

9 DCSE2004/3063/F - RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATED SITEWORKS AT PARAGON LAUNDRY WORKS, LEDBURY ROAD, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE

For: Newland Homes Limited, 8 Lansdown Place, Cheltenham, Glos, GL50 2HU

Date Received: 20th September, 2004 Ward: Ross-on-Wye East Grid Ref: 60436, 4878
Expiry Date: 15th November, 2004

Local Members: Councillor Mrs. A.E. Gray and Councillor Mrs. C.J. Davis

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Paragon Laundry Works is situated on the south-eastern side of Ledbury Road in Ross on Wye. It comprises a collection of various industrial buildings plus a reception area for dry cleaning on a site of about 0.34 ha. The rear part of the site has been built up and is considerably higher than the saw mill to the south-east (which fronts Tanyard Lane) and housing to the south-west in Rudhall Close. To the north-east are mobile homes (Cottage Mobile Home Park).
- 1.2 This long-established laundry is re-locating to Overross and the current proposal is for residential redevelopment. The dwellings would be arranged in three sections (i) two terraces of 3 houses each fronting Ledbury Road (ii) a terrace of 7 houses, extending along the central part of the site to which an additional unit has been attached at the northern corner, comprising a first floor flat with garage below and an entrance to the car parking area to the rear, and (iii) a block of apartments flanked by further houses at the south-east end of the site. All units would be 3-storeyed with the second floor within the roof slope, except for the flat with garage and entry in section (ii). The second floors would be lit by dormer windows and rooflights. A drive would extend from the existing access along the south-western boundary of the site which would lead to the open car parking (31 spaces) and 3 garages.
- 1.3 The 22 dwellings would be a mix of 2 and 3 bed units (11 and 9 respectively) plus two 1 bed apartments. They would be of brick construction with a tiled roof. In design the terraced houses would be flat fronted with Victorian-style windows. A gap between terraces and change in ground floor levels (as in (i)) or staggering part of the terrace (as in (ii)) or the apartment block projecting forward of its flanking houses and a central gable (as in (iii)) are employed to add variety to the basically simple designs. All units would have private gardens, that of the six apartments being shared, which would be 7-10m long. A play area for toddlers would be provided.
- 1.4 The ground level over almost all of the site would be reduced. This would be minimal close to Ledbury Road but by 2 m or more to the rear. Along the boundary with the saw mill a 2 m high retaining structure (gabions) would be formed with a 3 m high acoustic fence on top.

2. Policies**2.1 Planning Policy Guidance**

PPG3 - Housing

2.2 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

Policy R3A - Development and Open Space Targets
 Policy SH9 - Balance of Housing Types
 Policy SH14 - Siting and Design of Buildings
 Policy SH15 - Criteria for New Housing Schemes
 Policy ED4 - Safeguarding Existing Employment Premises
 Policy 3 (Part 3) - Infill Sites for Housing

2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft

Policy H1 - Established Residential Area
 Policy H9 - Affordable Housing
 Policy H13 - Sustainable Residential Design
 Policy H14 - Re-Using Previously Developed Land and Buildings
 Policy H16 - Housing in Rural Areas- Car Parking
 Policy H19 - Open Space Requirements

3. Planning History

3.1	SH961186PF	Portable building for storage	-	Approved 15.12.96
	SE2003/3149/F	Residential development (24 units)	-	Withdrawn 20.9.04

4. Consultation SummaryStatutory Consultations

4.1 Welsh Water recommend conditions.

Internal Council Advice

4.2 Head of Engineering and Transportation recommends that conditions be imposed if permission is granted.

4.3 Head of Environment Health's advise is awaited.

5. Representations

5.1 The applicant had submitted a noise assessment report prior to the current application.

5.2 4 letters have been received from local residents and the owner of the Cottage Mobile Home Park which object to the proposal or express concerns. The following is a summary of these representations:

(1) Unacceptably overbearing on properties in Rudhall Close as their main aspect faces the site and ground floor level of new buildings would be almost 3 m higher

- and 3-storeyed development about 10 m high (i.e. 13 m above Mornington Crescent's ground level).
- (2) Bungalows should be considered as 3 storey flats will tower above mobile homes.
 - (3) An appeal is quoted in which the proposals, although only a bungalow was dismissed partly due to a 3.5 m build level difference (SE2001/2851/F).
 - (4) Very detrimental to Mobile Home Park site, tenants and livelihood - boundary can be almost stepped over and tenants (all retired) privacy and security would be severely encroached upon. In particular car parking and children's play area next to fence; mobile homes have 4 gas cannisters and problem of children climbing fences are mentioned.
 - (5) All properties in area single or two-storeyed, and a development containing 3 levels both out of character and unfitting to the area.
 - (6) Egress from Rudhall Court can prove difficult at times - further development in close proximity will only exacerbate this.
 - (7) Add to drainage problems - the Ross 'smell' already well known and not aware of plans to remedy this - planning permission recently refused for change of use of commercial premises to dwelling for this reason.
 - (8) Meeting promised at Park but has not happened.
 - (9) New plans not thought to be any different from original, according to one resident but another is pleased that revised scheme shows a lot more respect for residents of Mobile Home Park.

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

6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 The site is within a residential area, and a laundry (as well as the adjoining sawmill) may well give rise to some environmental problems. There is no evidence that there has been severe environmental pollution. Nevertheless the redevelopment of this site for residential purposes would be both appropriate and be likely to enhance the amenities of those living nearby. The factory is not attractive and a well-designed housing scheme would improve the appearance of the area. In principle therefore it is considered that residential development is acceptable and has environmental benefits that outweigh the loss of employment land (Policy ED4).
- 6.2 The specific issues raised by this proposal are considered to be (i) the effect on the street scene(s) and the character of the area, (ii) the effect on the amenities of neighbours and (iii) whether the living conditions of occupants would be acceptable in view of the proximity of a saw mill.
- 6.3 It is appreciated that the new buildings would have three storeys. However the second floor would be within the roof and the houses would not be unusually deep, so that they would be no higher than a typical two-storey house. The apartment block is deeper but the houses on either side are lower (1.5 m difference in ridge height) and this helps to reduce the visual impact of these buildings. The differences in ground level with adjoining sites is a factor, with the properties in Rudhall Close being about 1.5 m below the proposed level of the new houses and a much greater difference with the saw mill. To this should be added the low buildings in Rudhall Close (two-storeyed but with flat roofs) and the mobile homes. Nevertheless with the reduction in the level of the application site it is considered that the disjunction between the proposed and existing housing would not be so serious as to be grounds to refuse permission.

- 6.4 The design of the buildings and their disposition on the site are considered to be acceptable. The one concern is the height of section (iii) which would stand well above the saw mill and be prominent viewed from lower ground to the south. Nevertheless this would be seen against the backdrop of higher buildings to the north – this tiered effect is an attractive feature of the town. It is considered therefore that the proposal would not harm the street scene or character of the town.
- 6.5 On the second issue the relative differences in ground levels and height of buildings have been referred to above. It is not considered however that this would result in overbearing and intrusive development because there would be sufficient distance between the new and existing housing. The central section (ii) is at least 21 m from the dwellings in Rudhall Close facing it and 10 m or more from the rear of the mobile homes. The southern – eastern section (iii) is closer to the mobile homes and Rudhall Close but is not directly in front of them. A 1.8 m high wall or screen fence would separate the new estate from the mobile homes and provide some security. An appropriate fence would also help reduce noise from the parking areas that would adjoin the mobile home park. For these reasons it is considered that the amenities of neighbours would not be seriously harmed.
- 6.6 The adjoining saw mills is the source of considerable noise and odours. A study of the former was submitted prior to this application which concluded that with appropriate amelioration the ambient noise levels within the proposed houses would not be above accepted levels. This has been considered by the Council's Head of Environmental Health who concluded that daytime noise could be mitigated to an acceptable level by the acoustic fence. This would not protect the upper floors of the nearest units (section (iii)) but only bedrooms would face the saw mill and night time working is not normally undertaken and could be controlled under environmental legislation.
- 6.7 Odours are primarily from creosote and cannot be reduced by physical measures on the application site. These odours are pervasive but there is no record of complaint and a number of dwellings are as close as those proposed. As best available techniques to minimise odours are undertaken at the mill it is not likely that future complaints would prejudice the continued running of that business. On balance it is considered that although at times odours would be detrimental to residential amenity this is not sufficient to refuse permission.
- 6.8 The problems of drainage are acknowledged but Welsh Water has considered the proposal and does not object provided surface water is not discharged to the public sewers. This could be controlled by planning conditions.

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 Notwithstanding the submitted drawing no development shall take place until full drawings showing cross sections of the existing site profiles and cross sections of the proposed site including all buildings, roads and car parking areas shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the site.

7 E18 (No new windows in specified elevation)

Reason: In order to protect the residential amenity of adjacent properties.

8 F47 (Measures to deal with soil contamination)

Reason: To ensure potential soil contamination is satisfactorily dealt with before the development is occupied.

9 H03 (Visibility splays)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

10 H13 (Access, turning area and parking)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.

11 W01 (Foul/surface water drainage)

Reason: To protect the integrity of the public sewerage system.

12 W02 (No surface water to connect to public system)

Reason: To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no detriment to the environment.

13 W03 (No drainage run-off to public system)

Reason: To prevent hydraulic overload of the public sewerage system and pollution of the environment.

14 F20 (Scheme of surface water drainage)

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding by ensuring the provision of a satisfactory means of surface water disposal.

15 Prior to the occupation of any dwelling a management plan, to include proposals for the long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules in perpetuity, for the areas of open space and play area shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that the use and maintenance in perpetuity of the open space is assured.

Informative:

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

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.