

**SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE 10th APRIL 2014
SCHEDULE OF ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Agenda Item 7a

**Plan List Item 1 14/01088/FUL – Demolition of the existing cottage and erect a replacement 3 bed dwelling with associated parking facilities and detached garage
At Hersanmine, Scotts Hill, Donhead St. Andrew, Shaftesbury.
SP7 9EP**

Third party representations

36 further representations from third parties were received (since the publication of the Committee report). 26 were in support of the application (and largely consist of letters from those who have already written in supporting the application reiterating their continued support following the submission of amended plans setting out that they consider the design to be appropriate and that there will not be overlooking of neighbouring properties.

10 were objecting to the proposal and again largely consist of letters reiterating their objections to the application following the amended plans on similar grounds to that set out in the committee report these include overlooking/loss of privacy and being out of keeping with the area.

Consultee responses

A consultation response was received from the Wiltshire Council District Ecologist, as follows:

The results of the Bat Survey (Chalkhill, Sept 2012) demonstrate that the cottage and lean-to have been used by bats in the past, possibly as a maternity roost. The droppings were considered to be pipistrelle bats which would be relatively straightforward to provide mitigation for. Although most of the droppings were old, it was not clear whether the roost had been abandoned or not. While I consider it is possible to determine the application, further survey will be needed as a condition of any permission to ensure that any mitigation is designed appropriately and to clarify whether the demolition works need to be undertaken under a Natural England licence. If bats are present, then the garage may need to be constructed before the cottage is demolished.

In accordance with the Habitats Regulations, the council must consider whether the application meets the tests required for a Natural England licence. The tests for imperative reasons of overriding public interest and no satisfactory alternative appear to be met judging from information contained in the Condition Appraisal accompanying the application; a significant amount of work both structural and internal is required to make the dwelling habitable. The test for maintaining the favorable conservation status of the bat population is also likely to be met since detailed drawings have been provided to show how the proposed garage will be designed to provide for a bat roost.

The consultant's report identifies that reptiles could occur on site. These could be present in some numbers and I therefore suggest that this issue is covered by condition (see below). Breeding birds are unlikely to be any more significant than in an average garden and therefore I suggest adding an informative to bring the risks to the developer's attention.

SUGGESTED CONDITIONS:

Before any works, including demolition, commence, a report of a bat survey will be submitted for Planning Authority approval. The report will be undertaken by a professional ecologist and will confirm the current status of bats at the property from 2 emergence surveys and 1 dawn return survey undertaken between May and August. It will also confirm that a Natural England licence is required or it will itemise in full the details of mitigation that will be provided for the development. The works will be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the approved report.

A permanent roost and accesses for bats will be provided for the duration of the development in the loft space of the proposed garage. These will meet the specifications in Proposed New Bat Roost Provision, (Chalkhill, 24/1/14) and drawings submitted with the application Proposed Bat Mitigation Measures -1 drawing no 07 20/1/14, Proposed Bat Mitigation Measures - 2 drawing no 08, dated 20/1/14, Proposed Garage Elevations, drawing no 06, dated 20/1/14, all by Western Design Architects or as modified by the approved report submitted to discharge condition 1 or as modified by a Natural England licence superseding this permission.

The works will be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations for reptiles provided in section 6 of the Bat Survey report (Chalkhill, Sept 2012).

SUGGESTED INFORMATIVES:

The adults, young, eggs and nests of all species of birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding. The applicant is advised to check any structure or vegetation capable of supporting breeding birds and delay removing or altering such features until after young birds have fledged. Damage to extensive areas that could contain nests/breeding birds should be undertaken outside the breeding season. This season is usually taken to be the period between 1st March and 31st August but some species are known to breed outside these limits.

Agenda Item 7b

**Plan List Item 2 14/01417/FUL – Demolition of existing laundry buildings; erection of 9 dwellings (2 x 1-bed; 5 x 2-bed; 2 x 3 bed); alterations to accesses; landscaping and associated parking
At Shrewton Steam Laundries Ltd, High Street, Shrewton, Salisbury
SP3 4BZ**

The following correspondence has been received since the writing of the Committee Report:

Third party representations:

A letter from the planning agent sent to Councillors, Appendix 1

One third party representations of objection, copied in full as an appendix to this sheet.
(Appendix 2)

04 April 2014

Cllr Richard Clewer
53 Highlands Way
Whiteparish
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP5 2SZ

Dear Councillor Clewer

**APPLICATION 14/01417/FUL
SHREWTON LAUNDRY, HIGH STREET, SHREWTON. SP3 4BZ**

We write in relation to the above application, to be considered at your Committee on 10 April. We remain the owners of the site. We are a small local firm of developers.

A previous scheme for 3x 4-bed dwellings (S/2013/0406/FUL) was approved following the Planning Committee on 5 September 2013 with no requirement for any developer contributions or affordable housing, due to the loss likely to result from that proposal. However, at the September meeting there was a clear indication expressed by Councillors that you would prefer to see a greater number of smaller dwellings instead of the 3x 4-bed units of the approval.

Accordingly, we asked our advisors to prepare an application for more, smaller units for consideration. The application before you is for 2x 1-bed units, 5x 2-beds and 2x 3-beds. A previous application – substantially identical to that now presented - was determined as a delegated decision in January without reverting to you for consideration, despite our request that it be presented to you for consideration.

We were extremely disappointed at this, given that the 9-unit scheme arises directly from comments made by Councillors in September. The current application is now the 5th scheme for this derelict site and we are keen for a constructive resolution.

Highways (access and parking), ecology, flood risk and heritage matters are all addressed by the current proposal. Similarly, loss of employment floorspace is approved, in principle, by the 3-unit consent. The Parish Council support the 9-unit scheme. They have suggested "Carriers' Court" as a possible name for the dwellings.

The single reason that your Officers are recommending for refusal relates to the following matters:

- a) bulk/massing (magnitude in three dimensions);
- b) scale (size in relation to surroundings);
- c) design of the development in relation to existing buildings; and
- d) the open siting and extent of vehicular hardstanding and car parking.

They then go on to express concerns regarding the amenities of future occupiers.

We consider that relevant points regarding these matters are being overlooked by your Officers, and address these below.

Flood Risk

Specifically on flood risk matters, the Environment Agency (EA) have acknowledged that the site plan shows "*predominantly communally owned areas (car parking and garden) and only privately owned driveways rather than gardens within the overland flood zone*" and concludes that such "*communal areas are unlikely to be raised or significantly altered or obstructed in the future*".

Accordingly, the EA prefer the layout of the 9-unit proposal over that of the approved scheme and suggest planning conditions. Their overall opinion is summarized as *"it would be unreasonable to object to this revised scheme"*

The winter of 2013/14 has been the wettest on record. Records commenced in 1910. Local evidence, including borehole records at Tilshead show that the rainfall that occurred in the Oct 2013-Jan 2014 period is estimated to have a return period that is more rare than once in each 100 years. This is particularly relevant as the River Till past the site is a winterbourne, and therefore driven by the groundwater levels of an entire winter season.

Despite the exceptionally high groundwater levels in the Oct 2013 to Jan 2014 period, the river has remained *in-bank* past the Laundry site. The site did not flood, and the Officer Report includes the photographic evidence we provided that show water levels in the River were around 1m below levels on site.

It may therefore be that no part of the application site should be considered as lying within Flood Zone 3 (where flooding is expected to be more common than once in each 100 years).

We are therefore of the view that the proposals before the Council represent an over-cautious approach to flood risk considerations at this site. Nevertheless we currently remain willing to accept the EA's requirement regarding site levels to ensure this matter is addressed.

Quantum of Development & Urban Design Considerations

We disagree with the points made by your Officers here. We believe that your Officer Report overlooks the significant amount of buildings currently on site. Furthermore, it appears that inadequate evaluation of the proposed streetscenes has been undertaken, particularly when comparing the streetscene of the 9-unit scheme to that of the approved 3-unit one.

Area and Volume Considerations

The existing buildings on site have a footprint of 840m² (or 59% of the site area), and a volume of around 3,800m³. They provide 925m² of floor space.

In comparison, the 9-unit scheme has a total footprint of 386m² (or 27% of the site), and a volume of around 2,250m³ (an average of 250m³ per unit). They provide a total of 603m² of floor space (an average of 67m² per unit).

Taking these per unit amounts, and dividing these into the existing built resource on site would suggest between 13 and 15 units. In contrast, we are providing only 9, together with 2 parking spaces and a private garden for each 2-bed and 3-bed house. The 2x 1-bed flats each have their own parking space and a communal garden.

Building Heights

In terms of height, no part of the 9-unit scheme would be above the highest part of the scheme approved under S/2013/0406/FUL. The application streetscene plan 1063/P11 shows the latest proposals against the approved scheme (and the existing buildings) and demonstrates this point clearly. The spacings approved by the 3-unit scheme are maintained in the current application.

The Officer Report makes no meaningful comparison between the physical parameters of the approved scheme and those of the current proposal. IN legal terms, this is a "fall-back" position and hence a relevant material consideration. It is illogical to suggest that the height of the 9 unit scheme is unacceptable (in comparison to surrounding dwellings) when the same height of new development has already been approved by the 3-unit scheme.

Distances of Built Form to Boundaries / Urban Grain

The proposal would improve the relationship between the buildings on site to the adjacent highways. Currently, buildings abut the highway immediately on 2 sides such that there is a difficult junction where The Hollow meets High Street. As was the case in the 3-unit scheme, built form is kept back from the highway and a 1.5m path is provided along the entire road frontage.

The front of the dwellings facing the High Street (Units 1-4) are set back 2.4m from the edge of the highway; Units 5-7 are between 6.5m and 10m from the highway; and the 2-storey building housing Units 8 and 9 is set back by between 10m and 11.5m. This will increase the sense of openness at the site, and bring it back into line with the surrounding area.

The proposal **re-introduces** front gardens to the site. These features are evident throughout the locality, and therefore are appropriate to include in the scheme. They will significantly enhance the appearance of the site. Compared with the approved 3-unit scheme, the latest proposals also address the public realm more directly.

It is considered that the proposal represents an appropriate built form and represents a transition between the monolithic development fronting London Road (approximately 50m to the east) and the more fragmented building forms to the west of the site.

Garden depths are appropriate, and more generous than those proposed in an alternative scheme suggested by the Council's Urban Designer. The scheme would respect the privacy of neighbouring dwellings.

Location of Parking & Effect on Appearance

With the exception of the 3 drives serving units 5, 6 and 7, parking is mainly provided in 2 courts. The first, serving Units 1-4, is accessed via the access design that was approved under S/2013/0406/FUL. Parking for residential dwellings that is visible from the street occurs throughout the immediate locality. Specific examples locally include Sundial Cottages, immediately to the north; all the properties on Hindes Meadow; and Beech Hollow and Millbrook House. Non-residential parking is evident from the highway serving both The George and The Plume of Feathers sites.

This is therefore a characteristic of the locality, and appropriate for inclusion in the scheme.

The Officer Report suggests the parking court adjacent to the River Till may represent poor design. This point is particularly dubious as this part of the proposal recreates a parking area that already exists on this part of the site.

Summary

The Officer Report represents an incomplete picture of the application, the site and the material considerations (including the scale of existing buildings and those of the approved scheme).

A superficial assessment has then been undertaken of the proposals. Accordingly, we are very pleased to have the opportunity to have the application discussed by elected representatives.

We would be happy to answer questions regarding the scheme, and hope you will be able to support the application at the Committee on Thursday.

Yours sincerely

JOHN RATTUE & MERVYN GRIFFITHS

Appendix 2

14/01417/FUL

SUBMISSION TO BE READ OUT AS WE ARE UNLIKELY TO BE ABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING AS WE ARE TRAVELLING

As owners of The Old Bakery, High Street, Shrewton, which is adjacent to the Shrewton Steam Laundries site under discussion this evening, we wish to pass comment on the report submitted by Shrewton Parish Council in support of the development in its current guise.

The report reads as follows:

Councillors observed that it was still too many houses for the site but agreed to support the application as it was necessary for new homes to be built.

We consider that it is totally irresponsible on their part to approve the application whilst at the same time saying that there are too many houses. We believe they should state what number they feel would be right for the site and to push for that number. Whilst we appreciate the need for new housing in the area, it should take regard of the overall quality of the design, as emphasised by the professional team in the Wiltshire Planning Department. In our view the Parish Council's stance is simply a case of aiming to improve the appearance and safety of the dilapidated site without regard for the long term impact on the area.

John and Sheila Sweeney

