

38/2006/523

STRONGVOX LTD

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING GARAGE BUILDINGS AND THE ERECTION OF 24 FLATS AT THE FORMER EAST REACH SALES, EAST REACH, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY AGENTS LETTER DATED 12TH DECEMBER, 2006 AND ATTACHED PLAN NO. 744/01F

323367/124545

RESERVED MATTERS

PROPOSAL

Outline planning permission was granted in 2005 for the erection of 24 flats and 2 commercial units on the site. This application is a reserved matters application for the site. The proposal is for 3 storey buildings providing 24 flats and 2 commercial units on the ground floor facing East Reach. There would be one linear block fronting East Reach and providing flats. This block would have an asymmetric roof layout to enable the front plane of the roof to be at an acceptable pitch, in keeping with the character of the area. The rear slope would have a shallower angle so enabling a deeper form to maximise the development. There would be two rear blocks at right angles behind the front block. There would be a new access into the site, situated at the east of the site to avoid the traffic light junction on East Reach. This access would serve 15 parking spaces and cycle parking areas. At this point East Reach is characterised by a variety of traditional building styles generally three storey in height. The proposed design has a traditional but individual character combining red brick on the upper floors with rendered lower storey. Vertical render strips, that link the design and materials of both the upper and lower floors, are proposed and these would break up the bulk of the linear form.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY views awaited. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST no objections. WESSEX WATER foul and surface water sewers are available in the area although the applicant should investigate a surface water drainage system for surface water. CHIEF FIRE OFFICER means of escape, access for appliances and water supplies need to conform to British Standards. SOMERSET AND AVON CONSTABULARY in my opinion the entrance archway should be gated if possible to improve security. This could be controlled electronically by a remote key-fob access.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER the submitted contaminated land survey meets the requirements of the outline planning condition parts (a) – (e) and the remediation work will take place and be monitored as the site is developed. DRAINAGE OFFICER no objection but soakaways must comply with British Standards. LEISURE AND RECREATION OFFICER recreation/play contributions are required.

6 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- the boundary garage wall is to be demolished and replaced by a 1.8 m high wooden

fence and this would be detrimental to the privacy and security of the neighbouring property, a replacement wall of similar height should be provided; the existing building on the boundary of the site acts as a retaining structure and its replacement with a fence would be likely to effect the stability of the building; the amended plans reinstate the boundary wall at a height of 1.8 m but due to differences in ground levels the height would need to be 2.5 m when measured from the ground level on the Strongvox site (ground levels vary by approximately 1.3 m); there is a small fence from the site boundary to the lock up garages that will become open to intruders when the buildings on the site are demolished, it would improve security if the developer built a wall to bridge that gap.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 - Sustainable Development, STR4 - Development in Towns, Policy 49 - Transport Requirements.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 - General Requirements, S2 - Design, H2 - Housing, H4 – Self-Contained Accommodation, Policy EC9 - Loss Of Employment Land, M4 - Residential Parking Requirements.

ASSESSMENT

The proposed details enable a development that optimises the development potential of the site whilst protecting the amenities of the adjacent occupants. The three-storey block fronting East Reach will have an individual design recreating the vertical emphasis prevalent in the existing development. Where the three storey elements have returned into the site care has been taken to avoid direct overlooking at unacceptable distances with obscure glazing proposed to first and second floor windows adjacent to 130 East Reach. Amended plans have been received that demolish part of the boundary garage (adjacent to the Octagon) but retain the boundary wall, along the eastern boundary, at 1.8 m with a coping stone placed on top. In regard the western boundary the developer will now retain the existing 2 m high fencing adjacent to Theaks Mews and either, retain the boundary wall with 130 East Reach and increase its height to 2 m or place a 1.8 m high boundary fence on the inside of the existing wall (depending on the condition of the existing wall).

Further amending plans are awaited making fine adjustments to the detail of the front of the commercial units and discussions are taking place regarding the possibility of security gates. Subject to those discussions (and plans details to be on update sheet) I consider the scheme to compliment the street scene. Proposal considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be APPROVED subject to an additional condition re boundary walls shown on plan No. 744/01F shall be provided prior to the first occupation of any units hereby permitted unless an alternative scheme is first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Note re outstanding outline conditions

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed residential and commercial development lies within the central area of Taunton where the principle of such uses is acceptable in accordance with Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy STR4 and Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, H2, M4 and EC9.

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: