



Bailey Partnership
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South Gloucestershire
BS30 8FJ

Please ask for: Griff Bunce
Tel: 01454 868004
Our ref: PRE17/0787
(Please quote at all times)
Your ref:
Date: 8th December 2017

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS 1990 (AS AMENDED) YOUR PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY

Dear Mr Parker

LOCATION: Former School Site Page Road Staple Hill Bristol South Gloucestershire
DESCRIPTION: Demolition of vacant former school building and creation of 27no. mixed 1 and 2 bedroom apartments
REFERENCE NO: PRE17/0787

Thank you for your request for pre-application advice. I have pleasure in enclosing the response.

1. Site and Development

Pre-application advice is sought regarding the redevelopment of a former school at Page Road in Staple Hill into residential accommodation. The accommodation would provide 27 one- and two-bedroom flats. The applicant is a registered provider so 7 units would be provided for social rent, 13 in shared ownership and 7 open market. Pre-application advice has previously been provided generically to the site vendor; this submission has been made to gain specific advice on the proposal.

A pre-application scoping meeting was held. This letter is the authority's written response.

In terms of the planning constraints, the site is situated within the east fringe of Bristol urban area; it is also located within Staple Hill town centre. The existing building on the site, a former school, is locally listed. To the rear of the school is a tree subject to a protection Order. This part of the district falls in to the coal referral area due to past mining activity.

There is no relevant planning history for this site.

2. Planning Policy

All applications are assessed against the planning policy at the time. The development plan currently comprises the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy (Adopted) December 2013 and the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Policies, Sites and Places Plan (PSP) (Adopted) November 2017.

Strategic Planning, South Gloucestershire Council, Department For Environment And Community Services
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The Joint Spatial Plan (JSP), a sub-regional level strategic plan, is nearing its final stages of production and is expected to be submitted for examination in the spring. This plan will establish the housing delivery that the authorities in the sub-region need to achieve over the period until 2036. In quick succession to the JSP, the council is looking to replace both the Core Strategy and PSP with a new Local Plan. The new Local Plan would be the means by which the housing identified in the JSP is delivered. It would also identify strategies for growth of the existing urban areas and allocate non-strategic growth locations. As this plan progresses through the plan making process, it will gain more weight.

On the development plan as it currently stands, the following policies and documents are of most relevance:

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012

National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy

CS1	High Quality Design
CS2	Green Infrastructure
CS4A	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CS5	Location of Development
CS6	Infrastructure and Developer Contributions
CS7	Strategic Transport Infrastructure
CS8	Improving Accessibility
CS9	Managing the Environment and Heritage
CS15	Distribution of Housing
CS16	Housing Density
CS17	Housing Diversity
CS18	Affordable Housing
CS23	Community Infrastructure and Cultural Activity
CS24	Green Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation Standards
CS29	Communities of the East Fringe of Bristol

Policies Sites and Places Plan

PSP1	Local Distinctiveness
PSP5	Undesignated Open Spaces
PSP6	Onsite Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
PSP8	Residential Amenity
PSP11	Transport Impact Management
PSP16	Parking Standards
PSP17	Heritage
PSP19	Wider Biodiversity
PSP20	Flood Risk, Surface Water, and Watercourse Management
PSP21	Environmental Pollution and Impacts
PSP37	Internal Space Standards
PSP44	Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design Checklist SPD (Adopted) August 2007

Local List SPD (Adopted) March 2008

Residential Parking Standard SPD (Adopted) December 2013

Affordable Housing and ExtraCare SPD (Adopted) May 2014

Renewables SPD (Adopted) November 2014

Landscape Character Assessment SPD (Adopted) November 2014

3. Initial views about your proposal

Advice is sought on the erection of 27 residential units in Staple Hill.

Principle of Development

The site is within the existing urban area where, under policy CS5, development of this nature is directed. In terms of the site's general location it is therefore an appropriate place for development. Therefore, the acceptability of the development would be determined on the site specific constraints and the impact of the proposal.

To assess this, design and layout would be considered against the provisions of policy CS1, CS16, CS17, and CS29. Other factors, for example transport impacts, would be considered under specific policies such as PSP11.

Design and Heritage

In essence, a 3-storey L shaped building is proposed. The building would front primarily onto Page Road to the south, with access being provided from Page Road to the west. Parking would then be provided between the rear of the proposed building and the rear of buildings along High Street. 34 parking spaces would be provided as would a small area of amenity space by the tree. Each flat would have access to a balcony or patio area. A separate building for bins and bike storage is also provided to the north of the site.

Externally, different elevational treatments are proposed. These promote clean lines and modern materials. A mood board is supplied indicating the design hues.

The proposal would replace the existing, locally listed, Victorian school building on the site. The school is set back from the road towards the rear of the plot with a playground to the front. The building itself is single storey built in local pennant stone with freestone banded detailing. The site is elevated above Page Road; the playground is behind a stone retaining wall and topped with railings. The school building is on the local list as a building that makes a significant contribution to the appearance of the area. A slightly grander but similar building is located to the east; this building is excluded from the development site and not subject to consideration.

The loss of the locally listed building is undesirable. The public benefit of the development would therefore have to outweigh the harm resulting from the loss of this heritage asset for development to be acceptable. A case for the loss of the building should be presented as part of any forthcoming planning application. Any case should specifically state what efforts have been made to retain the building and seek its re-use and why a redevelopment scheme that does not incorporate the building has been discounted.

Any replacement building should seek to make as significant a contribution to local distinctiveness and design quality as the building to be demolished. Where possible the design should reflect the existing features of the site which promote local character. For example, retaining features such as the retaining wall would be beneficial to the overall design quality of the proposal.

As part of a submission for planning permission, the design and access statement should set out how the final design has been reached including how it incorporates distinctive features.

Quantum of Development

Part of the urban living agenda being investigated in the new Local Plan preparations centres on increasing housing densities. The consultation document for the new Local Plan (which forms part of the background papers for the Cabinet meeting of 4 November 2017) suggests that to achieve this, higher density building is required around town centres; this includes taller buildings, introducing residential uses above shops and offices, and developing 'back-land' sites. The document goes on to state that a greater variety of homes should be developed including flats and smaller dwellinghouses. Public consultation is scheduled to commence in the New Year.

Therefore while the proposal as it stands makes an important contribution towards overall housing supply in the district, the redevelopment of this site presents an opportunity to reconsider the development in light of the urban living agenda with the objective of achieving higher density housing. Given that the site is within a town centre and is highly sustainable in nature, it is a suitable location for higher density development where the transport impacts have the potential to be mitigated through walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

It would be more a more efficient use of the land if a greater number of new residential units could be achieved on the site. For example, another storey could be included to provide further residential units. The efficient use of land is determined by a number of factors, such as access and parking, provision of amenity space, heritage and visual impacts, and development viability. However, the principle of a greater level of overall development on this site may be supported by officers and should be considered.

Transport

It is unlikely that there would be a transport objection to the proposed development. All attempts should be made at providing parking to accord with the council's parking standards. However, it is recognised that in highly sustainable town centre locations, parking demand may be less than elsewhere in the district. If parking at less than the minimum parking standard is being proposed it should be supported by a statement indicating why this would not lead to an impact on highway safety and what sustainable travel options are available to the future residents.

Affordable Housing

Under policy CS18, 35% of the units should be delivered as affordable housing. The site would benefit from Vacant Building Credit. Taking this into account, on the provision of 27 units, 7 would be sought as affordable housing. In this instance the council would accept all 7 units as social rent. A legal agreement would be required to secure the provision of these units.

Public Open Space

The site layout does not provide any public open space. The development would be expected to contribute towards mitigating its impact on existing public open space provision formed from the introduction of additional residents to the area.

An audit of public open space in the locality has revealed that the following would be required:

Category of open space	Minimum spatial requirement to comply with policy CS24 (sq.m.)	Spatial amount provided on site (sq.m.)	Shortfall in provision (sq.m.)	Contributions towards off-site provision and/or enhancement	Maintenance contribution
Informal Recreational Open Space	533.25	0	533.25	£13,455.39	£23,717.52
Natural and Semi-natural	607.50	0	607.50	£8,494.55	£14,091.63

Open Space					
Outdoor Sports Facilities	648	0	648	£32,517.03	£9,841.82
Provision for Children and Young People	33.75	0	33.75	£5,674.86	£5,967.16
Allotments	81	0	81	£745.37	£950.41

A financial contribution from the development would be secured through an appropriate legal agreement.

4. Recommendations

The main weakness is the loss of the locally listed building. This would need to be justified in any planning application made. Recently, a case where a building is considered to be an asset by the local community (although is not locally listed) and the redevelopment would result in its loss, Members have called the application into committee for determination.

On the basis that the loss of the locally listed building can be justified, the local planning authority is likely to support this development although the investigation of the provision of a greater number of units is suggested. It is therefore recommended, that subject to the investigation into the viability of providing further units, a planning application is submitted.

5. Further Information

As the site is within the coal mining referral area, a coal mining risk assessment should be submitted with any forthcoming application.

As there is a protected tree on the site, the application should be accompanied with an arboricultural assessment to include arboricultural method statement, tree constraints plan and tree protection measures in accordance with BS5837:2012.

If the development is subject to viability issues, a viability appraisal should be submitted with the application for assessment. The applicant would be expected to cover the council's costs incurred in verifying the appraisal.

Heritage details, as set out above, should also be submitted with the application to provide justification for the loss of the locally listed building.

Important:

Please note that any advice provided under this service will be given on the basis of the professional opinion of the officer(s) concerned, based on the information provided and the planning policies and site constraints prevailing at the time, and any views expressed are not intended to prejudice the Council's determination of any subsequently submitted formal application.

Case Officer: Griff Bunce

Date: 08 December 2017

Authorising Officer: Helen O'Connor

Date: 08 December 2017

