

OFFICER: Andrew Gunn (01935) 462192 [Item 2]
APPL.NO: 08/02735/OUT APPLICATION TYPE: Outline Application
PARISH: Crewkerne WARD: CREWKERNE TOWN
DESCRIPTION: Demolition of existing church and the erection of 8 no. dwellinghouses (GR 344402 / 109425)
LOCATION: Church of St Peter South Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8AA
APPLICANT: Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trustees
AGENT: Humberts Commercial (Yeovil) 32 Hendford Yeovil Somerset BA20 1TR
DATE ACCEPTED: 1 July 2008

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE:

The application has been accepted onto Committee by the Area Chairman (Cllr Kim Turner) at the request of 2 of the Crewkerne ward members (Cllr Mike Best and Cllr Angie Singleton), in order to further consider the density of the development in relation to the character and density of existing properties along the same side of South Street and Furland Road.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL:



The site is located at the junction of South Street and Furland Road, Crewkerne, in a mainly residential area. The site sits in an elevated position above South Street (1.8m above South Street) and currently contains a church hall set amongst a mainly grassed frontage and rear. An electricity sub station is located in the north west corner which is screened/enclosed by landscaping and a metal fence. A stone wall exists along the western boundary with a mix of walling and landscaping along the southern elevation. Pedestrian access to the site and hall is gained through a gated entrance and pathway from Furland Road.

The proposed scheme seeks outline consent for the erection of 8 no. 2 storey dwellings to be constructed in 3 separate blocks. Consent is sought only for access and layout at this stage. Four of the houses will face directly towards South Street whilst two will turn the corner and face the junction of South Street and Furland Road. 2 further units will face directly onto

Furland Road. The agent has stated that the prominent elevations will be finished in natural local ashlar stone with the rear elevations to be painted render. The roofs will be constructed in natural slate and all windows and doors will be in painted timber.

Each of the units will have separate amenity areas, which will be divided by 1.8m wooden boundary fencing. Vehicular access will be gained from Furland Road in the north western corner of the site with 12 parking spaces in the southern corner of the site. A section of stone wall will be removed to provide for the access. New pavements will be created within the site to enable access to each of the properties. Lockable cycle sheds are to be provided in the garden areas to accommodate 2 cycles. A refuse collection point will be created by the new site entrance.

HISTORY:

07/05094/FUL - Erection of 8 dwellings - refused Dec 2007.

POLICY:

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decision must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan Documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Relevant Development Plan Documents :

Regional Spatial Strategy:

VIS1
VIS2

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan

STR1 - Sustainable Development

STR2 - Towns

Policy 9 - Built Historic Environment.

Policy 49 - Transport requirements of new development

South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted April 2006)

ST5 - General principles of new development

ST6 - Quality of Development

EH1 - Conservation Areas

TP7 - Parking provision.

CONSULTATIONS:

Town Council:

Recommend REFUSAL on the grounds of overdevelopment and insufficient parking provision. It is clearly understood that the 1.5 car park spaces per household is the recommended norm however this Council stresses:

- There is absolutely no capacity for additional on-street car parking at or near this busy and dangerous traffic junction and any would exacerbate a current problem.
- 1.5 spaces per household is an unreasonable and unrealistic quota within modern day living in a small rural market town. The Council would like to see a reduced number of houses with increased on site parking.

Highway Authority:

The site is located within the development boundaries for Crewkerne within close proximity to the local services and facilities and as such there is no objection to the proposal in principle.

In detail, the proposed access to the site is located sufficient distance from the junction of Furland Road and South Street to enable vehicles turning into Furland Road ample time to slow down in the event of vehicles emerging from the site.

The level of parking proposed is sufficient to serve the development proposed and as such is unlikely to promote parking on the highway at this point. The bin store is located in close proximity to the access to the site and as such will prevent the need for refuse vehicles having to enter the site.

The level of visibility achieved from the access will be more than adequate for the speed of the road at this point given the wide footway that fronts Furland Road. It should be noted that the site proposal seeks to provide a standard vehicular access. The Highway Authority would wish to see a pedestrian crossover provided in this location so as to give priority to the pedestrian.

As a result, given the above I would advise you that from a highway point of view there is no objection to the proposal. However, in the event of permission being granted I would recommend that the following conditions be imposed:

1. The access hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until drop kerbs have been installed at the carriageway edge and a vehicle cross-over constructed across the footway fronting the site for the width of the access.
2. The proposed access shall be properly consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel) in accordance with details, which shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
3. The gradient of the proposed access shall not be steeper than 1 in 10.
4. Provision shall be made within the site for the disposal of surface water so as to prevent its discharge onto the highway details of which shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
5. The area allocated for parking on the submitted plan shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.
6. There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 900mm above adjoining road level forward of a line drawn 2.4m back and parallel to the nearside carriageway edge over the entire site frontage. Such visibility shall be fully provided before works commence on the erection of the dwellings hereby permitted and shall thereafter be maintained at all times.

Note: Having regard to the powers of the Highway Authority under the Highway Act 1980 the applicant is advised that a section 184 Permit must be obtained from the Highway Service Manager at least four weeks before access works are intended to commence.

Economic Development:

From an economic perspective, I raise no objections to the loss of St Peters Church, Crewkerne to residential dwellings. My only observation is the number of dwellings proposed on a fairly small site, which may impact on car parking in the area. Additional roadside or public car parking may impact on local traders as customers may resort to shopping elsewhere if easy car parking access is denied them.

Conservation:

No objections received.

REPRESENTATIONS:

1 letter has been received raising concerns that too many houses are proposed suggesting that 3 or 4 bigger town houses would be more in keeping. The road is better situated but raise concerns over location of the proposed bin area.

CONSIDERATIONS:

This is a revised application following refusal of a previous scheme submitted in 2007. This earlier scheme was also for 8 dwellings and was refused due to poor layout and relationship with its surroundings and would create an incongruous development on the edge of the Conservation Area. Following this refusal, discussion has taken place with the previous case officer and Conservation officer to address those concerns.

The main issues to consider are: parking provision, layout and design, loss of the hall, impact on the adjacent Conservation Area and density of development.

In terms of parking provision, 12 spaces are proposed for the 8 units. At a ratio of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, this meets the maximum provision as sought under Policy TP7 of the South Somerset Local Plan. This level of provision is therefore acceptable. Whilst concerns about the level of parking to be provided are noted, this scheme should not be expected to solve bigger parking problems/issues in the town or be expected to provide beyond the maximum level. The site is well positioned in terms of walking distance to the town centre and business park and good access to public transport. For those reasons, the level of parking provision is acceptable.

With regard to density of the development, the scheme will provide housing at a density of 43 dwellings per hectare (dph). Taking account of the sites location close to the town centre, opposite terraced housing at similar density, if not higher, the layout plan showing how the scheme can be adequately accommodated on the site, and the government policy of seeking best use of land particularly in towns, a density of 43 dph is considered to be acceptable.

Since the previous refusal, discussion has been held with the conservation officer to address concerns raised about the quality of the layout and its relationship with the adjacent Conservation Area. The Conservation Area boundary runs along the northern side of South Street and level with the site to the west. The agent outlines that the residential blocks have been redesigned to fit better within the site and stepped to be in line with existing site contours. Due to the fact that the site sits 1.8m above the road level in South Street, the new units to face South Street will be elevated well above the existing terraced block opposite in South Street. However, the new units will be set back 10 metres from South Street in order to reduce their physical impact on the street scene and on the existing terraced properties on the northern side of South Street. In addition, the design of the properties has been changed to better reflect both the design and appearance of the terraced properties opposite and to retain the cottage style apparent along South Street. It is considered that the current proposal is sympathetic to its setting and would preserve the character of and views into and out of the Conservation Area.

The new units have been designed so as to avoid any harmful overlooking into existing residential properties. No windows are proposed to be inserted into the gables of those new properties that will face directly towards existing properties in South Street and Furland Road.

A concern was raised from a neighbour about the location of the refuse area. No details have been provided in terms of whether this area will be enclosed but as this area is only for collection rather than permanent storage, it is not considered that the siting of this refuse area is unacceptable. In any case, full details will be sought at reserved matters application.

The existing church hall building to be demolished has a rendered finish and is not of any architectural or historical merit. The Economic Development Officer has not raised any objection to its removal. It is in poor condition and the agent has stated that its size and

facilities cannot support the large congregation. No objections are raised to the loss of this building.

SECTION 106 PLANNING OBLIGATION:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant permission.

JUSTIFICATION:

The development by reason of its layout, design, parking provision and access will preserve the character of and views into and out of the adjacent Conservation Area, will provide a form of development that respects the character and appearance of the locality, would not cause any harm to the residential amenity of adjacent occupiers and provides an acceptable level of off street parking. The proposal is in accordance with policies ST5, ST6, TP7, EH1 of the South Somerset Local Plan and Policy STR1, 9 and 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review.

Application Permitted with Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission, or before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved, whichever is the later.

Reason: As required by Section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Approval of the details of the design, plot boundaries, appearance, floor levels, materials, scale, and landscaping (hereinafter called 'the reserved matters') shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority in writing before any development is commenced.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

4. The access hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until drop kerbs have been installed at the carriageway edge and a vehicle cross-over constructed across the footway fronting the site for the width of the access.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan.

5. The proposed access shall be properly consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel) in accordance with details which shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan.

6. The gradient of the proposed access shall not be steeper than 1 in 10.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan.

7. Provision shall be made within the site for the disposal of surface water so as to prevent its discharge onto the highway details of which shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan.

8. The area allocated for parking on the submitted plan shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan.

9. There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 900mm above adjoining road level forward of a line drawn 2.4m back and parallel to the nearside carriageway edge over the entire site frontage. Such visibility shall be fully provided before works commence on the erection of the dwellings hereby permitted and shall thereafter be maintained at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan.

10. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of the development, as well as details of any changes proposed in existing ground levels; all planting, seeding, turfing or earth moulding comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

11. There shall be no burning of any produce or material whatsoever on the site other than in a properly installed incinerator within a building.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policy ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

12. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, foul and surface water drainage details to serve the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and such approved drainage details shall be completed and become fully operational before the development hereby permitted is first brought into use. Following its installation such approved scheme shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of environmental health.

13. No construction works or construction deliveries shall take place outside of the hours of 08.00 to 17.30 Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 14.00 on Saturdays. No construction work shall take place on Sundays, Public or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policy ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

14. No development shall take place on any phase or part thereof, unless a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for that part of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Subsequent works shall be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the approved CEMP unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and to protect residential amenity during the period of construction in accordance with ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

15. All electrical and telephone services to the development shall be run underground. All service intakes to the dwelling(s) shall be run internally and not visible on the exterior. All meter cupboards and gas boxes shall be positioned on the dwelling(s) in accordance with details, which shall have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and thereafter retained in such form. On (all) buildings satellite dishes shall be of dark coloured mesh unless fixed to a light coloured, rendered wall, in which case a white dish should be used. Satellite dishes shall not be fixed to the street elevations of the buildings or to roofs. All soil and waste plumbing shall be run internally and shall not be visible on the exterior unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development accords with the character of the area in accordance with Policy ST6 (EH1/EH5) of the South Somerset Local Plan as adopted 2006.

16. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no additional windows, including dormer windows, or other openings (including doors) shall be formed in the buildings, or other external alterations made without the prior express grant of planning permission.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policy ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

17. No development hereby permitted shall be commenced unless particulars of the materials (including the provision of samples where appropriate) to be used for external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the surrounding visual amenity and in accordance with Policies ST5 & ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted 2006).

18. No development shall take place until cross-sections of the site and adjoining land, including details of existing levels around the building hereby permitted and any changes in level proposed, together with the proposed floor levels within the buildings, have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policy ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan adopted 2006.
