

DC/2015/01210

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF THREE DWELLINGS ADJACENT TO 21 FOUR ASH STREET.

LAND ADJACENT 21 FOUR ASH STREET, USK

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Case Officer: Jo Draper

Date Registered: 01/10/2015

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

- 1.1 The proposed scheme is for the construction of three 2 bedroom dwellings with associated parking and turning areas to be constructed within the garden area of 21 Four Ash Street. The proposed terrace of 3 dwellings is proposed to be set back within the site with a small rear garden serving each dwelling and a shared parking area to the front of the site.
- 1.2 The application site sits within the garden curtilage of a Grade II Listed Building. This dwelling forms an end link property and has a Georgian frontage, it is rendered in roughcast with a slate roof. This dwelling has a very traditional frontage with garden walls projecting on either side of the frontage with a traditional iron railing crossing the whole frontage. The principle south western boundary to the site is a 1.6m high blockwork wall faced with random rubble stonework this forms the frontage to the application site.
- 1.3 The existing dwelling has a very large garden to the rear and side measuring approximately 1140 square metres. This application proposes the sub-division of this residential curtilage to accommodate a terrace of three small dwellings within the plot. The new dwellings take up 713 square metres leaving a further 597 square metres in amenity space. Each dwelling including the severed dwelling has 2 car parking spaces accommodated within the site.
- 1.4 The footprint of the three terraces measures 14.4m in depth by 8.1 in depth, the dwellings have been designed with a low ridge and eaves, the ridge height measures 7.1m with traditional dormer windows proposed to the front to provide the headroom required to make the first floor more accessible. The supporting information submitted with the application states that this has been designed to reduce the impact upon the neighbouring properties namely Blackfriars which are situated to the north east of the site. The proposed design has been amended to simplify the elevation removing the timber boarding previously proposed and replacing with a simple render finish. The finishing materials also comprise of natural blue/black slate, rainwater goods are painted cast metal, painted timber fascia and barge boards, and the fenestration is colour coated aluminium. The proposed driveways are finished with tegular paving setts edged with conservation type kerb edging.

- 1.5 The site will remain bound by walls and fences and the communal spaces will form part of the shared amenity space for the dwellings. The site has several trees with a Copper Beech to be retained in the rear garden. The willow and birch adjacent to the south western boundary and new vehicular access will be removed to allow the vehicle access to be widened, it is proposed to replace and compensate for these with native species trees to be planted along the south west boundary. The copper beech to the eastern corner will be retained and protected for the duration of the construction works.
- 1.6 The proposed vehicle access to the site is to be widened to 3.8m with an additional 1.4m path for pedestrian use. The existing boundary wall that forms the frontage to the site is a 1.6m high block and stone wall this is to be partly demolished and curved into the site to frame the new wider access with the height lowered to 0.9m at the one end to facilitate the visibility slay. The proposed site layout allows for two parking spaces per unit including that of the severed dwelling, the layout allows cars to enter and leave in a forward gear.
- 1.7 The site is situated within the Usk development boundary, the Usk Conservation Area and an Archaeologically Sensitive Area.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Strategic Policies

S1 – Spatial Distribution of New Residential Development
S4- Affordable Housing Provision
S13 – Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
S17 – Place Making and Design

Development Management Policies

H1 – Residential Development in Rural Secondary Settlements
H5 – Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside
DES1 – General Design Considerations
EP1 – Amenity and Environmental Protection
NE1- Nature Conservation and Development
GI1-Green Infrastructure
HE1- Development in Conservation Areas
MV1- Movement and Development

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 Consultations Replies

Usk Town Council: Approve

Gwent Glamorgan Archaeological Trust: An archaeological evaluation was carried out in response to previous consultation response. There is no objection to the positive determination of the current application but recommend that a condition is attached to any planning consent that is granted ensuring that any archaeological features that are disturbed by the works are identified, fully investigated and recorded.

Welsh Water: response to be reported as late correspondence

MCC Tree Officer: The application site is within the Usk Conservation Area therefore all trees are legally protected.

The block plan shows a number of trees to be retained including 3 Birch trees to the frontage and a large Copper Beech to the rear. On the whole the loss of other trees within the conservation area will appear to have a limited impact on the landscape as they are relatively isolated from view.

Further information is required which can be covered by planning condition.

MCC Conservation: The proposed design of the new dwellings to the rear of 21 Four Ash Street are acceptable. The lower roof pitch will now reduce any visual impact and light loss.

MCC Highways: No objection to proposal subject to certain annotations on the plan (eg. ensuring that no surface water drains onto the highway) The application is intending to utilise the existing point of access off the highway.

The proposal has offered some improvement to the same but I would wish to see further improvements at the location to bring the access closer to the required standards. The applicant has shown a substandard width for a private driveway with a substandard width footway. It is recognised that whilst it would be more desirable to have a shared access and widen the driveway to 4.2m minimum to support the two way facility to and from the site, the proposed access with the revised annotations provides an access point that is not unacceptable to a point that would warrant refusal on highway grounds.

Usk Civic Society : Usk Civic Society objects to the proposal to build three two-bedroom houses in the grounds of 21 Four Ash Street. This building, also known as Monmouth House, which is listed, was once an inn and as such stands in a more spacious plot than the cottages which it abuts. The entrance from the street is on the line of a now lost street which connected Four Ash Street with the town rampart and ditch (see Usk Town Trail by A G Mein, pages 3-4). The proposed houses would obliterate this line. They would also crowd Monmouth House, and, in the Society's view, would constitute overdevelopment at this location. Not only would the houses themselves be on very poky plots, they would leave Monmouth House isolated on a very small plot with very little privacy. While provision has been made for parking spaces for the houses, the restricted size of the site means that there is little space for visitors or delivery vehicles. These would have nowhere to park except on the street in Four Ash Street or Castle Street, which are already at capacity because few of the houses have off-street parking. Castle Street is a one-way street opening on to Four Ash Street just outside the entrance to Monmouth House. Vehicles come down

Castle Street from Castle Parade quite fast and visibility is not good. Even with an improved visibility splay, the extra traffic that would be generated by three houses would constitute additional danger, both emerging from the entrance and turning into it, especially turning right from Four Ash Street, where it is difficult to see approaching cars coming down Castle Street (I have witnessed this myself).

4.2 Neighbour Notification

6 representations have been received raising the following issues:

1. The entrance to the proposed dwelling is very narrow, in a dangerous position leading onto a narrow but busy one way street with limited views due to a high stone wall – will this have to be dropped to ease visibility
This will have historic implications for removing the wall?
2. Questioned whether this will conform to highway regulations?
3. The junction where Castle Street and Four Ash Street meet have been a site for accidents between vehicles and pedestrians. Questioned the safety measures put into place
4. Parking on Castle street and Four Ash Street is limited to ensure safety from the proposed dwelling entrance would lead to the loss of car parking spaces. This would detract from the quality of life of local residents
5. Impact upon wildlife, disruption of building work and reduced amount of light will impact the local wildlife.
6. Sewerage drains block up
7. Increased flooding and storm water.
8. Usk is already a dormitory town for people working outside the area. Condition should be imposed requiring this development to provide low cost housing for local youngsters
9. The area is of significant historical and archaeological interest with the old town rampart ditch/pond and old lane access being built on
10. Listing group left house of a terrace of four, part of a good range of town houses retaining their character in a historic position. This is an opportunist proposal with little consideration for the Listing.
11. Outside the building line
12. Single pavement and carriageway offer poor access/ingress. Blind to approaching traffic. Highway perceived as mismanaged
13. Extra traffic generated by proposal and service vehicles increases highways problems.
14. Proposed development is within a Conservation Area and would adversely impact upon the integrity of the Listed group,
15. Large part of stone wall along Castle Street will be taken down and lost
16. The proposed dwelling will impinge upon the listed properties adjoining, will reduce privacy within the gardens and will increase noise levels
17. Out of character with the existing housing stock and will affect the natural green corridor from Usk Castle to the open fields to the south of Chepstow Road.

4.3 Other Representations

None

4.4 Local Member Representations

None

5.0 EVALUATION

As the site is within the Usk Development boundary, residential development is acceptable in principle subject to detailed planning considerations. The following issues arise in the consideration of this proposal:

Impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area and Listed Building
Access Parking and Surface Water Drainage
Trees
Neighbour Amenity
Archaeology

5.1 Impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area and the Listed Building.

- 5.1.1 In this context the emphasis is upon ensuring that the development proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and its landscape setting. The proposal cannot have a serious adverse effect on significant vistas within the area and the general character and appearance of the street scene and roofscape. The materials should be appropriate to their setting and context with special attention given to the setting of the building and its open areas.
- 5.1.2 There will be glimpsed views into the site of the proposal from between 21 Four Ash Street and the garage of 5 Castle Street which projects out into the north-west boundary. Currently there is a stone garden wall that partly divides what appears currently as an enclosed overgrown garden. This is being removed which will partly open up with this development, although the viewpoint will continue to be framed by the severed dwelling and the aforementioned garage. The proposed dwellings are set well back into the site and by virtue of their modest traditional design sits comfortably within the background of this framed view. The form and design of the development is sympathetic to its setting as the height and mass of the built form has been designed to appear subservient to the Listed Building that forms the frontage to the site. The use of materials are simple, traditional and of a high quality that works within this setting.
- 5.1.3 There are some trees being removed but there are other trees that are being retained with additional trees being planted which helps to maintain the sense of privacy and enclosure that is characteristic of this site. It was important that the front boundary wall did not open up too much as this would compromise the current sense of enclosure that contributes to visual amenity of this part of the Conservation Area. The existing boundary wall which is a mixture of random rubble and blockwork is being widened to provide a wider shared access point but this has been kept as an opening of 3.8m with an additional footpath width of 1.35m that separates the side of the severed house from the altered access. The proposed curve of the wall that frames the vehicular access helps to maintain a sense of enclosure. The openness of the site is not compromised by the proposal as the development is not prominent being

set back in the site with a significant amount of open shared space to the front and side of the proposed dwellings that helps to prevent any sense of over development from being created as a result of this development.

- 5.1.4 The proposal will preserve and enhance the Conservation Area and does not compromise the setting of the Listed Building. The proposal complies with relevant planning policy in this case. Conditions are proposed that requires boundary materials and landscaping to be controlled.

5.2 Access, Parking and Surface Water Drainage

- 5.2.1 The highway engineers would ideally like to see a wider access than that proposed the standard given being 4.2m, this application proposes 3.8m. Currently the access point is a lot narrower with restricted visibility as the height of the wall provides little visibility splay from Castle Street (which is where the vehicle traffic will approach along this one way highway). This is a setting whereby a larger vehicle access point would open up the site considerably and detract from the sense of enclosure that contributes significantly to the character of this area. Hence this is an occasion whereby the potential harm to the setting of the Conservation Area would outweigh the highway benefit from providing the standard access width that is preferred.

- 5.2.2 The car parking and turning area is considered to be acceptable and should not therefore intensify the on-street parking problem that has been raised in some of the neighbour objections. With regard to surface water drainage, this site is not within a C1 or C2 Flood plain, the neighbours have raised concern regarding surface water drainage. Revised plans have been submitted that shows a drainage route that prevents the surface water drainage from leaving the site and being absorbed within the soakaways inside the application site. The proposed highway and access details are acceptable in this case.

5.3 Trees

- 5.3.1 There are many existing trees on the site that are being retained, there are trees being removed with compensatory trees proposed to be planted. The tree officer has confirmed that a number of trees are to be retained including 3 Birch trees to the frontage and a large Copper Beech to the rear. On the whole the loss of other trees within the conservation area will appear to have a limited impact on the landscape as they are relatively isolated from view. Subject to appropriate conditions requiring adequate protection of trees and a landscaping scheme that secures compensatory planting the proposal development is acceptable.

5.4 Neighbour Amenity

- 5.4.1 The siting of the proposed dwellings has minimised any potential conflict between the severed dwelling and the new dwellings proposed. The separating distance is acceptable to prevent any direct overlooking. The garden curtilage proposed to serve

the severed dwelling is large enough to prevent the proposed scheme from having an over-dominating impact on this property.

5.4.2 There are no windows proposed on the gable ends of the proposed terraced properties with no direct overlooking into no 5 Castle Street. Whilst no 6-10 Blackfriars situated to the rear of the site has an aspect north west to south east, there are no windows that could potentially overlook the rear gardens of the three proposed properties. The small gardens that serve the new dwellings share a common boundary with the communal space for Blackfriars, this is a communal amenity space which is overlooked by all the flats, in this case the distance is considered to be acceptable.

5.4.3 The proposed scheme does not compromise privacy or space standards or have an adverse impact upon existing or proposed residential dwellings.

5.6 Archaeology

5.6.1 The site is within an Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA), GGAT are satisfied with the archaeological evaluation and have recommended conditions accordingly.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Conditions/Reasons

1	This development shall be begun within 5 years from the date of this permission Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2	The development shall be carried out in accordance with the list of approved plans set out in the table below Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, for the avoidance of doubt.
3	No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured agreement for a written scheme of historic environment mitigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the programme of work will be fully carried out in accordance with the requirements and standards of the written scheme. Reason: To identify and record any features of archaeological interest discovered during the works, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource.
4	No development may take place until the local planning authority has received and agreed in writing a tree report in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations. The report should include the following information: (i) A scaled tree retention/removal plan showing the root protection area (RPA) for each of the retained trees. Nb the drawing should include any offsite trees where their RPA extends into the application site, (specifically the Monkey Puzzle and mature Birch trees in the adjacent garden of 23 Four Ash Street) (ii) An Arboricultural Method Statement detailing construction measures to mitigate damage where construction activity within the RPA is

	<p>unavoidable.</p> <p>(iii) Strategic hard and soft landscape design, including species and location of new tree planting.</p> <p>Reason :To protect existing and ensure continuity of Green Infrastructure assets within the Conservation Area.</p>
5	<p>No development shall commence until details of the design, height and materials proposed for the boundaries shown on the layout plan have been submitted to and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Such walls and fences shall be erected before the dwelling is completed or occupied whichever is the earlier and retained in perpetuity</p> <p>Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development takes place.</p>
6	<p>All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 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.</p> <p>Reason : To safeguard the landscape amenities of the area.</p>
7	<p>No structure or erection or planting exceeding 0.9 metre in height shall be placed, erected or grown in the visibility splay.</p> <p>Reason : To ensure adequate visibility is provided.</p>