

38/2005/323

FLOWER & HAYES DEVELOPMENT

**DEMOLITION OF BUILDING AND ERECTION OF 13 FLATS OF ONE AND TWO BEDROOM AT 46 ST JAMES STREET, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY LETTER DATED 26TH AUGUST, 2005 AND PLAN NOS. 1499/02 REV A AND 03 REV A**

22827/24779

FULL PERMISSION

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**PROPOSAL**

The site consists of a modern flat roofed two storey building, last used as a furniture showroom. The site lies within the conservation area and is bounded by a similar building to the east, St James Court to the west and Quadrant Court to the south. Approval was granted for 14 apartments in 2002 and the current application for 13 units is for a similar design to the approved scheme in a sustainable location using sustainable materials.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY no objection in principle to this application. The site is close to adequate services and facilities and is within Taunton's development limits. In detail the access at Quadrant Court is substandard and the visibility to the left is minimal and cannot be improved. The plans suggest parking for only 3 vehicles for 13 flats. I would suggest no parking for is provided for the development as it is in a central location and this is not an essential requirement. I would recommend refusal if vehicle parking is to be provided. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST the site lies in an area of high potential as defined in the Local Plan. It is sited adjacent to the medieval town ditch and on the original route from the town to the medieval Augustinian Priory. Also Roman artifacts have been discovered on site. I recommend that the applicant be required to provide archaeological monitoring of the development and a report made on any discoveries. This should be secured by means of model condition 55 attached to any permission granted. I am happy to provide a specification for the work and a list of suitable archaeologists to undertake it. WESSEX WATER the development is located in a sewered area with foul and surface water sewers available. Surface water flows should not be connected to the foul sewer. It will be necessary to agree a point of connection for the satisfactory disposal of foul and surface water flows generated by the proposal. With regard to water supply there are mains in the vicinity and again connection can be agreed at the design stage.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER subject to the retention of the two birch trees on the street frontage it should be possible to integrate the proposals into the local environment. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER note re noise emissions from the site during construction should be limited to the following hours Mon-Fri 0800-1800, Saturdays 0800-1300. All other times, including public holidays - no noisy working. DRAINAGE OFFICER no observations to make. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER the proposed development does not make provision for children's play or active recreation/sport, although it will generate additional needs. I would therefore request a

contribution of £777 per each of the 6 x 1 bed flats and £2562 per each of the 7 x 2 bed flats for sport and play in the local area. A total off site contribution of £22,596.

1 LETTER OF OBJECTION raising the following issues:- disruption and noise caused by demolition and building work; the use of the narrow drive as vehicular access to the proposed flats which is not suitable for regular use.

1 LETTER from adjoining owner raising the following concerns:- quality of life for tenants; concern over loss of wall and screening; need to introduce variation in the brick or render; all windows should be obscure glazed on elevation B; lowest window should be removed as is obtrusive and cause loss of privacy; building height will cause loss of view which is disappointing; two storey would be preferable; any asbestos should be properly dealt with; precautions should be taken to minimise dust; if permission is granted restrictions on working hours should be imposed re no weekend working, work between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. only and no radios played on site.

1 LETTER OF OBJECTION signed by 32 residents of St James Court raising the following issues:- the height of the development on this site would be out of proportion, it would be higher than the adjacent flats, it would restrict light, the existing wall should be retained, a bland brick wall would tower over the boundary and change the atmosphere, want to retain rural setting rather than enclosed feeling a large brick wall would give.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

RPG10 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West.

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 Sustainable Development, STR4 Development in Towns, POLICY 9 The Built Historic Environment, POLICY 13 Locally Important Archaeological Remains, POLICY 33 Provision for Housing.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 General Requirements, S2 Design, H2 Housing within Settlements, M4 Parking Requirements, C4 Open Space Requirements, EN14 Conservation Areas, EN23 Areas of High Archaeological Potential.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The proposal is to erect 13 flats on the site of the former furniture showroom with pedestrian access from St James Street and limited vehicular access for up to 3 parking

spaces via the service access off Middle Street. Previous permission for 14 flats was granted in 2002 with a 3 storey building on the frontage reducing to two storey at the rear. The issues to consider are the impact on neighbours and the impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

The proposal is to erect a three storey building on the site frontage as before with a reduction in height to two storeys at the rear. The revised plan reduces the height down from the initial scheme to reflect the height of that previously approved. A number of neighbour objections have been received as before, however the impact of the submitted scheme is not considered to be worse than that previously approved. If anything the current scheme will have less of an impact as it has less windows in the side elevation to St James Court and these are to be obscure glazed as per the previous approval. Consequently in terms of policy H2 of the Local Plan the scheme is considered acceptable one and has less overlooking impact.

The design of the flats is similar in character to the previous approval and is an improvement over the existing buildings on site. The scheme is therefore considered to result in an improvement in terms of the character of the conservation area. Pedestrian access is proposed at the front and rear and the existing rear service access is also proposed for the access to serve 3 parking spaces. Given the level of traffic this will involve it is not considered reasonable to object to this. Cycle parking provision is also intended.

The site lies within an area of high archaeological potential and the application has been assessed by the County Archaeologist and a condition is recommended to address this issue. The Local Plan also makes provision for recreation and play space and as this is not available to be provided on site a contribution to off site provision has been identified. This is to be the subject of a Section 106 Agreement.

In summary the proposal is considered to accord with the policies of the development plan and to be similar in scale and design with the previous approval and is therefore recommended for approval.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Subject to no further objections raising new issues by 13th September, 2005 and subject to a Section 106 Agreement concerning recreation and play space provision 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, sample panel, hardsurfacing, rainwater goods, landscaping, obscure fixed glazing facing St James Court, archaeological programme of works, timber windows and doors, window reveal, cycle parking, bin storage, no surface water discharge to foul sewer. Notes re Conservation Area Consent.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed development is considered to be in an appropriate sustainable location and subject to conditions to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, H2, M4, C4, EN14, and EN23.

If the Section 106 Agreement is not completed by 13th October, 2005 the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to REFUSE permission for reason of contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy C4.

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

**CONTACT OFFICER: 2456 MR G CLIFFORD**

NOTES: