

43/2007/107

DR RICHARD DAVID CHANNON

**EXTENSION AND CONVERSION OF PUBLIC HOUSE INTO 11 NO. FLATS, SANFORD ARMS, 57 SOUTH STREET, WELLINGTON AS AMENDED BY LETTER DATED 5TH OCTOBER, 2007 WITH ACCOMPANYING DRAWING NO. BP1996/04A AND E-MAIL DATED 5TH OCTOBER, 2007 AND AMPLIFIED BY LETTER DATED 4TH OCTOBER, 2007 WITH ACCOMPANYING DETAILS**

314122/120282

FULL

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**PROPOSAL**

The proposal provides for the conversion and extension of the former Sanford Arms to form 11 self-contained flats. The public house use has now ceased with the residential flat above still occupied. The proposal will provide for 5 one-bed flats and 6 two-bed flats. The existing footprint of the building is increased slightly by replacing the skittle alley extension, which is built of very inferior materials, with a properly built extension. The main building is increased in bulk by virtue of the proposed new roof, with a 45 degree pitch replacing the present shallower angle. Because of the patchy nature of the existing brickwork, it is proposed to render the south-east elevation of the barn building to the rear and the 'skittle alley' extension likewise. The non-original ground floor windows to the street frontage are to be removed and replaced by the insertion of new windows to match those at first floor level and located to co-ordinate with them. A hedge is proposed along the southern boundary of the proposed amenity area. The inn sign will be retained. The existing building is not listed, but it is located within the Conservation Area.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the premises are located approximately 240 m from the nearest public car park and 370 m from the town centre. On proposals such as these and given these distances, the provision of off street parking would usually be required. The existing vehicular access is through an archway and derives access directly onto a mini-roundabout. The access is not of sufficient width for two vehicles to enter and exit through the archway at the same time and this could lead to vehicles backing up or waiting on the public highway which would be detrimental to highway safety. In addition, visibility by vehicles emerging is extremely restricted due to the confines of the archway. This is a particularly difficult site given the existing use and substandard nature of the access together with its close proximity to the mini-roundabout. However, taking the above points into consideration, would be willing to accept a car free development in this location for this development. In the absence of on site parking, would seek the provision of a sheltered, secure cycle facility to be accommodated on the site on a one for one basis. The cycle rack shown on the plans appears to be restricted in size and may not be large enough to accommodate 11 cycles, but would be happy for the detailed design of this facility to be dealt with by planning condition. The drayman's hatch

into the basement is to be replaced with glazed blocks to light a basement bedroom. Given that this feature is to be located on the pavement it is imperative that details of the design, specification and skid resistance are submitted for approval, to ensure the safety of pedestrians utilising this stretch of public footway. In the event of permission being granted, would recommend conditions regarding fully sheltered and secure cycle rack facility capable of accommodating 11 bicycles, no windows at ground floor level to open onto or over the adjoining footway/highway, details of basement light and existing access to be stopped up with full height kerbs in accordance with details to be submitted. Note re Section 171 Licence from the Highway Authority and contact the Highway Service Manager. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST limited or no archaeological implications, therefore no objections. WESSEX WATER it will be necessary for the developer to agree points of connection for the satisfactory disposal of foul flows and water supply. AVON AND SOMERSET CONSTABULARY does not demonstrate how crime prevention measures have been considered in the design of the proposal. Hedges will not deter unauthorised access. Cycle and bin stores should be of substantial construction and lockable. Lack of parking provision may result in more parking in Wellesley Park which could result in neighbour/parking disputes and other forms of vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour. Communal entrances should be fitted with suitable access control systems. Requirements for internal doorsets. There should be suitable security lighting systems. Should meet secure by design standards.

CONSERVATION OFFICER the proposed development will enhance the appearance of the building's principal elevation to South Street and create a visual form not dissimilar to other former public houses of comparable size in the area. However, the site presents clear access issues because of the direct frontage onto the street and its proximity to a busy road traffic junction. These issues will become more acute if the proposed density of 11 separate flats is permitted. Additional parking on the residential roads to the rear of the development and unrestricted access for emergency vehicles are the main concerns. The proposed density is simply too much for the size of the site and it would be more realistic to reduce this down to say, five or six slightly larger flats with a generous amenity area, which would be better scaled to the realistic development density and spatial balance of the site. DRAINAGE OFFICER no objection. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER in accordance with Local Plan Policy C4, provision for play and active recreation should be made. A contribution of £1,023 for each dwelling should be made towards the provision of facilities for active outdoor recreation and an additional contribution of £1,785 for each 2-bed dwelling should be made towards children's play provision. The contributions should be index linked and would be spent in locations accessible to the occupants of the dwellings. HOUSING OFFICER this development is below the current threshold of 15 and therefore does not trigger the affordable housing requirement. If the planning officer decides that 11 flats is below density then there is a need for affordable housing in Wellington and would be happy to discuss with the developer.

TOWN COUNCIL recommend refusal because of overdevelopment.

14 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- will cause parking problems; Wellesley Park is already often difficult to negotiate because of parked cars, causing problems for emergency vehicles and leading to

unhappy even angry inhabitants and an element of chaos; there are already 23 residences nearby with no off road parking; unrealistic to assume that none of the occupants will own cars; there should be a minimum provision of one parking space per unit; the concept that a bicycle rack will solve all the problems is naïve and lacks foresight or proper planning for future occupiers; appears that common sense has been replaced by a pseudo social conscience in discussing the need for affordable housing; profit for the developer must not be allowed to take priority over real issues, which in this case is a sustainable development which meets the needs of the purchaser and does not cause problems for the surrounding area or existing residents; parking of cars will cause access problems for existing residents in Wellesley Park, together with Shuteleigh, Saxby and Grange Close; extra traffic at this busy mini-roundabout; minor accidents might become more frequent as residents drop off and pick up close to the development; serious overdevelopment – 2 or 3 with parking bays would be more appropriate; does not offer affordable housing as no restriction on ownership, so is vulnerable to investors buying for their own gain and offering it for rent on the open market; the site is restrictive and within a Conservation Area, which it will affect; loss of privacy in relation to the adjacent cottages; discrepancies in site plan with regard to boundaries and unlawful window; close to a busy boarding school with children crossing road; traffic calming should be required; hours of work for construction; security and safety of school children during the build - child protection/CRB clearance may be an issue due to proximity of school; the Sanford Arms has not been in use as a public house for about 4 years and before that had attracted only a dwindling number of customers.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

Policy S1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan sets out general requirements for new developments. Policy S2 of the same plan provides guidelines for the design of new developments. Policy H2 states that housing development will be permitted within defined limits of settlements provided certain criteria are met. It is considered that these criteria are met with the current proposal. Policy EN14 of the same plan states that development within or affecting a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it would preserve or enhance the appearance or character of the Conservation Area. I consider that the proposal will meet with this criterion.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The applicant's agent has canvassed local estate agents and they have indicated that there is a shortage and strong need for low cost accommodation in the town, for both one and two bed accommodation. If the number of units was reduced, the size of each unit would increase, negating this. The viability of the scheme would also be brought into question.

The footprint of the buildings on the site will remain largely as it is now with additional accommodation being provided by raising the height of the main roof of the premises and the largely first floor extension of the buildings to the rear. At the County Highway Authority's request, the proposed development is car free and any cars associated with the development are likely to be parked either in the nearby public car parks or on the nearby roads, most of which are outside the Conservation Area.

Although the public house is now closed, there has been no intervening use and it could re-open without the need for any planning permission. Whilst the use of the premises as a public house would have a degree of traffic generation, due to the confined nature of the area at the rear, the number of cars that could have been accommodated would have been limited and is most likely to have been utilised by the landlord and staff rather than customers. The use of the premises again as a public house would therefore result in customers arriving by car and parking in the surrounding roads. Furthermore the applicant points out that the parking situation at the town end of Wellesley Park is exacerbated by staff from Wellington School regularly using this road in preference to their own car park which, being at the rear of the school, is further from the school entrance. The applicant's agent contends that there is significant excess parking capacity on roads close to the development, although other forms of transport will be promoted.

The Agent also contends that it would be difficult to find a use for the building that would not require similar or greater parking provision. In view of the building being within the Conservation Area, demolition would not be viewed favourably.

Most of the points raised by the Avon & Somerset Constabulary have been addressed in the amended submissions. A management company will be set up and the proper maintenance of the security measures and general maintenance of the grounds and common areas will be included in its terms of reference defined in the flat leases.

I do not consider that there is likely to be any increased overlooking or loss of privacy in relation to adjacent properties as a result of the current proposals. Evidence has been provided by the applicant's agent that indicates that the first floor of the barn to the rear has been used residentially in the past as part of the private quarters of the public house.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, rainwater goods, hedge along southern boundary, boundary treatment, fully sheltered and secure cycle rack facility capable of accommodating 11 bicycles, no windows at ground floor level to open onto or over the adjoining footway/highway, details of basement light, existing access to be stopped up with full height kerbs in accordance with details to be submitted, landscaping, rear area/garden to be provided, meter boxes, underground services, Section 106 Agreement to provide a contribution of £1,023 for each dwelling towards the provision of facilities for active outdoor recreation and an additional contribution of £1,785 for each 2-bed dwelling towards children's play provision and bin storage. Notes re disabled access, energy/water efficiency, meter boxes, encroachment, CDM Regulations, Secured by Design, contact Wessex Water, contact Area Highways Manager and hours of construction.

**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:-** The proposal is considered not to have a detrimental impact upon visual or residential amenity and is therefore considered acceptable and, accordingly, does not conflict with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 and S2.. Furthermore the proposed development provides for car free

development in a location close to town centre facilities in accordance with the wishes of the Highway Authority and therefore provides a sustainable form of development.

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

**CONTACT OFFICER: 356463 MR D ADDICOTT**

NOTES: