

38/2004/287

GADD HOMES LTD

ALTERATION AND EXTENSION OF FORMER FOUR ALLS PUBLIC HOUSE TO ACCOMMODATE CLASS A3 (FOOD AND DRINK USE) TOGETHER WITH 19 FLATS AND PROVISION OF CAR PARKING AND CYCLE STORAGE AT FOUR ALLS, CORPORATION STREET, TAUNTON.

22528/24454

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

A proposal to demolish the former Four Alls and replace it with a modern five storey building accommodating 21 flats and two office suites, was withdrawn in March following a recommendation of refusal. This proposal seeks to retain the Four Alls building, maintaining a food and drink use (A3) at ground floor level. To the rear a large extension is proposed three storeys in height and also providing accommodation in the roof space. The design treatment proposed is more traditional than previously proposed taking reference from the original building.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY I would refer you to my letter dated 12 February 2004 in connection with planning application No: 38/2004/025. Whilst I do not have a problem with the proposed redevelopment of the Four Alls site, I do have a problem with the use of the vehicular access onto Corporation Street. Visibility at the proposed access is extremely restricted. Also the access is too close to the roundabout and the pedestrian crossing which could create additional vehicle and pedestrian conflict. Therefore I would again recommend that this application be refused on highway grounds for the following reasons:- The formation of an access together with the introduction of conflicting traffic movements on Corporation Street such as would be generated by the proposed development would be prejudicial to road safety. The proposed access onto Corporation Street does not incorporate the necessary visibility splays which are essential in the interests of highway safety. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST the site lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential as defined by the Local Plan (Policy EN24). It lies in the area identified by the English Heritage Extensive Urban Survey as being part of the Saxon town and burials have been discovered very close to the proposal site. Although it is accepted that the may be disturbance to the remains in this area it is likely that significant archaeology will be impacted by this proposal. However, at present the application contains insufficient information concerning the affects on remains. For this reason I recommend that the applicant be asked to provide farther information on any archaeological remains on the site prior to the determination of this application. This is likely to require a field evaluation. WESSEX WATER the development is located within a sewered area, with combined sewers available. According to our records, there is a public combined sewer crossing the site. Please find enclosed a copy of our sewer records indicating the approximate position of the apparatus. Wessex Water normally requires a minimum, three-metre, easement width on either side of its apparatus, for the purpose of

maintenance and repair. Diversion or protection works may need to be agreed. It is recommended that a condition or informative is placed on any consent to require the developer to protect the integrity of Wessex systems and agree prior to the commencement of works on site, any arrangements for the protection of infrastructure crossing the site. The developer must agree in writing prior to the commencement of works on site, any arrangements for the protection of our infrastructure crossing the site. The developer has proposed to dispose of surface water to the main sewer, as existing. Attenuation of surface water flows is likely to be required subject to flow calculations, as the public sewer is of limited capacity. It will be necessary, if required, for the developer to agree points of connection onto our systems, for the satisfactory disposal of foul flows and surface water flows generated by the proposal. The connection point can be agreed at the detailed design stage. With respect to water supply, there are water mains within the vicinity of the proposal. Again, connection can be agreed at the design stage. It is also recommended that the developer should agree with Wessex Water, prior to the commencement of any works on site, a point of connection onto Wessex systems. FIRE OFFICER the details of the proposals have been examined and the following observations are made:- Means of Escape - Means of escape in case of fire should comply with Approved Document B1, of the Building Regulations 2000. Detailed recommendations concerning other fire safety matters will be made at Building Regulations stage. Access for Appliances - Access for fire appliances should comply with Approved Document B5, of the Building Regulations 2000. Water Supplies - All new water mains installed within the development should be of sufficient size to permit the installation of fire hydrants conforming to British Standards. ENGLISH HERITAGE we have considered the application and do not wish to make any representations on this occasion. We recommend that this case should be determined in accordance with government guidance, development plan policies and with the benefit of conservation advice locally. If there are specific reasons for seeking the advice of English Heritage on this application that were not stated in the notification to us, we would be grateful if you could explain your request. We can then let you know if we are able to help on this occasion and agree a timetable with you. In the event of material changes to the proposals before the application is determined, please let us know so that we can consider the need for any further advice.

CONSERVATION OFFICER (1) Safer design approach than that previously refused. (2) pleased that Four Alls facade retained. (3) Corporation Street elevation mimics the existing building but fails to respect the quality of detailing and materials or the rhythm of bay widths. (4) The Bath Place proposals are less satisfactory. As the existing elevations clearly show, the height of the existing Four Alls is greater than the adjoining cottages but not so great as to feel/appear over dominant. The application proposal however clearly does have a dominant effect and in this respect, I cannot support the proposal. Equally, the existing views to the site, from The Crescent/Unison Car Park, clearly portrays the domestic scale of the Four Alls/adjoining cottages, which would be undermined by the new structures nearest to the latter and perhaps others. A photo montage of existing, with the proposals super imposed, from this vantage point, could well assist in confirming or not, this opinion. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER odours arising from cooking should, not be detectable at the facade of any residential or other odour sensitive premises. (This potential problem could be overcome by the fitting of a suitably filtered air extraction system). Noise from any air extraction system should not exceed background noise levels by more than 3 dB(A) for a 2 minute leq, at any time when measured at the facade of residential or other noise sensitive premises.

Equipment shall be installed to suppress and disperse fumes and/or smell produced by cooking and food preparation, and the equipment shall be effectively operated for so long as the use continues. Details of the equipment shall be submitted to, and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the equipment shall be installed and be in full working order to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of use. The use hereby permitted shall not be commenced until details of the extract ventilation system and odour control equipment, including details of any external ducting, have been submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority and the equipment so approved has been installed. Such approved equipment shall thereafter be operated at all times when cooking is carried out and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The extraction equipment installed shall be regularly maintained to ensure its continued satisfactory operation and the cooking process shall cease to operate if at any time the extraction equipment ceases to function to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT TEAM the proposed development does not make provision for childrens play although it will generate additional needs. I would therefore request a contribution of £806 per each of 9 x 1 bed dwellings for sport and £2,056 per each of the 10 x 2 bed dwellings for sport and play in the local area giving a total off site contribution of £27,814 in line with local plan policy.

CIVIC SOCIETY plans for the old Four Alls site were put before 62 of our members at July's meeting, raising the following points and observations:- As the Civic Society has always maintained, TDBC should be looking closely at how the whole site, from Hunt's Court to the West facing elevation of the 4 Alls could be handled holistically as one side of a square that could contain a prestigious Cultural Quarter. There is a groundswell of public opinion growing for such a development, and it is imperative that the opportunity is not lost. Form T&CPI Comments:- Question 13 - We are concerned that the general term 'plain tiles to match' is not specific enough to guarantee that those used by Gadd's will match or compliment the existing curved and square tiles that have been laid out in an alternate fashion. There is no reference to curved tiles throughout their application. The proposed 'natural slate' roof tiles gives the impression that 'grey' tiles may be used, contrary to the distinctive red tile character of the building. Guarantees on both points would be most reassuring. Question 20 - We have concerns over pedestrian safety and the contribution this plan will make to traffic congestion. We assume that the proposed courtyard entrance will be secured by means of an electric gate etc. If so, the timing involved for a resident's car to stop, wait for the entrance to open and for the car to leave Corporation Street may have congestion affects on the Town Centre. However, pedestrian flow from the small, inadequate pedestrian island in Corporation Street goes mainly towards the town centre and not towards The Crescent. If the island was moved closer to the town centre it could have a calming affect on traffic in Corporation Street and may assist in reducing the impact of the proposed Four Alls residential traffic. As a bonus it could be enlarged to enable more people, wheelchairs and pushchairs to fit within it, which at present it does not. Such a suggestion may aid Gadd's application and site logistics and could warrant some contribution from them on this minor change. It may also be recommended that residents be disallowed from turning right into the courtyard. Design Statement:- 2.3 - As advised in the PPG3 guidance, the government has said that PPG3 should:- 'plan to meet the housing requirements of the whole community, including those in need of affordable and special needs housing' We cannot see in the plans any apartments with access for the disabled. 3.2 - As mentioned above we believe that a full study of the traffic and pedestrian impact should be made before

application approval. 3.4 - The term 'plain tiles' again is used and the use of 'practicable' concerning colour and texture or reuse of tiles is too unspecific and does not give confidence that consistency will be kept. General:- As in our objection to the previous design submitted by Gadd's, we feel that a lower building would be more in keeping with surrounding buildings, and that Corporation Street would be very overcast by another towering edifice on the corner. We would also like to see stone, similar to that used on the Four Alls exterior, used at ground floor level, and above each window and door instead of brick. To promote the integration of the new building to old building we would like to suggest professionally cleaning of the Four Alls exterior for this reason. Perhaps Gadd's can be persuaded to refurbish the metal railings around the pavement that surrounds the Four Alls site. TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP the Partners acknowledged the reduction in scale from the previous application. The majority of the partners welcomed this design, which shows the retention of the original front elevation of the Four Alls Public House, but others felt that it was not very adventurous, at this key gateway to the town. The entry point to Bath Place between Moss Foods and The Four Alls, off The Crescent is very dated, unattractive and unwelcoming We would welcome some radical improvement to this area as part of the scheme, that reflects the qualities of Bath Place as an historic and niche shopping area. Overall the partnership approve this revised application and welcome the additional overall the partnership approve this revised application and welcome the additional residential provision in this location, but would welcome some contribution to the environment in the immediate vicinity.

ONE LETTER OF CONCERN has been received welcoming the retention of the western end but raising concerns in respect of massing; overdevelopment; parking problems; refuse storage; and impact on Bath Place.

POLICY CONTEXT

The proposal needs to be judged against Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review in respect of highway safety. POLICY 49 Proposals for development should be compatible with the existing transport infrastructure, or, if not, provision should be made for improvements to infrastructure to enable development to proceed. In particular development should:- provide access for pedestrians, people with disabilities, cyclists and public transport; provide safe access to roads of adequate standard within the route hierarchy and, unless the special need for and benefit of a particular development would warrant an exception, not derive access directly from a National Primary or County Route; and, in the case of development which will generate significant freight traffic, be located close to rail facilities and/or National Primary Routes or suitable County Routes subject to satisfying other Structure Plan policy requirements. Policies H1 and S1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit are also relevant. H1 Housing development will be permitted within defined limits of settlements, provided that: (A) there is safe and convenient access by bus or on foot to facilities and employment. In the case of proposals of a significant scale, bus or walking access to a town centre or rural centre will be required, taking account of any off-site works proposed in accordance with criteria (B); (B) necessary provision is made for off-site public transport, cycling and pedestrian facilities and highway improvements to cater safely for the expected number of trips generated by the development and minimise the proportion of car trips; (C) traffic calming, pedestrian, cycle and bus measures are incorporated where necessary to give priority to safe and convenient access and circulation by means other than the

car; (E) the layout allows people with impaired mobility or a disability safe and convenient access and movement to and between dwellings by careful positioning of potential obstructions, ramps, dropped kerbs, textured surfaces and reserved car parking; (G) 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; (H) a coherent approach to the overall design is adopted, including layout, landscaping, building designs, materials, open spaces and circulation routes, to create locally distinctive developments well related to their surroundings; and (I) existing and proposed dwellings will enjoy adequate privacy and sunlight. (J) on housing developments and conversions of a substantial scale a reasonable mix and balance of housing types and sizes be incorporated to cater for a range of housing needs particularly those low cost housing types which are under represented in the current stock. S1 Proposals for development, taking account of any mitigation measures proposed, will be required to meet the following criteria, in addition to any other Development Plan policies which apply in a particular case: (A) additional road traffic arising, taking account of any road improvements involved, would not lead to overloading of access roads, road safety problems or environmental degradation by fumes, noise, vibrations or visual impact; (B) the accessibility of the development by public transport, cycling and pedestrian networks would be consistent with its likely trip generation and minimising the need to use the car; (C) the proposal will not lead to harm to protected wildlife species or their habitats; (D) the appearance and character of any affected landscape, settlement, building or street scene would not be harmed as a result of the development; (E) potential air pollution, water pollution, noise, dust, glare, heat, vibration and other forms of pollution or nuisance which could arise as a result of the development will not harm public health or safety, the amenity of individual dwellings or residential areas or other elements of the local or wider environment; (F) the health, safety or amenity of any occupants or users of the development will not be harmed by any pollution or nuisance arising from an existing or committed use; (G) the safety of any occupants or users will not be at risk from ground instability; and (H) the site will be served by utility services necessary for the development proposed. Policies EN15, EN16 and EN17 are relevant in terms of impact on the Conservation Area and setting of listed buildings. EN15 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. EN16 There is a strong presumption against the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Proposals involving the demolition of other buildings within or affecting a Conservation Area will not be permitted unless acceptable proposals for any redevelopment or new use for the site have been approved. This requirement will also apply in the very rare circumstances where proposals involving demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution are allowed. EN17 Development proposals which would harm a listed building, its setting or any features of special or historic interest which it possesses, will not be permitted. In terms of car parking Policy M3(a) is relevant. M3a In order to promote sustainable travel, and to reduce the amount of land taken for development, the Borough Council will consider the need for residential car parking against the following criteria: Impact upon urban design. The location of the development, and its accessibility to employment opportunities and services. The type and mix of 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:- 1 space for all residential units with between 1 and 3 bedrooms. 2 spaces for residential units with four bedrooms or more.

ASSESSMENT

The retention of the frontage of the Four Alls is welcomed and the design treatment elsewhere is generally acceptable. However, there remain concerns in respect of scale and potential overdevelopment, particularly in terms of Bath Place. Discussions with the applicant have taken place with a view to submitting revised proposals in this respect. However, concerns in respect of highway safety remain and in particular the potential increase in conflicting traffic movements in Corporation Street. The site is in a town centre location where a car free scheme would be appropriate and it is therefore concluded that refusal is justified on highway safety grounds.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the receipt of satisfactory revised drawings reducing bulk and impact the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be REFUSED for reasons of highway safety. Should revised proposals not be forthcoming a further reason of scale, massing and overdevelopment be added.

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: