

38/2004/520

BARNARDOS DEVELOPMENTS

ERECTION OF APARTMENT BLOCK CONTAINING 20 SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS AT FORMER PRINCESS MARGARET SCHOOL SITE, MIDDLEWAY, TAUNTON AS AMPLIFIED BY DRAWING JAR003-P-005 ATTACHED TO SDA'S LETTER DATED 22ND NOVEMBER, 2004

22373/23568

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

Permission was granted in November 2004 for the demolition of the principal buildings on the site of Blagdon Lodge and the Princess Margaret School, and the erection of a retirement village comprising 72 apartments, 11 bungalows and 11 houses. Incorporated into that permission was a S.106 Agreement requiring an element of social housing.

Following discussions with the selected registered social landlord one of the apartment blocks has been redesigned to accommodate 20 social housing units. In addition a separate access is proposed, together with an enclosure separating the social units from the remainder of the site.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the access onto Middleway should be provided with visibility splays of 4.5 m x 60 m in both directions with no obstruction to visibility than these splays in access of 300 mm above adjoining carriageway level. In the event of permission being granted I recommend that the following conditions are imposed: (1) There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 300 mm above adjoining road level in advance of lines drawn 4.5 m back from the carriageway edge on the centre line of the access and extending to points on the nearside carriageway edge 60.0 m either side of the access. Such visibility splays shall be fully provided before the access hereby permitted is first brought into use and shall thereafter be maintained at all times. (2) The area allocated for parking on the submitted plan shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted. (3) The proposed access over the first 4.5 m of its length, as measured from the edge of the adjoining carriageway, shall be properly consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel) in accordance with details which shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. (4) The gradient of the proposed access shall not be steeper than 1-in-10. (5) Provision shall be made within the site for the disposal of surface water so as to prevent its discharge onto the highway, details of which shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such drainage shall be provided prior to the development first being brought into use. Note: Having regard to the powers of the Highway Authority under the Highways Act 1980 the applicant is advised that a Section 184 Permit must be obtained from the Highway Service Manager, Taunton Deane Area, Burton Place, Taunton, TA1 4HE. Application for such a Permit should be made at least three weeks before access

works are intended to commence. WESSEX WATER the existing foul sewerage system has capacity to accommodate the development proposed. The developer has agreed with Wessex Water for surface water discharge to be restricted to a rate of 95 l/s by means of a hydrobrake. Points of adequacy for connection will be agreed at the detailed design stage.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the south east corner of the proposed dwelling is close to the existing group of trees. Subject to tree protection measures it should be possible to build the dwelling without affecting the health of the tree. The building is too close to meet the 2/3rd mature height guidance normally applied for new building, however, subject to assurances (conditions) that the site will be managed by a management company I consider it would be appropriate to relax the usual guidance. The proposals will meet BS 5837 'Trees in Relation to Construction' given the above it would be advisable to move the building as far from the trees as possible even if just 2 or 3 metres. The site will need landscaping especially along the southern and western boundaries. Details of boundary fencing/treatment should also be provided as soon as possible. CONSERVATION OFFICER (1) Disappointing that the overall site is to be developed in the way proposed i.e. application site is now segregated from the rest of the site and this is clearly portrayed/indicated by way of:- (a) access/approach, uninviting (car parking/access road/sub station/high wall/fencing). (2) Access road and parking now a more dominant feature of the site, giving a poor setting for the proposed building and 'sense of arrival'. (3) When the approved Apartment Block 5 is compared to the proposed, the 'appeal' of the architecture is severely diminished. In essence by comparing the two in isolation, different sites would be suggested and this is not to be promoted. (4) In respect of the application design(s), I would make reference to the above comments and add that the canted bays on the east and west elevations, site uncomfortably off-centre of their associated hipped roofs. (5) In summary, whilst the proposal is for social housing, I do not consider that the standards of design and layout achieved by the extant permission should be compromised. This application does not meet those standards and I therefore have the concerns expressed above. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER suggests conditions. HOUSING OFFICER we are anxious to see social housing on this valuable site, close to the town centre at a level which has been agreed to reflect the need for elderly accommodation.

TWO LETTERS OF OBJECTION received on grounds of inadequate parking provision; large scale of this block,s suggesting that if reduced would be more aesthetically pleasing and reduce the demand for car parking; site is already overdeveloped.

POLICY CONTEXT

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy 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.

Policy S2 Development must be of a good design. Its scale, density, height, massing, layout, landscaping, colour, materials and access arrangements will be assessed to ensure that the proposal will, where reasonable and feasible: (A) reinforce the local character and distinctiveness of the area, including the landscape setting of the site and any settlement, street scene and building involved; (B) incorporate existing site features of environmental importance; (C) reinforce nature conservation interest; (D) minimise the creation of waste in construction and incorporate recycled and waste materials; (E) include measures to reduce crime; (F) minimise adverse impact on the environment, and existing land uses likely to be affected; (G) include facilities to encourage recycling; (H) make full and effective use of the site; and (I) subject to negotiation with developers, incorporate public art.

ASSESSMENT

To accommodate this building on the site, other buildings which formed part of the previous proposal will need to be resited. However, this does not form part of this application and there is therefore a conflict between this application and permission No. 38/2003/549. The agent is aware of this, but has not chosen to amend the application accordingly. The application is therefore unacceptable and should be refused on the grounds of lack of information.

One of the underlying principles of providing affordable housing within new development is that it must be assimilated into the development as a whole and not appear as being of poorer design quality or physically separated. In this instance much of the interest created by the detailed design treatment has been removed. Furthermore, not only is a separate access proposed, but the site is enclosed, whilst the remainder remains in open setting. All of these factors mitigate against the principles of assimilating affordable housing referred to above, and as a result leaves an incoherent overall scheme contrary to Policies H1(H) and S2(A) of the recently adopted Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED for reasons that proposed building, by reason of its design, its setting and means of access and enclosure is inferior to that previously approved and will therefore detract from the character and appearance of the overall development contrary to Policies H1(H) and S2(A) of the Taunton Deane Local Plan; and insufficient information has been submitted in respect of the changes to approval necessary to accommodate their revised proposals.

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: