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ITEM	APP/2007/6248	WARD Bromborough
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**Location:** Land on south side of Wharf Street Port Sunlight Wirral CH62 5HD

**Proposal:** Erection of forty eight apartments in a three storey development

<b>Applicant:</b> Seddon Homes 3 Cinnamon Park Crab Lane Warrington Cheshire WA2 OXP	<b>Agent:</b> Paddock Johnson Associates 33 Boundary Road Port Sunlight Wirral CH62 5EH
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**Development Plan allocation and policies:** Wirral Unitary Development Plan  
Primarily Residential Area  
Port Sunlight Conservation Area  
Policy CH2 - Development Affecting Listed Buildings and Structures  
Policy CH9 - Port Sunlight Conservation Area  
Policy HS4 - Criteria for New Housing Development  
RSS Policy SD1 -  
RSS Policy DP3

**Planning History:** APP/1998/6434/E - Erection of a 60-bed nursing home and close care apartments. Approved 23/10/1998.

APP/2000/7073/E - Removal of condition no. 9 on planning permission APP/1998/6434/E to allow the nursing home and apartments to be occupied by residents before the 20 garage to the north of the application site have been constructed and are available for use. Approved: 02/01/2001.

APP/2002/6527/E - Amendment of planning approval APP/1998/6434/E changes to car parking layout and erection of electricity substation. Approved 03/10/2002.

APP/2003/6502/E - Erection of a 62-bed nursing home and 38 close care apartments. (Amended scheme see APP/1998/6434/E). Withdrawn 07/11/2003.

APP/2003/6503/E - Erection of 16 town houses and 34 apartments with associated car parking and landscaping. Refusal 12/01/2005.

APP/2004/5809/E - Erection of 19 no. Town houses 76 apartments with associated car parking and landscaping. Refused 12/01/2005.

APP/2004/7203/E - Erection of 24 no. apartments and variation of condition 3 of APP/1998/6434/E to allow use of 38 no. close care apartments as residential apartments. Approved: 12/01/2005.

APP/2006/5566 - Amended design, proposals for 38 No. Apartments and removal of condition 3 of APP/1998/6434/E to allow use of 38 No. close care apartments as residential apartments. Approved: 25/08/2006.

**Representations and consultations received:** 2 site notices were erected and a Press Notice issued.

13 letters of consultation were sent out through the neighbour notification process of which no letters of representation were received.

Consultations:

Director of Technical Services (Traffic Management): no objection

Director of Technical Services (Highway Maintenance): no objection

Director of Technical Services (Conservation): no objection.

Director of Regeneration (Pollution Control): no objection subject to all issues

regarding contamination being fully addressed as per the advice given on the previous submissions.

English Heritage: support the current proposals on the following grounds:

They have been subject to significant pre-application consultation involving the applicant, English Heritage and the Local Planning Authority;

They acknowledge the considerable efforts made by Seddon Homes to redesign the scheme, specifically supporting the form, mass, siting and consideration given to key elements of the 'village vernacular' such as the articulation of the eaves level;

The apartments are differentiated from the existing buildings that form earlier phases of the village; and,

The detailed design of the fenestration offers an opportunity to ensure that the scheme is clearly understood as a new development while being informed by the context in which it is located.

Merseytravel: support the proposed development provided that:

The Council is satisfied that all traffic likely to be generated could be accommodated within the local highway network, without resulting in congestion that could impede the passage of bus services on New Chester Road;

The developer formulates and implements a full Travel Plan for the site which would effectively promote the use of sustainable modes of transport;

The developer make appropriate arrangements for Merseytravel Merseylink dial-a-ride vehicles; and, finally,

The developer creates good quality walking routes between the development's primary entrance/exits and their nearest appropriate bus stops.

Merseyside Cycling Campaign Wirral Group: object to the proposal on the grounds of insufficient cycle parking provision.

**Directors comments:** PROPOSAL

The proposed development is for an amended proposal for the erection of forty eight apartments in a three storey development following a previous permission for 38 apartments under APP/2006/5566.

Having bought the site from Miller Homes, with the benefit of an implemented planning approval for 38 apartments, Seddon Homes were made aware of the local unrest with the non village vernacular architectural style adopted for the apartments.

A meeting was held with the applicant, the agent, English Heritage and the Local Planning Authority to the issues more fully, with regards to the implemented design for the 38 apartments. It is considered that when planning permission was originally granted back in 1998, this site was the only site available for development, in Wharf Street, being flanked by the landscape depot to the northeast, and the occupied Wood Street offices to the southwest. As an isolated development the Conservation Officer at the time felt it inappropriate to employ a village vernacular style as the site was, technically, obsolete factory land. A more commercial/industrial character was asked for, which was supported by committee and granted planning approval.

English Heritage and the Local Authority Conservation Officer have acknowledged that since 1998, circumstances have changed considerably, with both the Wood Street office site and the Landscape Depot site being granted planning permission for residential development. The relevant permission APP/2004/7202 employs a village vernacular style. English Heritage and the Local Authority Conservation Officer felt that with the change in circumstances and context, the applicant should be encouraged to rethink their design proposals, in a village vernacular style.

Following a considerable redesign and cost evaluation the applicant considered that the only way the scheme would be economically viable in a traditional vernacular style would be by including additional residential units. This has led to an increase in units by 10 units.

The design for 48 apartments is much improved on the previous consent and now employs traditional materials and features common to the village which the previous scheme was a departure from and includes: gabled, tiled roofs, chimneys, porches, bay windows and a mix of facing brick, render and timber cladding to facades. It is intended that more contemporary detailing will be employed to assist dating the building's construction.

#### PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The site proposed is allocated as a Primarily Residential area within Port Sunlight Conservation Area. The development site is in an area outside of the west Wirral housing restriction area defined under Policy SD1 of the Regional Spatial Strategy. Therefore the development would normally be acceptable in principle subject to the requirement of Policies HS4, CH2 and CH9 of the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan adopted 2000.

#### SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site lies opposite the rear of properties fronting onto The Ginnel in Port Sunlight, and faces onto Wharf Street. The site has been previously developed and until very recently, there were a number of garages located within the site. These have since been demolished.

The site has remained un-used for a number of years and the redevelopment of this site would provide a considerable improvement in terms of the visual amenities in this part of the village and would enhance this part of the conservation area.

#### APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The amended design of the new apartment block, mirrors and continues the appearance of the the Wharf Street frontage.

It is considered that the design of the proposal is of a traditional nature and respectful of the density and massing of the adjacent dwellings within Port Sunlight Conservation Area. It would successfully integrate with their historic built features and special architectural details. A variety of traditional materials are being proposed in the construction including a variety of brick colourings, which complement or are commonplace within the immediate vicinity.

In relation to Policy CH9, the development is considered to impact positively upon the Conservation Area's special character, as the design it incorporates is sensitive to such a pivotal location on major thoroughfare of the area and upon the affected views out of it.

The design proposed takes on board common characteristics of the existing historic fabric present, incorporating similar mass and scaling, to the original built features and details present in the locality or immediate setting. The proposal would therefore be in keeping with the character and setting of the Conservation Area and is considered to be acceptable under Policy CH9 and Policy DP3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Therefore, when considering the proposed development against Policy HS4, which states the necessary criteria for new housing development, the proposal is of an acceptable scale when compared to adjacent properties. It incorporates a cohesive design, which complements neighbouring characteristics; and it would not result in the detrimental harm to the immediate setting of the surrounding Conservation Area.

When considering impacts upon privacy and the amenity of neighbouring residents, the development proposed meets with all necessary separation distances employed by the Council. It is therefore considered any other loss of light or overshadowing

caused by the proposed development would be within acceptable limits neighbouring residents could be reasonably expect to enjoy.

There is sufficient space available for the provision for both landscaping and boundary treatment associated with the apartments being proposed.

#### HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

In terms of access and services, the Highway maintenance division and the traffic management division raised no objection to the proposal and felt that the provision proposed was more than adequate to cater for the development in question.

The application is acceptable under Policy HS4 and is recommended for approval.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

There are no environmental/sustainability issues.

**Summary of Decision:** It is considered that the residential development proposed would not introduce a significant amount of harm to the street scene or to the character of the area. The proposal is acceptable in design terms and complies with PPG3: Housing, PPG15: Planning and Historic Environment; RSS Policies SD1 and DP3; and Policies CH2, CH9 and HS4 of Wirral's Unitary Development and therefore is deemed acceptable.

**Recommendation:** **Approve**

#### Condition(s):

- 1 Full planning permission: standard commencement date. (C03A)
- 2 Materials and sample panel to be submitted and approved prior to commencement (C59D)
- 3 Cycle parking scheme to be submitted and completed prior to occupation (C61L)
- 4 The site of the proposed development has been identified as a site of archaeological interest. No development shall take place until at least 14 days notice of the commencement of the works has been given in writing to the Local Planning Authority and the Director of National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, William Brown Street, Liverpool. L3 8EN. Access shall be afforded at all reasonable times to allow an archaeologist nominated by the Director of Museums to carry out a watching brief throughout the development.
- 5 No development shall take place until details of landfill gas monitoring of the site, together with a scheme for gas exclusion control relating to the construction of the building and/or the application site, have been submitted to, and, in the case of the scheme, approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme be implemented before the building is occupied.
- 6 No development shall take place until a ground contamination survey has been undertaken, taking into account any potential contaminants from all known previous land uses. Should this survey identify any such contaminants, then a scheme of remediation to render the site suitable for use shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to such works being undertaken. A statement giving precise details of the nature and extent of any such remediation, together with certification that the site has been made suitable for its intended use, shall also be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 7 Detailed landscaping scheme to be agreed prior to commencement (C71A)
- 8 Replacement of diseased planting for a period of 5 years from completion. (C71G)
- 9 Landscaping works to be carried out in accordance with the approved details as set out in Condition 7. (C71J)
- 10 The erection of fencing for the protection of trees shall be undertaken before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto the site for the purposes of the development, and shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. The above mentioned fencing shall consist of 1.5 metre high chestnut paling fence (or other approved fence) erected at the full extent of each tree. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavations be made without the written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

#### Reason for conditions

- 1 Standard (CR86)

- 2 To ensure that the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area. This condition is imposed having regard to policies CH2 (Development affecting Conservation Areas) and Policy H54 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.
- 3 To promote more sustainable forms of transport. Policy TR12 of the UDP (CR69)
- 4 In the interests of archaeological research.
- 5 In the interests of the safety of the users of the site.
- 6 In the interests of the residential amenity of future occupiers.
- 7 In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Policy GR5 of the UDP (CR79)
- 8 In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Policy GR5 of the UDP (CR79)
- 9 In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Policy GR5 of the UDP (CR79)
- 10 To protect trees which are of significant amenity value to the area and having regard to Policy GR7 (Trees and New Development) of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

**Last Comments By: 26 July 2007**

**56 Day Expires On: 18 September 2007**

**Case Officer: Mr N Culkin**