

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday 26 June 2017

Present:

Councillors Lyons, Bialyk, Denham, Edwards, Foale, Harvey, Mrs Henson, Morse, Newby, Prowse, Sutton and Spackman

Apologies:

Councillor Gottschalk

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CHAIR

In the absence of Councillor Gottschalk, the meeting was chaired by Councillor Lyons.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made by Members.

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PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 17/0006/03 - GOLF PRACTICE GROUND, LAND SOUTH OF NEWCOURT DRIVE, EXETER

The Principal Project Manager (Development) (MH) presented the application for the construction of 82 dwellings, access, estate roads, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

He set out the key issues including principle of residential development, housing delivery including affordable housing, traffic and heritage matters and advised of the receipt of further representations largely covering traffic matters. There had been a significant amount of both support and opposition to the proposal and, responding to a Member, he confirmed that the development would not experience problems of stray golf balls as adequate landscape would be provided and because of the safe direction of play of the adjacent area of the range.

Councillor Leadbetter attended the meeting and spoke on this item under Standing Order No. 44. He made the following points:-

- support principle of housing development as established in the Newcourt Masterplan including the provision of the off road cycle/pedestrian path as part of the wider strategic cycle network;
- wish to express the concerns of many residents in Holland Park Phases I and II that the development will result in dangerous road conditions in both areas and, particularly, on Old Rydon Lane itself. Consequently, support the call for alternative accesses to serve the development especially from Admiral Way; and
- further examination of road design is necessary to reduce the rat run potential and for further consideration to be given to the planning of the highway network in the area.

Mrs Mitchell spoke against the application. She raised the following points:-

- object to use of Old Rydon Lane as the only road providing access to Holland Park Phase III, when another route exists;

- not opposed to the building of homes or future development of the Golf Club but to safety issues and non-compliance with the Newcourt Masterplan;
- the application has Old Rydon Lane as the only entrance to at least 169 homes, St Bridget's Nursery and the offices at Newcourt House. It is an old Devon lane unsuitable for the increasing amounts of traffic;
- parts of the Lane are not wide enough for vehicles to pass each other safely with blind spots, high grass banks, walls and overgrown vegetation. There is no cycle path or pavement and vehicles often travel too fast making it unsafe and dangerous. It has poor sight lines from driveways and Phases I and II make exiting difficult;
- the only access to this area from the A379 is from Old Rydon Lane and there is a fear that, during severe traffic congestion in the area or an incident blocking the Lane, emergency vehicles would be delayed in responding to calls;
- having the only access to Phase III via Old Rydon Lane runs counter to the intention of the Newcourt Masterplan which states that "Old Rydon Lane will be managed with the aim of avoiding additional traffic using this route to access the Masterplan area". Contrary to the transport statement, traffic on Old Rydon Lane will increase by between 23% and 48%;
- access to Phase III from Admiral Way would be more suitable, access from Admiral Way being implied in the Masterplan as it is part of the Newcourt Spine Road and more suitable for 21st century traffic conditions. There is a potential, additional point of access via Batavia Drive; and
- the Newcourt Masterplan recognises the need to protect the special nature and historic value of Newcourt House and the green space around it. Each encroachment would mean the further loss to a beautiful area and wildlife habitat and corridor in a fast developing urban environment

Mr Lacey spoke in support of the application. He raised the following points:-

- am a serving director of Exeter Golf & Country Club with apologies from Will Gannon, the Chair of the Golf Club, who is on holiday;
- speaking on behalf of the Exeter Golf & Country Club members and the Board of Directors who express their full support for Heritage Development's application in respect of the existing golf practice ground at Newcourt;
- the application has arisen as part of the ongoing strategic plan for the club. This identified that the Newcourt Practice Ground is a largely under-utilised asset of the club, not benefitting the wider membership. The board wish to dispose of the asset and re-invest the potential development receipts for the wider benefit of members;
- as part of this strategy, a replacement of the practice area was achieved. This Planning Committee also approved consent for the Club's relocated facilities situated in Exeter Road, Topsham adjoining the University of Exeter sporting hub. Consent has been granted for a Driving Range and much improved golfing facilities whilst assisting in reinforcing a green buffer between the City and Topsham;
- the Board chose to partner with Heritage having failed to secure access onto Admiral Way which is still owned by Persimmon. Enlightened and informed by the challenges presented by Persimmon's Great Woodcote Way development, the Club ensured that the Heritage layout at Newcourt received the full professional audit and approval from the Club's golf architect, Tom Mackenzie of Mackenzie Ebert. The club is therefore confident that the long-term safety and playability of the golf course has been secured;
- in approving the application, the Club will have a unique opportunity to invest the resulting development funds in its own future. It will enable the Board to enhance the continuing and reasonable demands of its 5,000 members through

raising its offer in an increasingly competitive market. Wear House can then be improved to a quality not previously anticipated;

- Exeter Golf & Country Club has become a part of the history of the City. It supports an important tract of green space and a vibrant use for one of the city's finest historic buildings. It meets the needs of an active membership across its many social and sporting activities. This proposal provides the means to ensure that it can carry this function forward into the future in a manner increasingly demanded by the raised stature and prestige of this City. It is wholly consistent with the ambitious and up-beat image Exeter is projecting of itself to its own citizens and the wider regional population; and
- commend the proposal and encourage approval as submitted.

Responding to a Member, he stated that he was speaking purely on behalf of the Golf Club and not the developer.

The Highways Development Manager reported that the proposal had been carefully examined in terms of the impact on Old Rydon Lane which it was considered would be able to adequately cope with the additional traffic. Because of the existence of a "ransom strip" at Admiral Way, the identification of alternative access arrangements had not been possible. He detailed the traffic assessment exercise through the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) data base modelling used nationally on the basis of six to eight traffic movements normally expected from a residence which had been used to assess the impact on the highway network.

It was noted that there were two points off access onto the development from Admiral Way but that these were identified as pedestrian/cycle access points only.

Members noted the existence of a "ransom strip" in relation to Admiral Way but felt that options for providing alternative access routes onto this phase of the development should be explored as they recognised the need to address the concerns relating to additional traffic generation in the area.

The recommendation was for approval, subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that, in view of the additional traffic which would be generated by this development and the concerns over the concomitant impact it would have on traffic safety along Old Rydon Lane, the application for the construction of 82 dwellings, access, estate roads, landscaping and associated infrastructure be **DEFERRED** for further consideration of the potential impacts, potential for alternative access arrangements and clarification of the ransom situation.

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PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 17/0504/03 AND 17/0505/07 - MORTUARY BUILDINGS (EAST), NORTH GRANGE, CLYST HEATH

The Assistant City Development Manager the application for the conversion of former mortuary building to provide a one bed dwelling house.

Mr Atkins spoke in support of the application. He raised the following points:-

- discussions held with planning officers since July 2016 but with differing advice provided;
- the site would have no logical alternative. An office development would generate visits by staff and clients;

- no significant alterations proposed other than changes to window size and removal of steps at front of building for ground floor of the building to align with external ground;
- will enhance character of area through bringing into use a derelict building;
- internal size will be just one square metre under the minimum standard of 39 square metres and the interior design will be flexible;
- external area is larger than some of neighbouring gardens and the property will be some 150 metres from public gardens opposite Royal Crescent; and
- the County Council have no objections, including impact on parking.

Responding to Members, he stated that the land had been purchased two years ago from the management company who maintained the grounds of the whole site. He stated that there were other examples of land creatively used for habitable purposes and that internal timber dry lining would be used to insulate the single skin brickwork.

The recommendation was for refusal for the reasons set out in the report.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) planning permission for the conversion of former mortuary building to provide a one bed dwelling house be **REFUSED**. as the proposal is contrary to Objectives 3 and 8 and Policies CP15 and CP17 of the Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy, Policies C2, DG1 (c, e and h) and DG4 (b and d) of the Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 and Chapters 4, 6, 7 and 9 of the 'Residential Design SPD' by virtue of:-
 - (a) the poor provision of indoor and outdoor space the building would not provide an acceptable standard of accommodation;
 - (b) the poor quantity and quality of outdoor amenity space the proposal would have an unacceptable impact upon public visual amenity and upon neighbouring residential amenity; and
 - (c) the proposal would not conserve or enhance the character and appearance of a listed building in accordance with the internal and external alterations ascribed to residential conversion; and
- (2) Listed Building Consent for the conversion of former mortuary building to provide a one bed dwelling house be **REFUSED** as the proposal is contrary to Objective 8 and Policy CP17 of the Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy, and Policy C2 of the Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 because, by virtue of the internal and external alterations ascribed to residential conversion the proposal would not conserve or enhance the character and appearance of a listed building.

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LIST OF DECISIONS MADE AND WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

The report of the Assistant Director City Development was submitted.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

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APPEALS REPORT

The schedule of appeal decisions and appeals lodged was submitted.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

SITE INSPECTION PARTY

RESOLVED that the next Site Inspection Party be held on Tuesday 11 July at 9.30 a.m. The Councillors attending will be Lyons, Denham and Edwards.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.35 pm)

Chair