

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

DATE: **24TH FEBRUARY 2016**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT)**

SUBJECT: **ERECTION OF 92NO. DWELLINGS (62NO. HOUSES AND 30NO. APARTMENTS) TOGETHER WITH ALL ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT WORKS AT THE WALKS, DUKE STREET, FLINT**

APPLICATION NUMBER: **054485**

APPLICANT: **WATES LIVING SPACE**

SITE: **THE WALKS, DUKE STREET, FLINT, FLINTSHIRE**

APPLICATION VALID DATE: **12TH NOVEMBER 2015**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **COUNCILLOR I. B. ROBERTS**

TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL: **FLINT TOWN COUNCIL**

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: **SCALE OF THE PROPOSALS ARE SUCH THAT IT IS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF POWERS DELEGATED TO THE CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT)**

SITE VISIT: **NO**

1.00 SUMMARY

- 1.01 This is a full application for the re-development of the site of the former maisonettes at The Walks, Flint comprising 62No. houses and 30No. apartments, together with the creation of vehicular and pedestrian access routes, provision of open space, car parking spaces and all other associated works.
- 1.02 The issues for consideration are the principle of development, design considerations, impact on residential amenities, highways considerations, impact upon archaeology and drainage.
- 1.03 Members are advised that this proposal relates to the second site to be brought forward via the Council's Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP).

2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-

2.01 That conditional planning permission be granted subject to the following:

Conditions

1. Time limit on commencement
2. In accordance with approved plans
3. Samples of external materials to be submitted and approved
4. Boundary scheme to be implemented as submitted.
5. Landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved
6. Implementation of landscaping scheme.
7. Drainage scheme to be implemented.
8. No development until scheme for works on Sydney Street and Duke Street submitted & agreed.
9. Scheme for layout and design of site access to be submitted and agreed.
10. Forming and construction of the access not to commence until design agreed.
11. Access to be kerbed and completed to base course layer up to internal tangent point of entrance radii prior to any other site works.
12. Visibility splays of 2.4m 43m in both directions to be secured without obstruction and retained.
13. Detailed layout, design, traffic calming, means of signage, highway drainage, lighting and footways to be submitted and agreed.
14. 1.8m wide footway to be provided across site frontages.
15. Scheme for surface water interception between site and highway to be submitted and agreed.
16. No development until Construction Traffic Management Plan submitted and agreed.
17. Travel Plan to be submitted and agreed.
18. No development until archaeological investigation scheme submitted and agreed. Development to accord strictly with agreed scheme thereafter.
19. Archaeological Investigation Report to be submitted prior to the occupation of any units hereby approved.
20. No development shall commence unless and until a scheme has been submitted and agreed that satisfies the policy and planning guidance requirements relating to the retention of affordable housing.
21. No development shall commence unless and until a scheme has been submitted and agreed to satisfy the policy and planning guidance requirements relating to public open space and recreation.
22. Scheme for enhanced double glazing to be submitted and agreed.

23. Scheme for acoustic fencing to affected rear gardens identified within noise report.
24. Scheme for parking restriction road markings to be submitted and agreed.

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member

Councillor I. B. Roberts

Fully supports the proposals.

Adjoining Ward Members

Councillor. A. Aldridge

No response at time of writing.

Councillor D. Cox

No response at time of writing.

Councillor Ms. R. Johnson

No response at time of writing.

Councillor P. Cunningham

No objections.

Councillor V. Perfect

No response at time of writing.

Flint Town Council

No response at time of writing.

Highways (DC)

No objection subject to the imposition of conditions.

Pollution Control Officer

No objection subject to the imposition of conditions.

Public Open Spaces Manager

Advises that on site play provision for children aged 8 and below should be secured and a contribution be provided to enhance off site recreation facilities for older children.

Capital Projects and Planning Unit (CPPU)

No contributions are sought towards educational infrastructure as the nearest affected schools (Ysgol Gwynedd C.P School and Flint High School) both have surplus capacity in excess of 5%.

Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water

No objections subject to conditions and notes in respect of the proposed drainage and the presence of a water main upon the site.

Natural Resources Wales

Notes the area is within a Flood Zone A and is therefore unlikely to be affected by flooding. The scheme should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Accordingly a condition requiring the submission and agreement of surface water drainage proposals is suggested.

NRW advises that the distance between the application site and protected sites in the area is such that the development is unlikely to impact upon these sites.

CPAT

Has assessed an archaeological investigation report and requests the imposition of a condition to secure an archaeological investigation and mitigation scheme.

Wales & West Utilities

No adverse comments.

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 The application has been publicised by way of a press notice, site notice and neighbour notification letters. At the time of writing, no letters have been received in response to the above consultation.

5.00 SITE HISTORY

5.01 053372

Prior Approval – Demolition of flats
Prior approval not required 22.4.2015

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

Policy STR1 - New Development
Policy STR4 - Housing
Policy STR8 - Built Environment
Policy GEN1 - General Requirements for Development
Policy GEN2 - Development inside Settlement Boundaries
Policy D1 - Design Quality, Location and Layout
Policy D2 - Design
Policy D3 - Landscaping
Policy D4 - Outdoor Lighting
Policy HSG3 - Housing on Unallocated Sites in Settlement Boundaries
Policy HSG8 - Density of Development
Policy HSG9 - Housing Mix and Type
Policy HSG10 - Affordable Housing within Settlement Boundaries
Policy AC13 - Access and Traffic Impacts
Policy AC18 - Parking Provision and New Development
Policy HE8 - Recording of Historic Features
Policy SR5 – Outdoor Play Space & New Residential Development.

Planning Policy Wales
TAN12 - Design
TAN15 - Flood Risk
TAN18 - Transport

Local Planning Guidance Notes:

9 - Affordable Housing
11 - Parking standards
12 - Access for All

Flint Strategy and Master Plan 2021
Flint Town Centre Development Brief

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.01 Site and Surroundings

This 1.7 hectare site occupies a prominent position on land between Duke Street and Sydney Street within Flint town centre. It is presently vacant land but was latterly occupied by a range of maisonettes and associated circulation and parking space.

7.02 The site is bounded to the west by the tower block, Castle Heights. The northern and eastern edges of the site abut the town centre and associated Conservation Area. Duke Street and Chapel Street forms the southerly edges of the site, with established areas of residential development beyond.

7.03 The Proposals

The proposals provide for the re-development of this site to provide a scheme of residential development comprising 62No/ house and 30No. apartments. The housing provision equates to the provision of:

41No. 2 bed houses;
21No. 3 bed houses;
10No. 1 bed apartments; and
20No. 2 bed apartments.

7.04 The scale and form of development comprises 2 storey dwellings; a 2 storey building providing some of the apartments and a 3 storey apartment block with 4 storey central feature.

7.05 Vehicular access to the site would be derived via 3 new proposed access points derived from Chapel Street, Duke Street and Sydney Street. A solely pedestrian access is facilitated via a proposed pedestrian link between Sydney Street and the new internal estate roads opposite the proposed Duke Street access which serves to enhance the pedestrian linkages between the site and Church Street and the retails and leisure facilities to the north and northwest of the site.

7.06 The proposals provide facilities for vehicle parking amounting to some 141 car parking spaces. This includes 19No. spaces to serve existing residents of Castle Heights and a further 25No. spaces to serve the future occupants of the 3 storey apartment building.

7.07 Site landscaping is also proposed including street frontage planting and the creation of an amenity space a small children's play area.

7.08 **The Principle of Development**

Within the UDP, Flint is classified as a Category A settlement where most development is expected to occur. There is a general presumption in favour of the principle of development within defined settlement boundaries subject to other policy and material planning considerations. The proposals comply with the policy context in respect of the principle of development and with regard to the location of new residential development within settlement boundaries. The site is sustainably located with access to bus services and other local services and infrastructure.

7.09 In addition, the site is identified within both the Flint Strategy and Master Plan 2021 and Flint Town Centre Development Brief. These documents provide an overview for the re-development of parts of the town centre as a consequence of the removal of older and unsuitable forms of accommodation within the town. The application site forms part of the Spatial Framework of the Master plan and is identified amongst the listed Short Term Projects within the plan.

7.10 Accordingly, the principle of the development of this site is established not only through a policy presumption in favour of development of this type in this location, but also via the Master plan and development brief specific to the town centre overall and the site in particular.

7.11 **Main Planning Issues**

It is considered that the main planning issues can be summarised as follows:-

- a) Design
- b) Archaeological Issues
- c) Highway Issues

7.12 **Design**

The proposed design and layout of this scheme has been the subject of negotiation and discussion over the course of the consideration of the application and has been amended in line with comments arising from the consultation process. The proposals were also presented for Design Review to the Design Commission for Wales (DCW). This review was held on the 2nd December 2015 and the comments arising from this review have, in part, been responded to in the proposed design. A copy of the Design Review Report is appended.

- 7.13 The proposals have drawn upon the guidance set out in the Flint Town Centre Design Brief insofar as it relates to this site and the surroundings. The proposals seek to re-introduce something of the original street plan of Flint which was lost with the development of the maisonettes in the 1960's. A new frontage to Duke Street seeks to create a built 'edge' reflective the original fortified boundary of the town. New street frontages are also created to Sydney Street and, in part, Chapel Street. The apartment building at the junction of Chapel street and Duke Street serves as a visual feature to mark the approach to the original town boundary.
- 7.14 The design of the dwellings building reflects the discussions at pre-application stage to introduce a range of dwellings types and sizes. The application was accompanied by a design statement and detailed discussions have taken place with the applicant to arrive at the current design.
- 7.15 The comments of the Design Commission arising from the Design Review were largely positive. The rationale behind the scheme and the interpretation of the design brief in this scheme were clearly understood. No issues were raised in respect of the scale or form of development as whole. Comments in relation to the simplification of the exterior composition of the dwellings has been addressed to create elevations which are visually less cluttered but also much more maintenance friendly. The impact of the car on the street scene proposed to the northeast of the site, via frontage parking spaces, is proposed to be addressed via the introduction of street tree planting to create a tree lined avenue. Windows have been introduced in the flank walls of the proposed 3 storey apartment building to ensure that the building sits comfortably within the scheme and do not appear as solid 'book end' markers within the vista.
- 7.16 Extensive consideration of the proposed amenity space within the centre of the scheme has established that, in order for there to be an ownership of the space and proper use, it should have an identified function. It was considered that simply having a non-descript green space would not engender this ownership and therefore it was likely to become a negative focus within the scheme. Accordingly, It was felt that the use of this space to provide a small children's play space would be the most appropriate use for the area. This in turn has led to re-design of the units abutting the area to ensure that the elevation facing the play area provides degree of natural surveillance. I propose to add a condition requiring the submission and agreement of scheme to secure this on site provision but also to provide for recreation and play facilities for older age groups off site.
- 7.17 The areas around the apartment building were considered to present something of a problem in terms of landscaping due to tight 'pinch points' between the building and the back edge of footway. This has

been addressed by a revision to the position of the building to pull it back from the street edge, allowing more breathing space for the landscaped areas. In addition, the railings along this part of the site have been revised to reduce them in height to 1.1m which serves to allow a better integration between the site and the adjacent public realm.

7.18 The external appearances of the buildings utilise high quality detailing and materials in its composition. The use of render, brick, glazing, aluminium window detailing and slate effect roofing all combine to soften the scale of the buildings and provide interest to the external elevations. I am satisfied that these proposal represents a bold, modern but sympathetic design response to the historic vernacular but also to the future needs of residents.

7.19 The proposed scheme would redevelop a key site within Flint town centre in accordance with development plan policies. The proposals would not be out of character with the site and its surroundings and would enhance the overall appearance of the area.

7.20 **Archaeology**

The site occupies a position which corresponds to the position of the original medieval town boundary at edge of Duke Street. Given the fact that proposals involve a large scale clearance of built form in this location, it is considered that there would be a need for the site to be the subject of a scheme of archaeological investigation.

7.21 This issue is considered best addressed via the imposition of a condition requiring the implementation of suitable scheme of archaeological investigation prior to works commencement upon the site. These investigations will informed by the recent archaeological works undertaken at the Coleshill Street/Earl Street Sites and it is considered will help to illustrate the position in respect of the Edwardian Town defences in this area.

7.22 Accordingly, I propose to add 2 conditions. Firstly a condition to secure the required investigation works be undertaken prior to development works being undertaken and second, a condition requiring the submission of a reports upon these investigations prior to the occupation of any units of accommodation.

7.23 **Highway impact**

The proposals have been to subject of consultation with Highways (DC) who have assessed the proposals in terms of impact upon highway safety and have advised that there is no objection to the proposals, subject to the imposition of conditions. I am advised that whilst the level of car parking provision is below that required by Local Planning Guidance Note 11 – Parking, the site is sustainably located within the town centre and is within walking distance of local bus and rail links. Accordingly the site is considered to be sustainably located

in highway terms. The apparent shortfall in parking is best addressed via a conditional requirement for a travel plan. I propose to condition accordingly.

7.24 Other matters

The proposals have been considered in terms of drainage and flood impact. Neither is a concern and a drainage strategy has been submitted which formed the basis of consultation. Subject to the implementation of the same, no objection is raised on drainage grounds.

7.25 I am advised following consultation with Pollution Control that a condition will be required requiring the submission and agreement of a scheme of enhanced glazing to provide acoustic protection from the noise associated with traffic from nearby roads. In addition, acoustic fencing will also be required to certain gardens. I propose to condition accordingly.

8.00 CONCLUSION

8.01 The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in principle and detail subject to conditions of the form outlined in paragraphs 2.01 above.

8.02 In considering this planning application the Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention, and has had due regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Planning Application & Supporting Documents
National & Local Planning Policy
Responses to Consultation
Responses to Publicity

Contact Officer: David Glyn Jones
Telephone: 01352 703281
Email: david.glyn.jones@flintshire.gov.uk