

ITEM NO. 5

COMMITTEE DATE: 14/01/2013

APPLICATION NO: 12/1416/03 FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

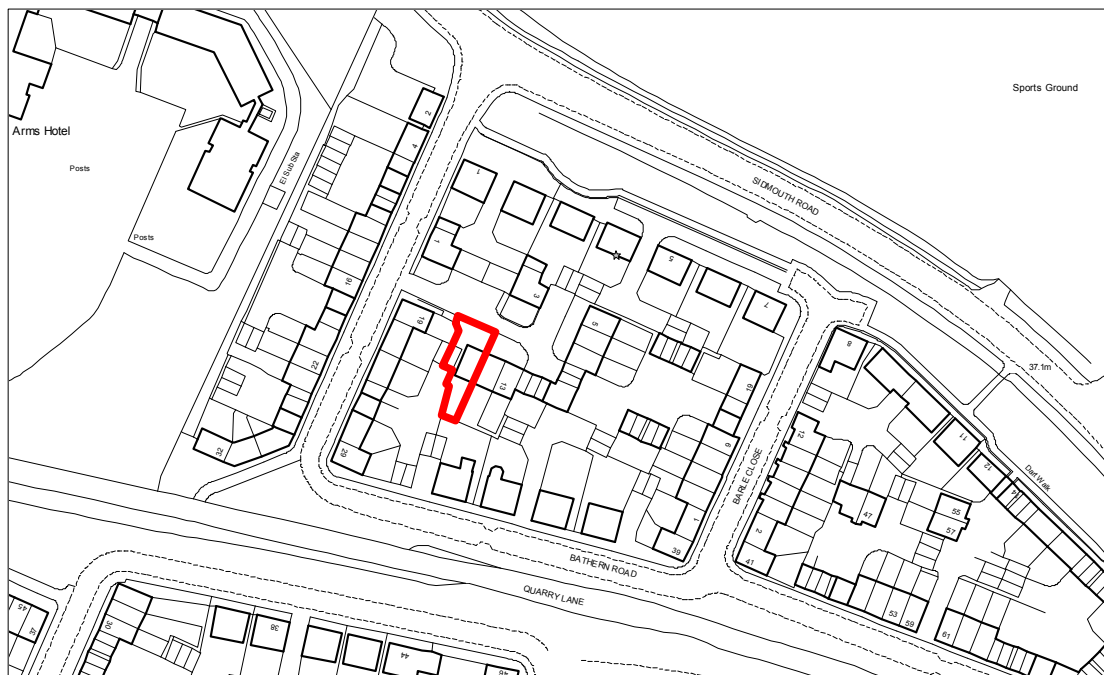
APPLICANT: Ms Dovey
Agency Assistance

PROPOSAL: Replace garage doors with french doors/windows to facilitate an additional unit of accommodation.

LOCATION: 4 Dart Walk, Exeter, EX2 7QF

REGISTRATION DATE: 10/10/2012

EXPIRY DATE: 05/12/2012



Scale 1:2000

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DESCRIPTION OF SITE/PROPOSAL

No. 4 Dart Walk is a large detached residential property located on the Southam Fields estate. The property shares a driveway with 5 Dart Walk which leads to two double garages at the rear of both units. Vehicular access to the wider development is gained via an entrance directly onto Sidmouth Road to the south of the adjacent Exeter Arms Public House. Middlemoor roundabout sits in close proximity.

No. 4 Dart Walk is classed as a dwelling in planning terms, but it is owned and run by a Home Care Agency which provides an element of care to the occupants. A carer lives at the address.

Retrospective planning consent is sought for the replacement of two garage doors with french doors/windows to facilitate an additional unit of accommodation. The applicant's agent advises that the use is ancillary to the No. 4 Dart Walk and is not a separate dwelling. Internally the former garage contains a kitchen and a bathroom and is capable of being occupied without using any facilities within No. 4 Dart Walk. There is no external amenity space.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE APPLICANT

The application is accompanied by a Planning Statement. The statement provides a summary of the works undertaken.

REPRESENTATIONS

Two objections have been received. Planning issues raised include:-

1. Highway congestion and parking difficulty.
2. Aesthetically out of character.
3. Over-development.

CONSULTATIONS

The Devon County Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment recommends that the application is refused on grounds of highway obstruction and associated danger to all users of the road. This is because the vehicles displaced by the conversion will either park in the adjacent highway or obstruct the off-street parking facilities associated with neighbouring properties.

PLANNING POLICIES/POLICY GUIDANCE

Central Government Guidance

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy

CP17 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

CP4 - Density

Devon County Structure Plan 2001-2016

CO6 - Quality of New Development

TR10 - Strategic Road Network and Roadside Service Areas

Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011

H1 - Search Sequence

H2 - Location Priorities

H5 - Diversity of Housing

DG1 - Objectives of Urban Design

DG4 - Residential Layout and Amenity

Exeter City Council Supplementary Planning Document

Residential Design Guide (adopted September 2010)

Householder's Guide to Extension Design (adopted 16 September 2008)

OBSERVATIONS

There are two elements to the proposal: the physical alterations and the associated use. With regard to the former, the structure subject to this application is an existing double garage built at the same time as the main dwellinghouse. It was constructed from matching materials and benefited from two up-and-over garage doors. Structures like the one subject to this application are prevalent throughout the vicinity and collectively add to the character of the area. The conversion works saw the original garage doors removed and replaced with large french doors. The installation of the french doors is at odds with the original design philosophy used throughout the wider estate and appears incongruous.

With regard to the use, there are a number of issues of concern. Firstly, the loss of the on-site parking displaces cars to the adjacent highway or leads to the obstruction of neighbours' parking spaces. This results in additional vehicles parking in the highway to the detriment of public safety. Parking is at a premium throughout the estate, and this problem is exacerbated by the loss of this particular garage.

There is also concern about the amenity of occupiers. As Members are aware, the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 'Residential Design' was adopted in September 2010. It identifies internal and external space standards. This unit does not provide the required minimum internal space and has no external space. It is therefore unacceptable. Future occupiers will not feel at ease in such a confined space. The lack of any defensible space magnifies this issue.

The applicant has advised that the use of the converted garage is ancillary to that of 4 Dart Walk. However, due to the size and appearance of the structure, coupled with its independent means of access and availability of all necessary utilities, this conversion is tantamount to a self-contained dwelling, which has a negative relationship with both the existing property and other properties in the vicinity. Although located within a residential area, this site is not considered to be an appropriate site for an additional dwelling unit due to the lack of internal and external space.

There is also some doubt whether the use taking place is actually ancillary. It would appear that the unit is in independent occupation.

SOUTHERN AREA WORKING PARTY

Members requested that the application was considered at Planning Committee. Members also requested that a site visit was undertaken. The comments of the visiting Members will be reported via the late items sheet to be circulated prior to the Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

- 1) The proposal is contrary to Policy CO6 of the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016, Policy DG1 (a, e and i) and Policy DG4 of the Exeter Local Plan 1995-2011 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Residential Design Guide' because:
 - i) the annexe is tantamount to a new dwelling which has a poor relationship with the host property, to the detriment of the character of the area and the amenity of the occupants;
 - ii) its limited size and restricted outlook fail to provide an acceptable standard of amenity; and,
 - iii) it would create an undesirable precedent for similar proposals which, individually or collectively, would detract from the character and appearance of the area.
- 2) The proposed development has removed existing facilities to accommodate the parking of vehicles within the site, and the resulting obstruction created by the displaced vehicles encourages parking on the highway, with consequent additional danger to all users of the road contrary to Policy TR10 of the Devon County Structure Plan.

Local Government (Access to Information) 1985 (as amended).
Background papers used in compiling the report:

Files of planning applications available for inspection from the Customer Service Centre, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter: Telephone 01392 265223