

38/2005/160

BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY

DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF 10 FLATS AND ASSOCIATED PARKING AND EXTERNAL WORKS AT BRITISH RED CROSS CENTRE, WILTON STREET, TAUNTON.

22297/24037

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

Planning permission for the erection of a two storey block of 10 flats (incorporating an additional 3rd level of accommodation within the roof) was refused December 2004 for three reasons:- the bulk, depth and height were out of keeping with the street scene, overlooking of adjacent residential properties and poor siting of the access resulting in unacceptable visibility splays. The current proposal is still for 10 flats but has redesigned the building to reduce its bulk, height and overlooking. There would still be a 3rd storey in the roof but 2 gable features in the front elevation would visually provide the third storey. The proposed flats would bridge the height difference that exists in ground levels between 2a Wilton Street, located at street level and 10 Wilton Street that lies approximately 3.3 - 3.5m above the adjacent street level. The access has remained in the existing location, which affords the best possible visibility splays for the site frontage. This access would go beneath an arch to give access to 12 parking spaces located around the boundary of the site.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY views awaited. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST no objection. WESSEX WATER the development is in a foul sewer area with foul and surface water sewers available, water mains are available; records indicate a public foul sewer is close to the site.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER subject to suitable landscaping the proposal should be able to be integrated into the local area. CONSERVATION OFFICER views awaited. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER noise emissions from the site during construction should be controlled by condition. LEISURE AND RECREATION OFFICER a contribution to children's play area and recreational open space is required in accordance with the Council's standards.

10 LETTERS OF OBJECTION (including one from the Wilton and Sherford Community Association) have been received raising the following issues:- the proposal attempts to reduce the impact on the surrounding area by reducing the depth and height of the building but it would still tower over 2a Wilton Street; the building should be reduced to two storey to reflect the area; the frontage should have half rendered elevations to match its neighbours with a tiles not slate roof; the 20- 22 m window to window distance appears to have been infringed; the building would be imposing to the property on its south side, reducing the amount of light to the property; the applicant has compared the building to those in the area that cannot be seen from this site and this is inappropriate;

the parking provision 1 space per unit plus 2 visitor spaces will be insufficient and result in more chaos for street parking in the area; the windows in the northern elevation will overlook the adjacent property; the proposals are out of keeping with the area; Visibility splays will result in reduced on street parking in the area; they do not appear to be any facts submitted on the current traffic flows at present there is a small amount of traffic using the site through out the week; the building will effect outlook from an adjacent property; the existing facilities are used by the local community and its loss is to be regretted, making it difficult for the community to meet locally at all.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 sustainable Development; STR2 Towns; 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.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 General Requirements for Development; S2 Design; H2 Housing Development Within Taunton EN16 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. EN23 Area of High Archaeological Potential; M4 Residential Parking Provision.

ASSESSMENT

The proposed development is for the construction of a block of flats within an existing street scene that is characterised by houses. It is therefore important that the proposed development should take account of the nature of the existing houses and aim to compliment their character whilst maximising the development potential of the site in line with advice contained within PPG3 on the redevelopment of brown field sites within Town Centres. There is a significant difference in site levels between 2a and 10 Wilton Street and the proposal seeks to use this to its advantage. The street scene submitted with the proposal shows that the proposed block will be lower than 10 Wilton Street and will be reduced in height adjacent to 2a Wilton Street to minimise the impact on these properties. Care has been taken to ensure that windows on the north and south of the development are obscure glazed where necessary to avoid direct overlooking of existing properties. The objectors consider that the development would be out of keeping with the area and suggest it is reduced to two storey and the materials altered to reflect the render/brick and tile characteristics of the street. Bearing in mind the level differences across the site and the need to maximise the development potential of the site, I do not consider it necessary to alter the height of the proposal. However, I consider that an amendment to the materials will help the development to be integrated into the street scene. Objectors are also concerned about the relationship of the development to 10 and 2a Wilton Street. 10 Wilton Street is located at a higher level than the development site. The erection of a three-storey building in this location will have no greater impact than to a two-storey development at the same ground level as the house. As such I do not consider the development to be too high in this location. Siting of the development ensures that the building does not project beyond the rear of the existing dwelling. There are two windows in the side elevation of number 10 but

these are separated from the boundary of the site by a driveway to the garage. The development is located an additional 1.9-2.4m away from the boundary and I consider this relationship to be acceptable. Toilet and kitchen windows are located in the wall of the new development. The kitchen windows would be out of alignment with those of no 10 but the toilet windows would be closer to the windows of the existing property. As a result it is proposed to obscure glaze the toilet windows on this elevation. Number 2a Wilton Street lies to the south of the proposed development and is situated at a lower ground floor level with a 3m driveway separating it from the development site. The development has been reduced in height so that the wall is only 0.9 m above the wall height of number 2a and the roof has been designed to slope away from the boundary. I consider that the relationship between the heights of the buildings is acceptable. The proposed development projects beyond the rear wall of 2a Wilton Street (main house) by approximately 6m and the ground floor extension by approximately 4.4 m and it will effect the sunlight reaching the rear of the existing dwelling. Bearing in mind the 3m drive, the additional 1.4 m to the wall of the development and the slope of the roof away from the boundary, I consider that any loss of sunlight would not be such as to warrant refusal. Where the toilet windows might result in overlooking of the rear of 2a Wilton Street they have been obscure glazed and would be retained as such by condition. The proposed development has been redesigned to introduce traditional gables into the front elevation, in character with the adjacent houses and a cat slide roof to the front to reiterate the two storey design of the housing. The rear projection in the original scheme, that created overlooking problems, has now been deleted. Overall the proposal is now considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement by 27th May, 2005 for contributions for the provision of children's play area and recreation open space and the receipt of amended plans showing a render /brick and tile elevations, the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, access, turning/parking, internal access road free from obstruction, no gates, access gradient, cycle parking, bin storage, landscaping, obscure glazing, noise during construction, no additional windows in the north or south elevations. Notes re disable persons, energy conservation, meter boxes, contaminated land, secure by design, infrastructure.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal is for residential development in accordance with the Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, H2 and M4.

Should the S.106 agreement not be completed by 27th May, 2005 with Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be REFUSED.

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

CONTACT OFFICER: 356467 MRS J MOORE

NOTES:

