

Planning Committee

6 July 2010

Reference:
APP/10/00275

Area Team:
South Team

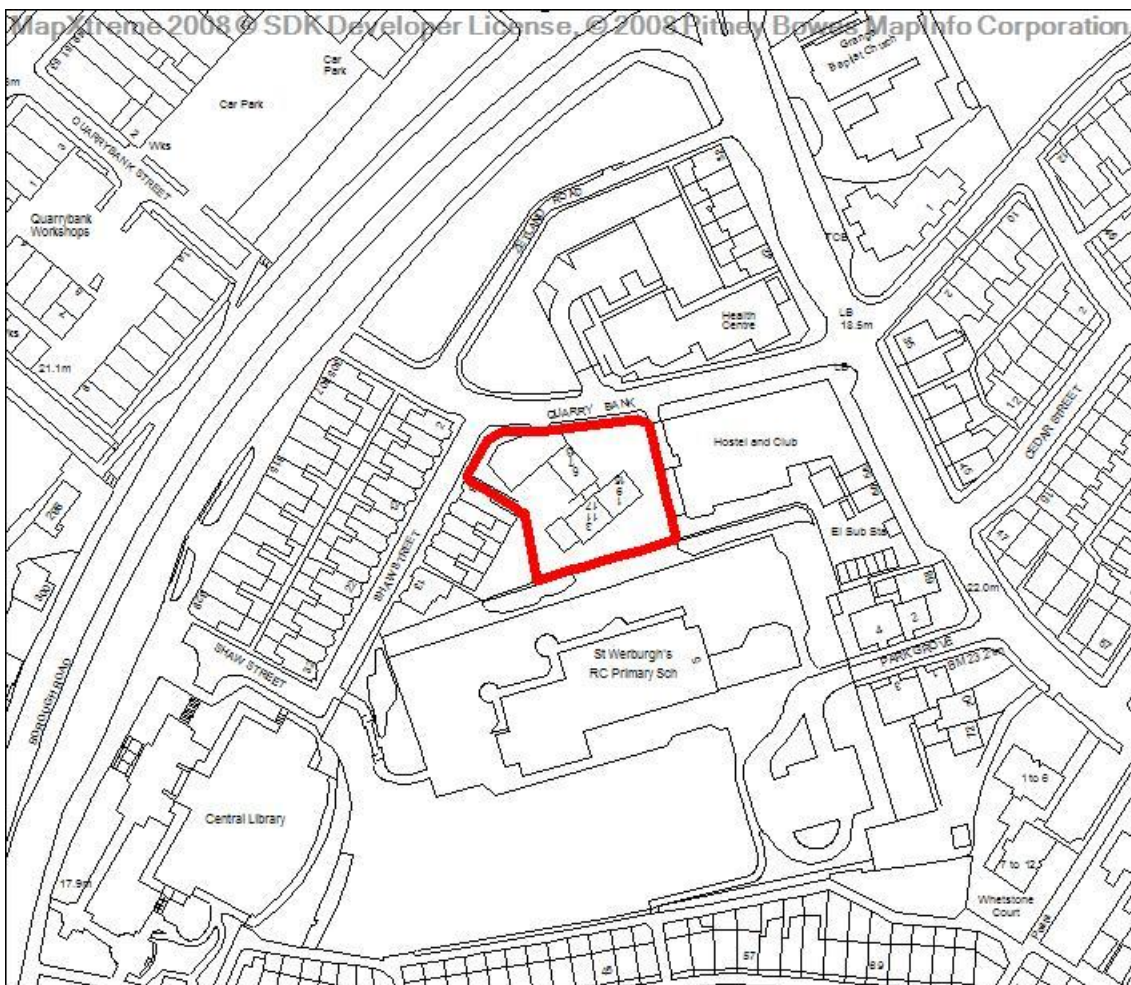
Case Officer:
Mr K Spilsbury

Ward:
**Birkenhead and
Tranmere**

Location: Quarry Bank Hostel, QUARRY BANK, TRANMERE, CH41 2XF
Proposal: Refurbishment of existing block of 45 Bedsits into 12no. Self contained flats and associated work.

Applicant: Venture Housing Association Ltd
Agent : Mr D Fitzpatrick

Site Plan:



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Development Plan allocation and policies:

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

None Relevant

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:

REPRESENTATIONS

A site notice was posted outside the site and 51 individual letters of notification were sent out.

At the time of writing this report 1 letter of objection has been received from the occupier of 3 Lingdale Road. The objection can be summarised as follows:

- Bicycles and bins should not be stored together
- Storage of bicycles should be secure
- There should be storage for 1 bicycle per flat.
- Concerns over the removal of trees

Merseyside cycling campaign have objected to the development unless the scheme is conditioned for good cycle parking facilities.

CONSULTATIONS

Director of Regeneration (Pollution Control) - No Objection

Director of Technical Services (Traffic Management Division) – No Objection subject to conditions.

Director's Comments:

REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application has been referred to Planning Committee as it is a major application containing more than 10 individual residential units.

INTRODUCTION

The scheme involves the refurbishment and conversion of an existing block of 45 bedsits into 12 self contained flats with associated work to meet the current demands for residential accommodation by modernisation and improvement of fabric, facilities and environmental performance. The scheme is being undertaken by Venture Housing Association.

The existing accommodation comprises 45 bedsits in a four storey block

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The site is located within a primarily residential area as allocated within Wirral's Unitary Development Plan and as a result self contained flats are considered acceptable in principle, subject to all other elements of the proposal complying with National, Regional and Local/Supplementary planning policies.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The four storey block of bedsits is located on the corner of Quarry Bank and Shaw Street. There are a mixture of housing styles and buildings in the area as well as some areas of open space. There is an open area of grassland directly opposite the site (to the north) as well as a health centre. The YMCA is a modern building located to the east of the site and there are traditional terraced properties located to the west. St Werburgh's RC Primary School is located to the south of the site.

POLICY CONTEXT

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are principle of development, highway safety and car parking, design and site layout, residential amenity, noise/pollution and landscaping issues.

The site lies within the North West Metropolitan Area as defined by Regional Spatial Strategy Policy SD1 and is within the regeneration priority area where new housing is permitted by the Interim Planning Policy, adopted by the Council's Cabinet on 20 October 2005.

PPS3, introduced in November 2006 indicates that the priority for development should be previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings. This scheme is therefore in line with this Planning Policy Statement.

PPS3 encourages the provision of more intensive housing development in and around existing centres and close to public transport nodes. The aim is to create mixed, inclusive communities, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent home through a broader range of housing (including flats) in locations where the need to travel can be reduced.

Affordable Housing

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) adopted by the Council's Cabinet on 7th February 2008 is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, to be considered alongside Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3), RSS Policy UR9 and UDP Policies HSG2 and HS6.

The Council will normally negotiate on all schemes of 15 and more dwellings and for a scheme proportion of 40% of all dwellings to be affordable. However, Members will be aware that at its meeting on 7th February 2008, Cabinet resolved that the 40% was subject to consideration of land availability, supply and the financial viability of the development proposal.

Whilst the development is below the threshold for affordable housing it is intention of the applicant to provide 100% affordable housing on the site as the scheme is for Venture Housing.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The layout of the proposed flats have been determined by the layout of the existing building. The appearance of the block will be substantially improved by the measures proposed. Windows and doors are to be replaced and insulated and render will be applied to the existing brick walls. The render will be in two colours that can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition and ceramic tile detail cladding will be introduced to add further warmth and interest to elevations. The elevations will be modern in style as are the proposed fabric, proportions and fenestration of the development. It is considered this approach should improve the appearance of the block drastically and provide regeneration to the area.

The surrounding landscaped area will be improved, including a new hard and soft landscaping scheme. New 2.1m high steel railings will be added to the existing boundary wall and pedestrian and vehicular gates will be accessed controlled.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

There will be no changes to the existing separation distances or surrounding residential amenity as the window locations and outlook of proposed rooms have not changed. The main changes proposed will be the removal of existing Juliet balconies and the introduction of windows

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

The Director of Technical Services (Traffic Management) has no objection to the proposed scheme subject to appropriate visibility splays and sight lines.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

Regional Spatial Strategy policy EM18 states - "all residential developments comprising 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable.

The proposed flats are to be registered for EcoHomes assessment with the target being very good. The principles of lifetime Homes have been borne in mind in the layouts of the homes.

HEALTH ISSUES

There are no health implications relating to this application.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposed development will create a high quality residential development within a primarily residential area, on an existing building which is in a poor state of repair. It is considered

that the development would be in keeping with the character of the area and regenerate the existing street scene. The proposal is acceptable in design terms and complies with HS13 of Wirral's unitary development plan and SPD2 - Designing for Self Contained Flat Conversions. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

It is considered that the proposed development will create a high quality residential development within a primarily residential area, on an existing building which is in a poor state of repair. It is considered that the development would be in keeping with the character of the area and regenerate the existing street scene. The proposal is acceptable in design terms and complies with HS4 of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommended Decision: Approve

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Before any construction commences, samples of the facing/roofing/window materials to be used in the external construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved materials shall then be used in the construction of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy HS13 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

3. No part of the development shall be brought into use until visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 2.4 metres at the proposed junction with *Quarry Bank* have been provided clear of obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 0.6 metres above the carriageway level of *Quarry Bank*. Once created, these visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any obstruction and retained for their intended purpose at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to accord with Policy HS13 of the in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

4. No part of the development shall be brought into use until space and facilities for cycle parking of a type and in a location previously submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority have been provided and these facilities shall be permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to accord with Policy TR12 in the in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan

Last Comments By: 22/04/2010 18:13:17
Expiry Date: 04/06/2010

