our private drainage along our rear garden should not be used as part of the new development; the flats will create a loss of privacy and reduce levels of light and sun currently enjoyed by surrounding residents; the hedgerow between the site and Newton Road flats should be retained and reinforced with additional planting; noise and pollution from the cars and development will have detrimental impact on amenity; construction traffic and noise will create a highway danger and nuisance for existing residents; traffic moving along Blackbrook way is fast and the turning movements into and out of the site will create a highway danger.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Structure Plan Review Policies STR4 Development in Towns, Policy 49 Transport Requirements of New Development Local Transport Plan 2006-2011.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 General Requirements, S2 Design, H2 Housing within classified settlements, M4 Residential Parking Requirements, EN6 Protection of Trees, Woodlands, Orchards and Hedgerows.

ASSESSMENT

The site comprises 0.09 hectares of unused land behind Iminster Road, Newton Road and Charles Crescent. A new access road was provided between 28 and 30 Iminster Road and the County Highway Authority raise no objections to this roadway forming the access to the proposed flats. The proposal has been amended to provide 4 No. 1 bed roomed flats and 8 No. 2 bed roomed flats with 14 on-site parking spaces. 1 cycle parking space would be provided for each flat. The Taunton Local Plan policy for this location would require a maximum of 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling. However since the approval of that document this council has collaborated with the County Council on the Local Transport Plan. This contains updated parking standards that require a maximum provision of 1.5 per dwelling but, where a site has medium accessibility levels, as in this case, the parking requirement can be reduced by 30%. Using these standards 14 parking spaces are required.

The flats would be contained within two blocks. These have been orientated west to east and main windows have been situated to reduce any impact on the privacy of existing properties. Where windows, above ground floor level, have been necessary and face towards existing properties these are to be either, obscure glazed, or are at a distance that is considered acceptable without the need for obscure glazing. The development of the site will have a greater impact on existing residents than the existing vacant land but I consider that this impact would be acceptable in this case. I am concerned that the existing residents amenity is not affected to an unacceptable level during construction work and I propose an hours of work condition to avoid this. The development would need to contribute to the provision of leisure and recreation facilities in the immediate area and I therefore recommend a condition to ensure this is provided. The design of the blocks has a vernacular approach with brick and tile in keeping with the new development to the south.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, surface water drainage, heights as shown on the submitted drawings, windows obscure glazed, construction hours, construction noise, cycle parking, car parking, turning area, retention of hedge, landscaping scheme, including reinforcement of hedge, leisure and recreation contributions, removal of GDPO for fencing etc, development in accordance with submitted plans. Notes re badger awareness during construction, disabled access, energy conservation and secure by design.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed development would provide residential development within the settlement limits of Taunton In accordance with the requirements of Somerset and Exmoor National Park Structure Plan Review Policies STR4 and 49 and Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, M4 and H2

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: