

P/14/0400/D3

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

FAREHAM EAST

AGENT: MH ARCHITECTS
LIMITED

SIXTEEN SELF CONTAINED RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND ASSOCIATED BIN & CYCLE STORE, ACCESS, PARKING AND COMMUNAL GARDENS

PALMERSTON AVENUE - PRIVATE CAR PARK FAREHAM PO16 7DP

Report By

Richard Wright

Site Description

The application site comprises a rectangular parcel of land currently used as a private car park which is accessed via a ramped vehicular entrance at the southern end of Palmerston Avenue. The site is mainly hardsurfaced with only relatively small areas of grass and low level planting around its perimeter. The level of the tarmac surface is approximately 0.75 - 1.25 metres lower than the public footpath immediately adjacent the site to the north.

Along the eastern boundary of the site is the four to five storey rear elevation of Fareham Shopping Centre, more precisely the Marks & Spencer retail store. A high brick wall runs along the southern boundary beyond which is a service yard used for staff parking and delivery vehicles to the Next store (Fareham Shopping Centre) and 99p Stores (public access fronting West Street).

A public footpath runs adjacent to the western side of the site (Westbury Path) and a further footpath connecting it and Palmerston Avenue runs along the northern boundary. The car park is enclosed by high metal mesh fencing along these boundaries. On the opposite side of Westbury Path the telephone exchange building can be found adjacent to a funeral directors and a sheltered accommodation block (Moresby Court). Further to the south of the site is a dental surgery whilst to the north semi-detached two storey housing can be found fronting onto Palmerston Avenue.

Description of Proposal

Permission is sought for the erection of sixteen self-contained residential units each with one bedroom.

The proposed building is laid out in an inverted L-shape with its height staggered to range from two storey scale at its northern end rising to four storeys in scale in the south-eastern corner, the top storey being set back further to lessen the apparent height. The building is to be of red/brown brick construction with sections of white coloured render. Some top storey apartments would be finished in grey seamed cladding and windows would be thin framed aluminium.

Each of the new residential units would benefit from the use of either a private patio/garden area or balcony with metal railings and handrails. A communal garden area is located centrally within the external space to the front of the building.

On the south-western corner of the building would be an attached bin & cycle store. The site would be enclosed along the majority of its northern and western boundaries by new metal railings 1.8 metres in height. Pedestrian access is proposed via a single gate set in

the railings adjacent Westbury Path whilst vehicular access would remain from the southern end of Palmerston Avenue.

A total of eight car parking spaces are provided on the site. One of the spaces is a disabled sized-space covered by a car port and is intended to be allocated for use by the tenant who would live in the ground floor wheelchair adapted unit (unit 1). Another one of those spaces is shown as being a disabled sized-space however it is to be unallocated for use by anybody as are all the other spaces. Two of the spaces adjacent the communal garden area would be surfaced using cellweb or another similar material to allow the car parking spaces to become part of the lawn should they not need to be used by vehicles.

The intention is that the finished flats would be offered to people on the Council's housing waiting list for affordable rent and managed by Fareham Borough Council's housing tenancy services.

Policies

The following policies apply to this application:

Approved Fareham Borough Core Strategy

- CS2 - Housing Provision
- CS6 - The Development Strategy
- CS7 - Development in Fareham
- CS15 - Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- CS16 - Natural Resources and Renewable Energy
- CS17 - High Quality Design
- CS18 - Provision of Affordable Housing

Approved SPG/SPD

RCCPS - Residential Car and Cycle Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document,

Development Sites and Policies

- DSP2 - Design
- DSP3 - Environmental Impact
- DSP4 - Impact on Living Conditions
- DSP13 - Nature Conservation
- DSP15 - Recreational Disturbance on the Solent Special Protection Areas
- DSP40 - Housing Allocations

Fareham Borough Local Plan Review

DG4 - Site Characteristics

Relevant Planning History

The following planning history is relevant:

<u>P/03/1865/FP</u>	Erect Apartment Block to Include Ten Two Bed & Six One Bed Units, Car Parking Cycle and Bin Storage
	PERMISSION 09/03/2004

P/13/0532/FP

ERECTION OF BUILDING TO COMPRISE 16 SELF-CONTAINED RESIDENTIAL UNITS, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND AMENITY SPACE.

WITHDRAWN 06/12/2013

Representations

One letter of objection has been received by a resident living nearby in Palmerston Avenue. The resident has raised concerns over the impact on her privacy, the effect of an increase in vehicles using Palmerston Avenue, the disruption caused during construction and the effect on the value of her property.

Consultations

Director of Planning & Development (Highways) -

On the understanding that the flats will only be available as affordable and for rent, and given the highly central location of the site, it is considered the level of proposed parking provision is acceptable.

Given the layout of the Palmerston Avenue access and the nature of Westbury Road and Path the applicants should demonstrate that safe and convenient construction access can be achieved.

Whilst both Westbury Road and Palmerston Avenue have limitations with regard to access by refuse vehicles, it is considered the proposed arrangements, with service from the former for the main collection and from the latter for collection from the disabled unit, will operate satisfactorily.

Subject to conditions, there would be no highway objection.

Director of Environmental Services (Refuse & Recycling) -

Advice was provided by the Refuse/Recycling Manager as to the ideal size for the proposed bin store and access arrangements on the site. The comments have been taken into account by the applicant and a revised bin store has been proposed which is larger and enables easier loading and unloading by the Council's refuse collection crews.

Director of Planning & Development (Urban Design) -

Advice was provided on the appearance of the building, bin store and boundary treatment. There was no objection in principle subject to the detailed design and materials to be used in the bin store cladding and boundary treatment being the subject of a planning condition.

Director of Community (Environmental Health) -

Concern regarding noise from adjacent service yard to south of site and impact on future occupants of units with windows in southern elevation of building. Sound attenuation measures recommended.

Director of Community (Contaminated Land) -

Advice was provided by the Contaminated Land Officer recommending that planning

conditions be used to require the applicant to submit details of foundation design, gas protection measures and the importation of top soil.

Director of Planning & Development (Ecology) -

It is understood that the tree referenced within the submitted ecological assessment has already been removed. There is no ecological interest on the site and no particular concerns regarding the proposals. It is recommended the adherence to the proposed enhancement measures (relating to provision of bird nesting features and native/wildflower mix planting) set out within this report, is secured through condition of any consent.

Southern Water -

Advice was provided on the proximity of sewers to new development and soakaways, the need for existing infrastructure to be protected, and the need for a formal application to connect to the public foul and surface water sewer.

Hampshire Constabulary -

To provide for the safety and security an appropriate level of lighting should be installed within the parking area and along the access routes.

Planning Considerations - Key Issues

Members will recall that a previous planning application was considered by the planning committee in September 2013 (P/13/0532/FP). Concerns were raised over the low level of parking provision proposed for that particular scheme and members resolved to defer taking a decision pending further work by the applicant to address that issue. The application was subsequently withdrawn and a fresh scheme developed to address the concerns raised by Members.

The main issues with this new application are as follows:

- 1) Principle of Development
- 2) Design and Appearance
- 3) Impact on living conditions of neighbours and future occupants
- 4) Highway Issues
- 5) Other matters

- 1) Principle of Development

The site is within a highly sustainable, town centre location close to public transport links and shops and facilities. It has been designated a housing allocation in the emerging Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies and constitutes previously developed land within the urban area. Policies CS2 (Housing) & CS7 (Development in Fareham) of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy set out housing requirements and in particular the levels of development expected in Fareham and the Town Centre respectively and it is the case that this development will contribute towards achieving this.

Planning permission has previously been granted for 16 flats on the site in 2004 (P/03/1865/FP). The permission remains extant as works for that development were commenced in the form of footings being laid.

2) Design and Appearance

The proposed building is modern in its appearance and the submission has been made following extensive pre-application discussions with Officers. Particular attention has been paid throughout this process to ensuring the building provides a suitable transition in scale from the two storey houses to the north of the site to the much larger commercial units of Fareham Shopping Centre and those buildings fronting West Street. The design succeeds in this regard and also acts to screen from view the back end of the shopping centre building which is bulky and unsightly.

The layout of the development means the tallest sections of the building are set back from Westbury Path and also allows space for the provision of a high quality communal garden area for residents. The balconies and terraces ensure that the communal garden and car park are provided with appropriate natural surveillance and the boundary railings define this semi-private space without closing it off from public views. The railings reflect those used elsewhere nearby along Westbury Path and are also used on the balconies and terraces providing continuity in the appearance of the building and linking in with the high quality thin framed aluminium windows proposed. The dominant facing material to be used is red/brown brickwork with areas of white coloured render to break up the massing of the building where required. The precise details of the material products to be used, including those in the hard surfaces of the outdoor areas and car park, are proposed to be finalised at a later date through the use of planning conditions. Similarly a planting scheme would be provided later to clarify what the communal garden, 'green buffers' and planting beds would comprise.

The development will be constructed to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 standards. The units will range from 50 - 70 square metres in size and would each feature appropriate outdoor amenity space in the form of balconies, terraces or private courtyard gardens.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal offers a high quality living environment for residents in a well designed building which complements and enhances the surrounding area. The proposal satisfies Policy CS17 (High Quality Design) of the Fareham Borough Core Strategy and Policy DSP2 (Design) of the Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites & Policies.

3) Impact on living conditions of neighbours and future occupants

The nearest residential properties that could be affected by this development are in Palmerston Avenue to the north of the site. It is not considered that the proposals would adversely affect the amenities of these properties to an unacceptable degree in terms of the light or outlook.

Concern has been raised by a neighbour living nextdoor but one to the site regarding the potential for overlooking and loss of privacy. The applicant has paid careful attention to this matter and ensured that balconies and terraces have been positioned on the building in a manner that will not face towards the properties in Palmerston Avenue; none are proposed in the northern elevation and those on the western elevation either have a privacy screen fitted or are so far away that views northwards are not materially harmful to the neighbours' privacy. Similarly, north facing upper floor windows within the northern section of the building are to be obscured glazed and fixed shut to a height of 1.7 metres above floor level where necessary, whilst other windows in the rest of the building are too far away from neighbouring properties to give rise to any unacceptable degree of overlooking.

Environmental Health Officers have commented raising the concern for potential noise issues from the adjacent service yard to the immediate south of the site. Delivery vehicles are understood to visit the yard early in the morning and there is the potential for the use of the yard to increase in the future in this respect. The applicant has agreed to provide a scheme of high specification glazing and mechanical ventilation to mitigate external noise to a satisfactory level and this could be secured through a planning condition.

Overall, it is not considered that any undue issues arise with regard to the amenities of existing and future residents and accordingly the proposal satisfies Policy CS17 (High Quality Design) of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy and Policy DSP4 (Impact on Living Conditions) of the Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites & Policies.

4) Highway Issues

The previous application considered by the planning committee last year proposed 16 flats with two disabled parking spaces for residents. Members were concerned that, despite the town centre location of the development, the level of car parking provision was too low.

This current application has been prepared with those concerns in mind and proposes a total of eight parking spaces to serve the proposed 16 flats. The scheme has been completely redesigned to provide the necessary parking space within the site without compromising the quality of the accommodation or the outdoor amenity space for residents.

The proposed parking includes seven unallocated parking spaces, of which one is a disabled proportioned space but available for use by any driver. A further parking space is proposed to be allocated to the wheelchair adapted unit.

The Council's adopted Residential Car & Cycle Parking Standards SPD sets out an expectation that proposed developments should provide shared/unallocated parking spaces at a rate of 0.75 per 1-bed dwelling. The Residential Car & Cycle Parking Standards SPD also explains that lower levels of car parking is acceptable in areas of high accessibility or for specific types of residential development that create a lower demand for parking.

The application site is located within the heart of the town centre, in extremely close proximity to the main bus station and with the town's railway station a short walk away. It is within easy walking distance of numerous shops including major supermarkets, banks, doctors and dental surgeries as well as other facilities and employment opportunities.

The flats are proposed to be advertised to persons on the Council's housing waiting list. The Council's housing officers have provided the findings of a recently conducted survey which shows the level of car ownership amongst residents is typically 54%. Furthermore, notwithstanding the availability of car parking spaces for residents at the site, the flats will be advertised to prospective tenants as 'car-free' accommodation.

In light of this, Officers consider it unlikely that the demand for car parking on the site would be such that the eight proposed spaces prove inadequate for residents. Ultimately the use of the car park will be managed by the Council's housing tenancy services.

Given the accessibility of the site and the nature of the development Officers consider the level of parking provision to be acceptable.

Two other related highway safety matters have been raised in the letter of representation

received. In relation to the level of traffic generated by the development, Officers are confident this would be no greater than the overall number of vehicle movements already generated by the site's use as a car park with 32 spaces. The potential impact of construction traffic on nearby areas and residents is an important consideration which could be controlled by condition to require further details to be submitted at a later date. Such details would need to clarify the provision of parking for contractors, the route taken by delivery vehicles and measures to ensure no mud or spoil was carried onto the highway.

In summary, Officers are satisfied that there are no adverse implications likely for parking provision, highway safety or convenience as a result of the proposed development. The proposal meets Policies CS5 (Transport Strategy & Infrastructure) and CS17 (High Quality Design) of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy.

5) Other matters

The development is for affordable housing, this being an application submitted by Fareham Borough Council. The development would be subject to Community Infrastructure Levy.

Policy DSP15 of the Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites & Policies sets out the expectation that, where proposals result in an increase in residential units, a financial contribution shall be made to satisfactorily mitigate the 'in combination' effects of increased recreational visits to the Solent Coastal Special Protection Areas. The applicant has agreed to make such a financial contribution.

This being an application by the Council on Council owned land, it is not considered that it is necessary for any condition to require details of affordable housing tenure/mix.

Conclusion

The application seeks to provide sixteen much needed affordable dwellings on a previously developed and underused site in a highly sustainable town centre location. The development is of a high quality of design and will not materially impact upon neighbouring properties. The level of car parking provision is appropriate given the site's highly sustainable position and close access to Fareham Town Centre with its facilities and public transport links.

The application accords with local and national planning policy and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION PURSUANT TO REGULATION 3 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL REGULATIONS 1992, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

Implementation period; list of approved drawings; materials; Specified windows obscure glazed/fixed shut to 1.7 metres above internal finished floor level; boundary treatment; privacy screens to balconies; landscaping scheme and implementation; hardsurfacing materials; details of locking/release mechanism to gate on north-eastern side of building; Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4; bin store provision; parking and turning spaces provided and retained; cycle store provided and retained; sound attenuation scheme; ecological enhancements; contamination remedial measures; construction access details;

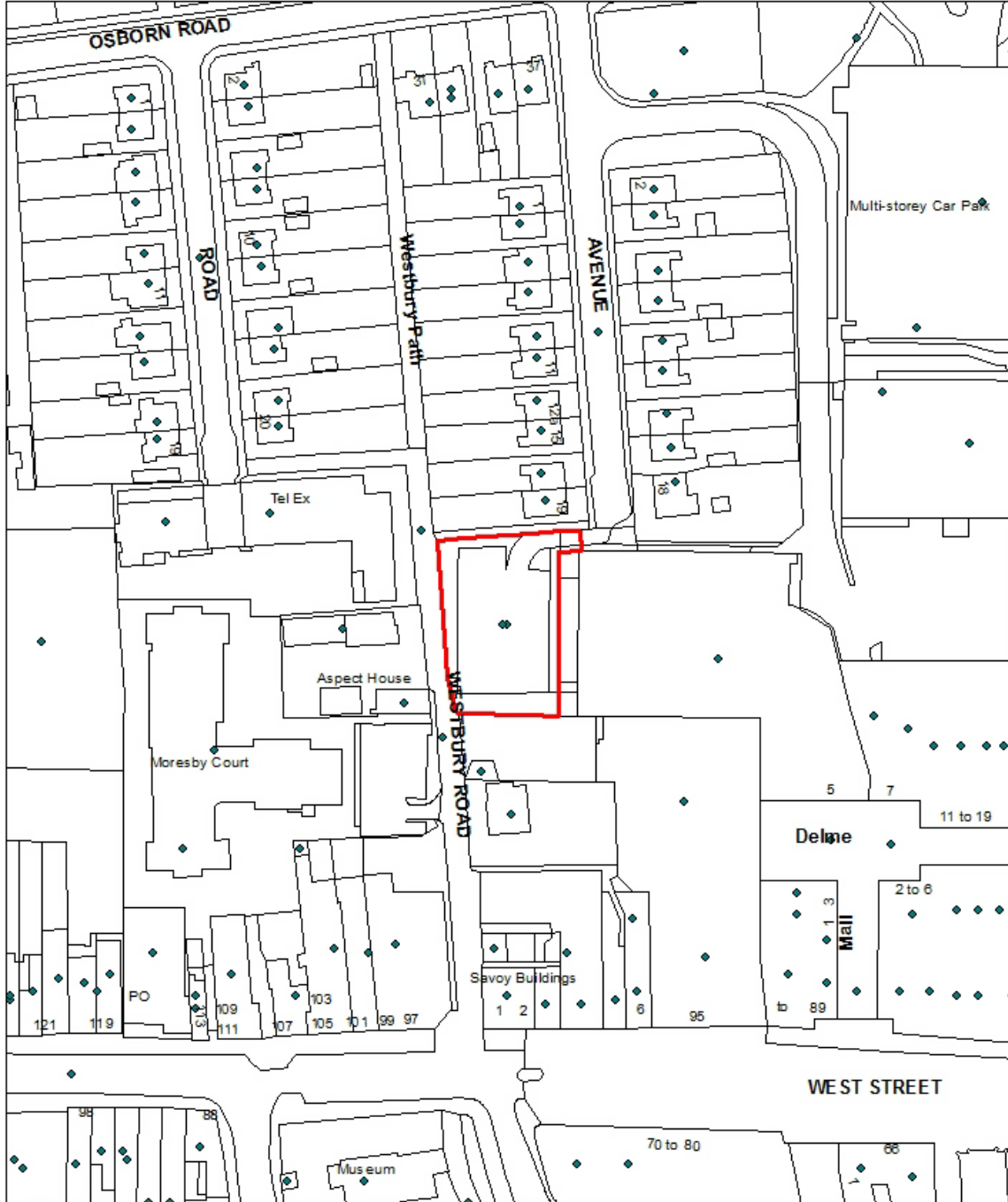
contractors' parking; hours of construction; mud on highway.

Background Papers

P/14/0400/FP,P/03/1865/FP

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PALMERSTON AVENUE
PRIVATE CAR PARK
SCALE: 1:1,250

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