

13 DCSE2007/0031/F - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DETACHED DWELLING AND ERECTION OF 9 NO. RESIDENTIAL DWELLING APARTMENTS AT GREEN ORCHARD, RYEFIELD ROAD, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 5LS.

For: Ms. F.M. Drummond per Hook Mason, 11 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL.

Date Received: 5th January, 2007 Ward: Ross-on-Wye East Grid Ref: 60595, 24312
Expiry Date: 2nd March, 2007

Local Members: Councillor Mrs. A.E. Gray and P.G.H. Cutter

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site which comprises a modern detached house and gardens of about 1310m² ($\frac{1}{3}$ acre), is at the northern end of Ryefield Road. It adjoins housing to south and east: large Victorian detached houses (the adjoining house Cherrington being a stone villa) and terraced housing, respectively. On the opposite side of the road is the Ryefield Centre. To the north is a pedestrian route bordered by mature trees (subject to a Tree Preservation Order) and beyond that the Ashburton Industrial Estate.
- 1.2 It is proposed to demolish the house and erect a 2/3 storey block of 9 apartments. This would be 'L'-shaped with a 3-storey section fronting Ryefield Road and the 2-storey section extending to the rear. The design features two prominent gables facing Ryefield Road which would be natural stone walling; the lower rear section would be rendered. Fenestration would be casement window with French windows opening onto small balconies on upper floors in the 3-storey section and north elevation of rear section. 7 units would have 2 double bedrooms; 2 (units 4 & 8) one double and one single bedroom.
- 1.3 The existing entrance would be widened and a 3.5 m wide drive would be formed close to the southern boundary, leading to a parking/turning area at the rear of the proposed apartment block, with spaces for 10 cars and a bin store. An amenity area would be provided in the angle formed between the two wings of the building and the northern boundary.

2. Policies

2.1 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007

Policy S3	-	Housing
Policy H1	-	Hereford and the Market Towns: Housing Land Allocations
Policy H13	-	Sustainable Residential Design
Policy H14	-	Re-using previously Developed land and Buildings
Policy H15	-	Density
Policy H16	-	Car Parking

3. Planning History

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| 3.1 | SS980788PF
SE2006/1829/J | Remove walnut tree to ground level. | - | Consent
26.7.06 |
| | SE2006/3909/f | Alterations to existing house and new detached garage with games room | - | Approved
2.2.07 |

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Welsh Water advise that "information has been provided which demonstrates that the proposals will not result in an increase in flows to the public sewerage system. We would ask that conditions and advisory notes be incorporated with the planning consent".

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 The Traffic Manager recommends that a turning head be provided at the entrance to the proposed site to be adopted by Herefordshire Council as highway; street light to be provided in vicinity, also to be adopted; should have 1.5 spaces per unit; conditions also recommended.

5. Representations

- 5.1 The Design and Access Statement submitted by the applicant's agent states:
- (1) The proposals comprise demolition of a detached residential dwelling and erection of new residential dwelling apartments.
 - (2) 9 no. residential units in total, each having 2 bedrooms.
 - (3) the siting of the new building is designed to minimise its impact on the adjacent residence "Cherrington", whilst facilitating car parking facilities for each dwelling created together with communal external amenity areas.
 - (4) The scale of the new apartment building reflects the height and massing of the adjacent residential property.
 - (5) The proposed building is set within extensive landscaped grounds which will provide communal car parking and external amenity areas.
 - (6) Vehicular and transport links will be unaffected by the application proposals.
 - (7) Access to the site is via a ramped access road and level access is provided to the apartment main entrances in accordance with current Building Regulations requirements. Mechanical lift access is provided to all floors internally.
- 5.2 The Town Council observes that there is insufficient parking provision and the development of a three-storey building is not in keeping with the neighbouring two-storey buildings. Recommend refusal.

5.3 10 letters have been received objecting or expressing reservations to the development. In summary the following reasons are given:

- (1) The building would be out of keeping with the area, being far too big in terms of scale and size and wholly inappropriate in style - twice the size of Cherrington, currently the largest house in Ryefield Road, double the footprint of Green Orchard and treble the massing - it would consequently dominate the whole area.
- (2) Density (9 units on 1/3 acre) well above existing area, resulting in substantial changes to character and density of surrounding area.
- (3) Ugly building especially as next to lovely trees and would spoil their setting; Travel Inn type architecture; barn like - it would spoil Ross on Wye.
- (4) 2 or 3, 2-storey family homes would be more appropriate and universally acceptable.
- (5) External space too small to be considered an amenity area.
- (6) No trees proposed which would help break up dominant Ryefield Road elevation.
- (7) Would add significantly to traffic volumes in this quiet residential road with no turning head and which is increasingly congested, with limited on-street parking and continuously used footway - disabled and handicapped regularly dropped off for the Ryefield Centre and often 10 cars parked on the east side of the street and 1 or 2 on the other side.
- (8) Consequently adequacy of car parking is challenged: 16, 19 or 27 cars (the latter based on experience locally) plus visitors' vehicles are anticipated - notwithstanding planning guidelines should learn from existing conflict in North Road resulting from inadequate off-street parking; increased congestion will change the character of the street.
- (9) Junction of Ryefield Road with Gloucester Road is very dangerous and even if necessary improvements to visibility undertaken will still increase risk of accidents.
- (10) Proposed cycle store irrelevant in overcoming these potential problems.
- (11) Loss of privacy to North Street houses and gardens and to garden of Cherrington - former only have privacy to west.
- (12) Closing-in effect and blockage of evening light and views of North Street houses, resulting from new building being much closer; existing limited outlook to north from Cherrington would be substantially reduced.
- (13) Noise and fumes from cars (engines, doors slamming especially late at night) which would be on top of noise and disturbance 24/7 from the adjoining factory units and builders' merchants - a fence would not provide attenuation; noise from demolition of Green Orchard.
- (14) The triangular area of scrubland on opposite side of Ryefield Road has abundant wildlife; frogs and newts annually cross Green Orchard to garden ponds; bats regularly seen - any disturbance of this area would be a genuine loss to the area.

(15) All bathroom windows should be obscurely glazed; 'balconettes' and east-facing windows in flats 4 and 8 are unnecessary and overlook North Road.

- 5.4 4 letters have been received but not from local residents, supporting the proposal on the grounds that Ross needs residential apartments especially in attractive locations within easy access of town facilities and public transport.

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Southern Planning Services, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officer's Appraisal

- 6.1 There are three main issues raised by this proposal: the effect on the character of the area; highway matters (adequacy of car parking and safety at junction with Gloucester Road); and the effect on residential amenities.

- 6.2 PPS3 encourages the efficient use of land, in particular brownfield land, such as this application site. Densities of at least 30 dwellings per ha. should be achieved, and near to town centres at least 50 per ha. This proposed development exceeds the latter figure. Nevertheless as pointed out in paragraph 5.6.10 of UDP on sites below 1 ha. "whilst densities should be maximised the effect of site factors and constraints make guidelines inappropriate". Apartment blocks with smaller dwellings and 3-storey development inevitably have higher densities compared to the large detached villas and terraced housing. In terms of massing the apartment is certainly a large residential building but in scale it is comparable with the larger houses along Ryefield Road. Eaves height would be similar to Cherrington and the width comparable to Pensholme/Sunnymount. It would be set back from the road the same distance as Cherrington and the existing stone boundary wall with hedge above would be retained which would limit views from the street. Viewed along the length of Ryefield Road the greater massing of the building would be partially screened by existing tall conifers in Cherrington and Green Orchard and would not be apparent until looking directly through the access. To the rear the building does extend much further back than Cherrington but considerably less than the next property, Ellerslie, which comes within 5 m of the rear boundary, has a shorter front garden and extends across most of the narrower frontage. Ryefield Road slope downwards to the north and the apartment block would therefore be at the lowest level. Nevertheless ground levels to the north are much lower but the factories and builders' merchants close to the northern boundary would ensure that the apartment block would not be prominent in wider views. For these reasons therefore the proposal would not be wholly out of character with the area. The front (west elevation) is plainer than the Victorian buildings but a careful attention to detailing would help give the building more 'character' and the applicant has improved the fenestration of this elevation.

- 6.3 Car parking provision is less than recommended by the Traffic Manager (1 per unit spaces plus one visitor space rather than 1.5 per unit). However there is no minimum requirement (Policy H16). In this location, within walking distance of the town centre and public transport a lower than average provision may be acceptable. This level of provision has been agreed for new apartments nearby in Gloucester Road. There are no restrictions on on-street parking and one side of the road has the Ryefield Centre with its own car park. This is unlikely to generate traffic requiring on-street parking during the evenings and week-ends when peak demand for parking for the apartments would be expected. In these circumstances it is not considered that the limited parking is sufficient grounds to refuse permission. Traffic at the

junction of Ryefield Road and Gloucester Road would not be increased significantly, in relation to current flows, and this junction is not referred to by the Traffic Manager. The turning head recommended by the Traffic Manager could be formed within the application site, although this would widen the entrance. This land could not however be dedicated to the Council by planning condition.

- 6.4 The apartment building would have windows in all elevations but issues of overlooking and consequent loss of privacy arise from those in the south and east elevations. These would be about 9m and 12m respectively from the boundary with adjoining houses (Cherrington and North Road properties respectively). The kitchen windows in proposed units 2, 6 and 9 look directly into bedroom window(s) of Cherrington. This could be overcome by obscured glazing. The bedroom windows of units 3-7 would be set further back and are considered to be acceptable. The windows in the rear part of the 2-storey section which would overlook the garden of Cherrington light bathrooms and hall/lobby and are shown with obscured glass. With regard to North Road there would be a distance of about 30m. between facing windows which in urban locations is considered above minimum standards. 12m to the rear gardens is also adequate and there is a tall conifer hedge in the garden of 2 North Road which provides additional screening. The privacy of neighbours is not therefore unacceptably harmed. The distances between dwellings is also sufficient to ensure that this building would not be overbearing.
- 6.5 Noise from cars entering and leaving the site, parking and manoeuvring is also raised by neighbours. The drive has been set away from the boundary with Cherrington but the proposal and boundary fence would provide very limited sound attenuation. Better attenuation would be achieved by a brick or stone wall or acoustic fence and this could be required by condition.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission))

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 B01 (Samples of external materials)

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.

3 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

4 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

5 G01 (Details of boundary treatments)

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.

6 F48 (Details of slab levels)

Reason: In order to define the permission and ensure that the development is of a scale and height appropriate to the site.

7 F32 (Details of floodlighting/external lighting)

Reason: To safeguard local amenities.

INFORMATIVES:

1 N19 - Avoidance of doubt

2 N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.

