

App.No: 161485	Decision Due Date: 3 March 2017	Ward: Devonshire
Officer: Neil Holdsworth	Site visit date: Various	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 2 February 2017		
Neighbour Con Expiry: 13 April 2017		
Press Notice(s): N/A		
Over 8/13 week reason: To enable consultation on amended plans.		
Location: 102a Tideswell Road, Eastbourne		
Proposal: Demolition of commercial building and provision of 4 x 2 bed semi-detached dwellings.		
Applicant: Mr Nick Mason		
Recommendation: Grant conditional permission		

Executive Summary:

This application is reported to planning committee at the discretion of the Senior Specialist Advisor given the number of objections raised to the scheme and in order to enable public debate around the merits/issues involved.

Planning permission is sought for the demolition of an existing commercial building that occupies a backland location between Tideswell and Longstone Road and its replacement with four two bedroom semi-detached houses. The design was amended in the course of consideration of this application to reduce the size of the proposed dwellings and improve its relationship with the surrounding residential uses.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the development will have impacts on the amenity of the neighbouring residents to the rear on Longstone Road, it is considered that this is outweighed by the benefits of the development in terms of additional houses it provides in a sustainable location, and the improvement in residential amenity following the cessation of the commercial use. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Planning Status:

The existing building is in use as a printers/workshop (B1 use class).

Relevant Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

1. Building a strong, competitive economy
2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
4. Promoting sustainable transport
6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
7. Requiring good design
8. Promoting healthy communities

Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan Policies 2013

- B1: Spatial Development Strategy and Distribution
- B2: Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- C1: Town Centre Neighbourhood Policy
- D1: Sustainable Development
- D2: Economy
- D5: Housing
- D10A: Design

Eastbourne Borough Plan Saved Policies 2007

- NE14: Source Protection Zone
- UHT1: Design of New Development
- UHT2: Height of Buildings
- UHT4: Visual Amenity
- HO1: Residential Development Within the Existing Built-up Area
- HO2: Predominantly Residential Areas
- HO7: Redevelopment
- HO20: Residential Amenity
- BI1: Retention of Class B1, B2 and B8 Sites and Premises
- TR2: Travel Demands
- TR6: Facilities for Cyclists
- TR11: Car Parking

Site Description:

The site comprises an existing printworks located via an existing undercroft vehicular access off Tideswell Road. Currently the site consists of a single storey commercial building occupying part of the site with a hardstanding over the remainder.

Two storey terraced late Victorian residential properties adjoin the site along Tideswell Road and Longstone Road, with a block of flats and garden space facing Bourne Street forming the northern boundary of the site. Due south, there are other industrial buildings accessed from Tideswell Road and Arch Mews, former commercial buildings recently converted to residential use (with consent).

Relevant Planning History:

050694

Erection of a single-storey detached prefabricated building to be used as a store for adjacent general printers. (Renewal of permission EB/00/0645).

Planning Permission

Approved conditionally

080518

Demolition of existing building and erection of six terraced houses

Planning Permission

Refused

04/11/2008

090677

Demolition of existing building and erection of four terraced two storey residential dwellings

Planning Permission

Refused 02/12/2009

Appeal dismissed.

Proposed development:

The proposed development involves the demolition of the existing printers building and the construction of four dwellings (two pairs of semi-detached properties). The remainder of the site is to be set out as landscaped gardens, with each dwelling having a small area of private garden.

The proposed buildings have a modern contemporary design with a curved green roof sloping down towards the boundary of the site along Longstone Road. Facing Tideswell Road there is a sheer two storey elevation located three metres from the site boundary.

The proposed dwellings are to have lounge/kitchen/diner on the ground floor and two bedrooms, bathroom and study at the first floor level. The floorspace is approximately 100sqm with private garden to the front/side.

The height of the proposed is approximately 5.5m high under a curved 'green roof'. The external materials are to utilize grey brick/render and vertical timber cladding. Rooflights only on the rear elevation, no flank windows and to the front obscured glassing to the bathroom and high level and returned window to bedroom.

The general theme and style of the proposal is similar to the 'Eco' houses constructed at Chandlers Mews.

Consultations:

Southern Water:

No comments received.

Highways ESCC:

First consultation - January 2017

A holding objection was supplied requiring details of the on-street parking situation.

Second consultation - April 2017

No objection subject to conditions following the scheme being amended to show a reduction of bedrooms and submission of parking survey by applicant.

