

38/2002/232

MAGNA HOUSING ASSOCIATION

DEMOLITION OF BUILDING AND ERECTION OF PART 3 STOREY, PART TWO STOREY BUILDING FOR 14 FLATS AT 46 ST JAMES STREET, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY AGENTS LETTER DATED 14TH AUGUST, 2002 AND DRAWING NO. 1640/5A

22820/24770

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

No 46 St James Street is a modern two-storey flat roofed building (currently Inwood workshops) located on the southern side of the street, which along with a similar building adjoining detracts from the street scene. The rear of the site, which is adjacent to Quadrant Court abuts the Conservation Area and has access onto Middle Street. A previous application for 15 flats in a 3 storey building was refused in December 2001 on the grounds of height, bulk and overbearing impact detracting from the amenities of nearby residents, listed buildings and Conservation Area. A note on the decision notice encouraged the applicant to seek a comprehensive scheme incorporating the land to the east.

The applicant claimed to not be able to acquire adjoining land, but re-submitted an application on the same site reducing the height and bulk of the building and the number of windows facing towards the adjacent elderly persons flats. At the meeting on 10th July, 2002 the application was deferred to seek revised proposals moving the building away from the western boundary of the site and with obscure glazing only in windows in the west elevation. The revised drawings show obscure glazed windows. The boundary wall is to be capped just above ground level and the building set 150 mm inside the boundary.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the proposed development site is located within Taunton town centre, close to a public car park and a wide range of facilities. I have no objections to the principle of this development, but would request that conditions be applied to any consent to ensure the provision of secure, covered, cycle parking facilities at the minimum rate of one space per dwelling unit.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER there are trees adjacent to the site at St James Court that may be affected by the proposals. I would like to see these plotted and the impact of the proposals on them fully considered. The tree at the front of the building should also be plotted and any impacts considered. HOUSING OFFICER very pleased to support this necessary and worthwhile scheme providing every effort is made to nullify its effect on

the St James Court development next door. Younger single applicants are the fastest growing category on the Housing Register. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER no objection subject to conditions. CONSERVATION OFFICER submission does not include street scenes of St James Street and Middle Street. The above said, scale of proposal reduced from that previously refused. Suggest conditions including sample panel of brickwork to be erected on site for approval, specific details of windows/doors/railings to be approved.

PRIORY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION 21 flats means perhaps 30 bicycles which require covered storage/need for security that will work for residents. Objection until revised acceptable storage facility added.

THREE LETTERS OF OBJECTION received including one from Knighstone Housing Group who manage adjacent elderly persons scheme. Grounds of objection: young persons housing inappropriate next to elderly persons accommodation, still overlooking windows, loss of light, parking problems, density of development, bulk to rear not reduced significantly, overlooking of garden to 15, Middle Street, still has thoroughfare.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policy H1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit controls new housing development within the urban areas. It gives a presumption in favour of development subject to criteria including "small scale schemes in existing residential areas will increase the development density of these areas without individually or cumulatively eroding their character or residential amenity".

ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the reduced bulk of the building, particularly the reduction to two-storey at the rear, has overcome previous concerns in this respect. The number of windows facing onto the courtyard at St James Court was initially reduced and now with obscure glazing to those that remain it is not considered that demonstrable harm will be caused to the amenities of existing residents. Whilst concerns about locating young persons housing next to elderly persons accommodation are understood, there appears to be no overriding planning argument to justify refusal on this ground. Whilst setting the building 150 mm inside the wall will have minimal impact compared with that submitted, concerns in this respect seem to have been centred around questions of ownership which is not a material planning consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of materials, hardsurfacing, rainwater goods, landscaping, completion of development, windows facing St James Court obscure glazed and fixed, aeriels, detailed drawings of doors, windows railings, contamination and cycle parking. Notes re: remediation, materials and CDM Regulations.

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

CONTACT OFFICER: 356464 MR T BURTON

NOTES: