

43/2004/048

MAGNA HOUSING GROUP

**ERECTION OF 2 NO. DISABLED PERSONS BUNGALOWS AND CAR PORTS,
LAND ADJACENT TO 32 ALEXANDRA ROAD, WELLINGTON**

13726/20886

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

The proposal provides for the erection of two 2 bedroom disabled persons bungalows with integral car ports. The proposed materials are to be red brick walls with reconstructed slate for the roofs. The site is currently an open amenity area laid to lawn and shrub beds with a path crossing it. The scheme is part of a wider proposal to provide affordable homes on under-utilised land within Wellington and is a partnership between Magna Housing Association and TDBC. There was a planning application in 1988 covering both the current site and part of Roly Poly Green opposite, which included the provision of two dwellings on the current application site. The Resolution was that the development not be carried out for reasons that development on existing public open space or playing fields would not normally be permitted unless alternative land of equivalent size, suitability and convenience is provided and that the proposal would have constituted an undesirable erosion of the Roly Poly open space which would be detrimental to the visual and recreational amenities of the area.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the site lies within a residential area of Wellington and there are no highway objections subject to conditions regarding surfacing of driveways and visibility splays along Victoria Street and Alexandra Road, and a note regarding contacting the Highway Service Manager. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST a Bronze Age axe was discovered less than 20 m away (in the late 19th Century) and further artefacts may be disturbed by the proposal. Therefore recommends that the applicant be required to provide archaeological monitoring of the development and a report on any discoveries made. This should be secured by the use of programme of archaeological work condition. WESSEX WATER it will be necessary for the developer to agree a point of connection onto the combined sewer for the satisfactory disposal of foul flows generated by the proposal and for connection to the water mains. There is a public combined sewer crossing the site; Wessex water normally requires a minimum 3 m easement width on either side of its apparatus for the purpose of maintenance and repair; diversion and protection works may have to be agreed.

LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER no observations to make. HOUSING OFFICER agreed development with Magna Housing Association.

TOWN COUNCIL opposed to this application because it will result in the loss of an open space area.

ONE LETTER OF OBJECTION the land has been a public open space for about 25 years, prior to that a lorry park and understand prior to that a children's play area; description of proposal does not refer to public open space; the land is opposite Roly Poly Green which is used by local children and dog walkers and which the Council has previously tried to build on; will discourage children and young people from taking exercise by building on open space; will make the parking situation worse; will restrict ability of young and old to use Roly Poly Green.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policy STR1 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review contains criteria for sustainable development, including ones that (a) development should develop a pattern of land use and transport which minimises the length of journeys and the need to travel and maximises the potential for the use of public transport, cycling and walking; and (b) give priority to the continued use of previously developed land and buildings.

Policy WD/HO/3 of the West Deane Local Plan states that within the identified limits of settlements the development of new housing will normally be permitted provided that certain criteria are met. Policy WD/RT/7 of the same plan states that development will not be permitted on public or private open space or recreational or amenity value unless its loss would be compensated for the long term by improved recreation provision or other community benefit.

Policy S1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit includes general requirements for new developments. Policy S2 of the same plan provides guidelines for the design of new developments. Policy H1 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 C3 states that proposals involving the loss of recreational open space will not be permitted unless a) there is an excess of good quality recreational open space of the type which would be lost, sufficient to meet local demand; or b) the proposed development provides recreational or community benefit greater than the long term recreational value of the open space that would be lost; or c) equivalent provision in a convenient location is made to at least an equal standard and with equal community benefit.

ASSESSMENT

Although the proposal constitutes development on an area of public amenity land, the Leisure Development Manager does not raise any objection to the proposal. The Taunton Deane Local Plan includes a notation that Roly Poly Green opposite should remain undeveloped, this notation does not cover the current application site. In view of these considerations and the indication in Policy C3 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan that loss of recreational open space can be acceptable if the proposed development provides community benefit, I consider that the proposal, which provides public sector disabled housing, is acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of materials, landscaping, boundary treatment, surfacing of driveways, visibility along Alexandra Road and Victoria Street, parking, meter boxes, programme of archaeological work and removal of GPDO rights for walls and fences. Notes re contacting Highways Service Manager, contact Wessex Water, sewer crosses site, disabled access, energy/water conservation, meter boxes, compliance and CDM Regulations.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION: The proposed dwellings will not have any adverse material impact on neighbouring properties or the street scene and is therefore in compliance with Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit Policies S1 and S2. Although the proposal will result in a loss of recreational open space, this is considered acceptable in view of the community benefit which provides public sector disabled housing.

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

CONTACT OFFICER: 356461 MR J HAMER

NOTES: