

Exeter City Council
Planning Committee
13 November 2023

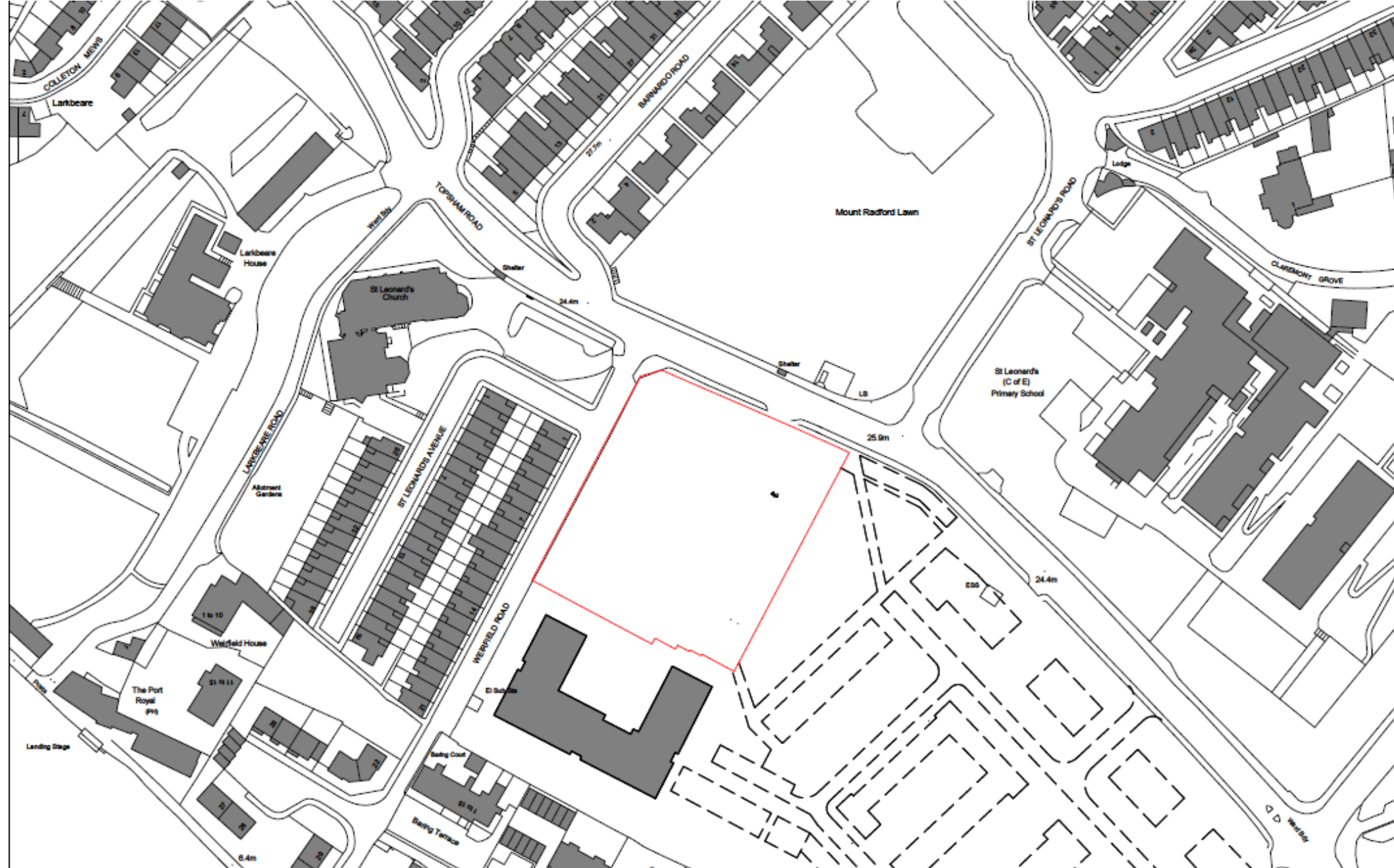
1. Application 23/0880/FUL

Site: Former Exeter Royal Academy For Deaf Education, 50 Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4NF

Applicant: Gladman Retirement Living Ltd

Proposal: Development of 65no. units of Use Class C2 Residential Accommodation with Care for the elderly along with associated landscaping, access roads, car parking and services

Case Officer: Catherine Miller-Bassi



SITE LOCATION PLAN

- **3-5 storey detached** 'U' shaped building
- **65no. units** of Use Class C2 Residential Accommodation with Care for the elderly
- Associated landscaping, access roads, car parking and services
- Proposed main vehicular **access off Weirfield Road** south-west of site
- Parking area for **33no. cars**: 2no. accessible, 1no. car club use, **4no. for Weirfield Road residents**
- Secondary vehicular access to the north of the site off Topsham Road for dropping off
- Main building access on southern elevation of south-west element
- 2no. additional entrances on the northern elevation
- Some cycle parking

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- High number of **objections** from neighbours:
 - 123no. objections including St Leonard's Neighbourhood Association
 - 2no. support
- Objectors' main **concerns**:
 - Overbearing impact, overshadowing to Weirfield Road
 - Out of character – too tall, wrong colour, overdevelopment of site
 - Increased traffic – light/air pollution
 - Access should be on Topsham Road not Weirfield Road – pedestrian safety...

KEY ISSUES

- **However**, site has **extant consent**: 21/1864/FUL
 - 84 retirement apartments
 - Communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping
 - Current scheme is **virtually identical** to extant consent
- Site also has **extant consent**: 19/1436/VOC
 - This has been partially implemented ie commenced
 - Very similar to current and subsequent schemes
- **NO objections** from any statutory consultees (including Highways)
- Only objection from a non-statutory consultee: Exeter Civic Society

KEY ISSUES

Extant 21/1864/FUL



Current proposal



Current layout is
virtually identical to
extant consent

COMPARATIVE SITE LAYOUT

CURRENT (max. height: 12m approx. & max. length: 55.5m approx.)



EXTANT 21/1864/FUL (max. height: 11.4m approx. & max. length: 55.5m approx.)



COMPARATIVE ELEVATIONS – NORTH

CURRENT (max. height 12m approx.
south-east element)



EXTANT 21/1864/FUL (max. height 11.4m approx.
south-east element)



COMPARATIVE ELEVATIONS – SOUTH

CURRENT (max. height 14.9m approx.)



EXTANT 21/1864/FUL (max. height 14.2m approx.)



COMPARATIVE ELEVATIONS – EAST

CURRENT (max. height 9.1m approx. south-west corner)

Red arrow denotes approx.
extent of nos. 1-3 Weirfield Rd
opposite



EXTANT 21/1864/FUL(max. height 8.7m approx. south-west corner)



COMPARATIVE ELEVATIONS – WEST



Extant 19/1436/VOC: south elevation max. height **15.8m**
South elevation length: approx. **53.5m**



South proposal: south elevation max. height **12m**
North elevation length: approx. **55.5m**



COMPARISON WITH 19/1436/VOC

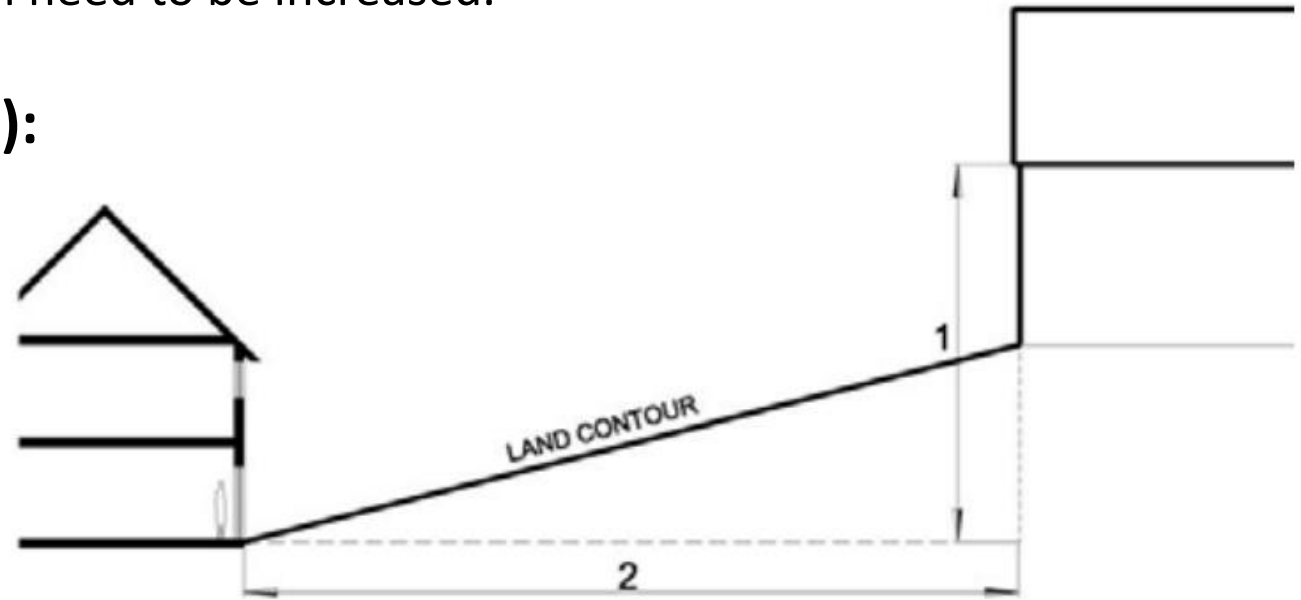
Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):

1. Loss of privacy:

- 7.16 A minimum **back to back** distance of 22 metres is required between habitable room windows.
- 7.18 Where buildings of different storey heights back onto one another, or differences in site levels place buildings of the same storey height higher than those they back onto, privacy distances will need to be increased.

2. Overbearing impact (harm to outlook):

- 7.24 See fig.7.6 The distance between habitable room windows and an elevated blank wall must be minimum **2 times of the height of the wall plus the level difference.**



- **Loss of privacy:**
 - Separation gap to nos. 1-3 Weirfield Rd of 17.7m – **front to front**
 - Policy requirement of 22m is **back to back** not front to front
 - **No loss of privacy** given windows in question face public realm
 - **Identical relationship has been approved** under extant consents 21/1864/FUL & 19/1436/VOC
 - 14.2m gap between dwellings fronting on to St Leonard's Ave nearby
 - 12m gap between dwellings fronting on to Cedars Road
 - Therefore, **not** considered reasonable grounds for refusal
- Proposal is **acceptable** re. privacy

- **Overbearing impact (harm to outlook):**
 - Nos. 1-3 Weirfield Road would face onto proposed development (south-west corner of building)
 - **Ridge height** of approx. **31m AOD** & ground level of approx. **23m AOD** at no.1 Weirfield Road
 - **9.1m approx. height** of proposed west elevation opposite no.1 Weirfield Road & ground level of **22m AOD**
 $2 \times 9.1\text{m} = 18.2\text{m} + \text{level difference of } -1\text{m} = \mathbf{17.4\text{m}}$ required for overbearing impact
 - **17.7m** approx. actual separation gap
- **Acceptable** re. overbearing impact



NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

- **Highways safety:**
 - Proposed scheme not considered to result in significant trip generation
 - **Identical access and parking arrangement approved** under extant consents 21/1864/FUL & 19/1436/VOC
 - Therefore, **not** considered reasonable grounds for refusal
- Proposal is **acceptable** re. access and parking

- **Benefits**
 - Contribution of 65no. new dwellings to current housing shortfall of 457 homes
 - Effective use of land – high density
 - Use of brownfield site
 - Bringing vacant site back into use
 - Employment opportunities during construction & operation (16-20 FTE) phases
 - Site has **TWO extant consents** 21/1864/FUL & 19/1436/VOC – both extremely similar, former **virtually identical** (material consideration)
 - Developer contributions
- All the above afforded **substantial positive weight cumulatively**

- **Adverse impacts**
 - High number of objections
 - Increased traffic on Weirfield Road, especially during construction phase
- By reason of **similarity with extant consent**, the above is cumulatively afforded **negligible negative weight**

- ECC currently has less than 5YHLS so **Tilted Balance** (NPPF para.11(d)) applies
- The adverse impacts of this proposal **would NOT significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits**, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole
- Therefore, planning permission should be **GRANTED** subject to conditions and S106 agreement

RECOMMENDATION