Neighbour Representations:

First consultation (January 2017)

Four letters of objection have been received covering the following points:

Land Use

- Concern that loss of existing light industrial use will result in a loss of jobs and economic activity.

Amenity

- Concern that proposal will result in additional overlooking of surrounding properties, resulting in a loss of privacy.
- Concern about overshadowing and loss of light given height of new buildings.

Transportation and Highways

- Concern that proposal will result in additional pressure for on street parking thereby exacerbating existing difficulties for residents to park along Tideswell Road.
- Request that residents parking is introduced along Tideswell and Longstone Road.

Other issues

- Concern about emergency access for surrounding residential properties following development.
- Concern about increase in cost of heating due to overshadowing and loss of light resulting from development.
- Concern about flood risk resulting from development.
- Concern about impact on local sewerage system.
- Proposal will exacerbate existing issues relating to damp on surrounding residential properties by blocking out light.

One letter of support on grounds that proposal will fulfil existing housing need.

Second consultation (March 2017)

- One objection received reiterating original comments made.

Appraisal:

Principle of development:

The proposal results in the loss of an existing printing business (class B1 use) and its replacement with four two bedroom dwellings. There is no policy protection for the existing business use and the existing building has come to the end of its economic life. As such, there is no objection in principle against the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes.

The proposal provides two bedroom, two storey dwellings measuring approximately 100 sqm in floor area. This exceeds the relevant minimum space standard for a two bedroom, two storey dwelling (79 Sqm). The ground floor, which comprises the main living area is well lit and has a reasonable outlook given the constraints of the site. The upper floor which contains bedrooms has rooflights and windows that provide sufficient natural light to these secondary living areas. Overall the proposed accommodation is considered acceptable in terms of the amenity of future occupiers.

The four additional good quality residential units in this a sustainable town centre location would also contribute towards the Council's housing supply. This is of particular importance given that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply.

Impact of proposed development on amenity of adjoining occupiers and surrounding area:

A previous proposal to redevelop the site for four residential units in a similar position was refused in 2009 and subsequently dismissed at appeal. In dismissing the appeal the inspector found that the proximity of the proposed six metre high building to the neighbouring gardens along Longstone Road, together with the unbroken ridge line, resulted in an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of the occupants of 55 to 59 Longstone Road.

The applicant has sought to improve the relationship between the site and surrounding properties by slightly reducing the maximum height of the proposal to 5.5 metres, and to introduce a five metre gap between the two pairs of semi-detached houses which provides some elevational relief. Following advice from officers the proposal has been amended to be sited over one metre away from the common boundaries with the Longstone Road properties (to the rear). In broad terms the relationship between the site and

adjoining residential properties is similar to those immediately south of the site at Arch Mews, which is a commercial building recently converted to residential use.

Notwithstanding this it is acknowledged that the proposal would have some impact on the residents of Longstone Road primarily through an increased sense of enclosure to the rear garden area as the result of the construction of the proposed building in close proximity to the site boundary, reducing the existing limited sense of openness from these garden areas. This is particularly apparent for numbers 53 and 55 Longstone Road, where at present there is no existing building on the other side of the boundary wall. These impacts must be weighed against the benefits of the proposal discussed elsewhere in this report.

The proposal is located three metres from the boundaries of the properties to the rear on Tideswell Road and has been orientated in a way that prevents direct overlooking of these properties. In this case the distance is sufficient to not create a significant loss of amenity for these residents. Due to its siting and limited height, the proposal would not have any significant impact on the residents of Croft Court facing Bourne Street, or Arch Mews further south.

The bathroom window on the front elevation will be conditioned to be obscure glazed. It is not considered appropriate or necessary to control the glazing to the front bedroom as these windows are high level to the front with a side return and thereby limiting the potential for overlooking. There would be no direct overlooking of the properties on Longstone Road given roof lights only on this elevation. The ability for the applicant to extend or alter the roof of the properties, or to install new windows on the building, is removed by condition.

The cessation of an existing commercial use and its replacement with residential development is considered to result in a more appropriate use given the surrounding residential uses. The applicant proposes hard and soft landscaping within the proposal. These measures will lead to improvements in the residential amenity of this area for both existing and future residents and help to mitigate the adverse impact on residents as a consequence of the close proximity of the development to existing residential buildings.

Overall the improvements to the existing amenity of the area offered by the proposal, together with the cessation of the existing use and mitigation measures proposed are considered to weigh in favour of the proposed development.

Design issues:

The proposal is to construct a pair of buildings with a curved green roof of a contemporary modern design. There is timber cladding to the front elevation

with glazing at ground floor level (front and side) and high level windows on the front elevation. There is private amenity space to the front and side of each unit.

The design reflects other local schemes including a nearby site in Chandlers Mews.

The design has been amended to facilitate access to the rear of the properties via a 1m wide path, thereby improving the relationship with the properties to the rear along Longstone Road. This will also assist with the maintenance of the proposed green roofs by ensuring easy access.

In design terms the proposal is considered appropriate for this urban infill site. The appearance, layout and design of the accommodation provided represents a significant improvement when compared with other schemes in this part of Eastbourne, many of which are conversions of commercial buildings carried out under permitted development rules which do not seek to influence design quality. The design quality of the proposed buildings is a consideration that weighs in favour of the proposed scheme.

Impacts on trees:

There are no trees currently occupying the site, as such there is no impact on trees.

Impacts on highway network or access:

The proposal creates four new two bedroom units. No off street parking is provided. The lack of off street parking was not an issue in the 2009 proposal, nor was this an issue in the subsequent appeal.

A number of local residents draw attention to the additional parking pressure created through the introduction of four additional residential units. The existing vehicular access via Tideswell Road would cease, and as such any parking would need to be undertaken on the surrounding network of on street parking spaces, principally along Tideswell Road. As this is currently an unrestricted parking area, parking demand for these spaces is high, particularly given the proximity of the site to Eastbourne Town Centre.

It is acknowledged that the proposal is likely to result in additional pressure for parking along Tideswell Road and the surrounding network of streets. It is accepted that the development will result in greater demand for parking spaces, and that this will result in both existing and future residents having to travel further to find a parking space. However it should also be acknowledged that the location of this development site and its close proximity to all town centre services including public transport links may reduce the demand for parking spaces. In addition the cessation of the existing business use will result in fewer large delivery/service vehicles

parking on Tideswell Road which may also mitigate localised congestion, as would the stopping up of the existing vehicular access to the site providing more space for parking along Tideswell Road.

Paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. Whilst it is recognised that zero parking development results in an inconvenience for local residents, in this case there is no evidence that the additional demands for parking from the four additional residential units would result in a severe transportation impact as set out in the NPPF, nor has any evidence been presented that the highway safety issues resulting from additional vehicular movements on the surrounding public highway comprise a significant material consideration. The Highway Authority do not object to the development, and it is considered that in view of the policy context discussed above it would be difficult to defend a reason for refusal on highways grounds were the matter to proceed to an appeal.

The highway authority and some of the objectors note that at present the parking along Tideswell Road is unrestricted. It may be possible to address the issues outlined above by introducing controlled parking along Tideswell Road, however this is a matter for local residents to pursue with the highway authority and falls outside the scope of the current decision.

Planning obligations:

Not relevant on a scheme of this nature.

Sustainable development implications:

The environmental credentials of the scheme including the green roof and the highly thermally efficient building fabric are noted and welcomed and should help to reduce the development reliance on fossil fuels.

Other matters:

The development is not located within an area of flood risk on the basis of the 2014 Environment Agency data.

Human Rights Implications:

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

Conclusion:

Because of its close proximity to 53 to 59 Longstone Road the development will have impacts on these residents principally through the sense of enclosure the development would create to these gardens. The proposal would also result in additional demand for on street parking on the surrounding streets.

Overall however it is considered that the benefits of four well designed new residential units in a sustainable town centre location outweigh these issues and the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation:

Approve planning permission subject to conditions.

Conditions:

1. Development in three years
2. Development in accordance with the approved plans
3. Front bathroom window to be made from obscure glass
4. PD rights removed: windows
5. PD rights removed: extensions to any part of the building.
6. Submission of a detailed landscaping plan.
7. Existing vehicular access to be stopped up in agreement with local highway authority prior to occupation of building hereby approved.
8. Provision of waste storage and cycle parking as per the approved plans.
9. Working Hours 8-6 Monday to Friday, 8-1 Saturday.
10. Submission and approval of a construction management plan prior to commencement of works on site.

Informatives:

Appeal:

Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate course of action to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be **written representations**.