

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Planning Committee: 3 October 2012

DC12/167 Erection of 33 residential flats and associated car parking and landscaping at land south-east of Studio Drive, Dumbarton by Persimmon Homes

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1** This application relates to development on part of the Lomondgate residential site in a manner which would result in the overall number of dwellings exceeding the number allowed by the previous planning permission in principle for the wider development. The application is considered to be of interest to the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1** Minded to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Section 9. Following the conclusion of a legal agreement requiring that the flats remain as social rented accommodation, authority is delegated to the Planning and Building Standards Manager to issue the decision notice.

3. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

- 3.1** The application site is within the Lomondgate development area, which has Planning permission in principle for mixed use development. The permission in principle (DC04/192, subsequently renewed) allows up to 338 dwellings to be built on the former bonded warehouses land to the south of the A82 dual carriageway. This is in the process of being developed by three separate housebuilders (Persimmon Homes, Taylor Wimpey and Walker Group) in accordance with various detailed approvals which collectively total 333 units. This application site is within the northern end of the Persimmon Homes' development, bounded by Studio Drive to the north and west, and surrounded on all sides by new houses or housing under construction.
- 3.2** The applicant is currently developing their land in accordance with approval of matters specified in conditions DC10/219/MSC, which allowed 98 houses and 21 flats. The approved flats would have been provided as a single 3-storey block, which was intended for owner occupation. The current application seeks full planning permission to replace the 21 flats with a block of 33 one- and two-bedroom flats on the same part of the site. The proposed flats would be built for Bield Housing Association and are intended specifically for elderly tenants for rent.

- 3.3** The proposed building would be deeper than the previously approved building and would have a wing extending further along Studio Drive to give the building an 'L' shape. The building would still be 3 storeys in height, with a hipped roof. It is proposed to finish the building primarily in red facing brick, with buff coloured facing brick detailing and Marley Modern smooth grey roof tiles. Car parking and bin stores would be provided at the rear of the building, with access being as per the approved scheme. Only 13 car parking spaces would be provided as the level of car ownership is expected to be very low.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1** West Dunbartonshire Council Roads Service has no objection, subject to the flats being restricted to social retirement housing.
- 4.2** West Dunbartonshire Council Environmental Health Service has no objection, subject to conditions relating to contaminated land and construction works.
- 4.2** Scottish Environment Protection Agency has no objections subject to a condition relating to SUDS being attached to any consent granted. The application is part of a wider residential development whose drainage has been designed and built in accordance with SUDS principles.
- 4.3** Scottish Water and Transport Scotland have no objections to the proposed development.

5. REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1** One representation has been received from an agent for the BBC, which occupies the film studios close to the application site. The BBC has not raised any objection to the proposal but seeks assurances that construction activity and the finished development will not give rise to any noise, vibration, dust or dirt which might affect their filming.
- 5.2** It is considered unlikely that the finished development will cause any adverse impacts upon the BBC studios. Construction activities do have potential to cause problems, but this applies equally to all of the Lomondgate developers. The BBC studios are leased from the Walker Group, who is the lead developer at Lomondgate, and all of the other developers are contractually required to abide by the terms of a framework document which was agreed between the BBC, Walker Group and Strathleven Regeneration Company at the time of the outline permission.

6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010

- 6.1** The Lomondgate residential area is identified as a Private Sector Housing Opportunity Site, which Policy H1 indicates to be one of the main locations suitable for new housing development. The principle of housing on the site is

in compliance with this policy and has already been established as being acceptable by virtue of the previous permissions. Whilst the proposal is for social rented rather than private housing, the Local Plan's indicative private sector capacity of 300 units will still be achieved on the wider Lomondgate site, therefore the use of a small part of the site for social rented housing raises no concerns in terms of housing land supply.

- 6.2** Policy H4 sets out the standards expected of new residential development, requiring high quality in terms of shape, form, layout and materials. The proposal is assessed against the criteria contained in the above policies in Section 7 below, and it is considered to be in compliance.

7. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Retirement Flats

- 7.1** The site is the only part of the Lomondgate development which is intended to contain flats, with the remainder of the site being comprised of a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses. The applicant has indicated that due to the continuing weakness of the housing market and the particular difficulties in obtaining mortgages for flatted properties, the approved flats had generated little interest from the private sector. It is therefore proposed to develop this part of the site for Bield Housing Association instead, as the social rented sector has a continuing requirement for flats. The proposed flats would be for retired people who are able to live independently with little formal or on-site support. The minimum age of tenants would be 60, except in exceptional circumstances, but the average age would be around 78. The development would not be sheltered accommodation and would not have an on-site staff presence, but all properties would be linked to Bield's community alarm system which would enable residents to obtain assistance in an emergency. Housing management services would be provided by the association's existing team that operates in the area and a scheme assistant would provide day to day cleaning and maintenance checks. The provision of social rented retirement flats in this location is acceptable as it would create a more diverse mix of residents, as well as providing modern purpose-built homes for older people.

Design

- 7.2** Although the proposed building would be larger than the previously approved flats, its bulk would be broken up by the use of design features such as projecting feature gables on the frontage, and the use of contrasting facing brick to highlight details. It is considered that the overall design and proposed finishing materials would compliment the surrounding lower density housing and would be in keeping with the character of the area. The building would be situated on a corner and would provide appropriate frontages onto adjacent streets, with car parking located at the rear. It is not considered that it would raise any privacy or overshadowing issues in the future once the houses that are currently under construction are occupied.

Traffic and Parking

7.3 The permission in principle for the Lomondgate site was subject to a condition limiting the total number of residential units to not more than 338. The reason for that particular limit being imposed was related to the calculations contained in the transportation assessment (TA) for that application, and the potential for the traffic generated by a larger number of units to interfere with the movement and safety of traffic on the A82 trunk road. The current proposal would mean that the total number of units within the site would increase slightly to 345. Whilst this would exceed the maximum recommended in the TA it is considered that the impact upon traffic flow and road safety would be negligible, particularly as the flats are intended as social housing for elderly persons and the anticipated level of car ownership is significantly lower than the owner-occupied housing envisaged in the TA. Transport Scotland, has no objection to the proposal, and there is therefore no objection to the principle of increasing the number of units as proposed on traffic or other grounds.

7.4 In the previous application for 21 flats, 35 car parking spaces were proposed, however, under the current application only 13 spaces are proposed to serve 33 flats. As the proposed development would provide social housing for elderly people the number of car parking spaces required by the Council's adopted parking standard is significantly lower than the number required for private housing. Bield Housing Association have indicated that based on their experience of similar developments elsewhere very few of the residents are likely to own cars and the proposed parking spaces would mainly be used by visitors. A bus layby and turning circle have been built immediately adjacent to the site and residents will have access to the town centre and other destinations by way of local bus services. The Council's Roads Service considers the proposed number of proposed parking spaces to be acceptable subject to the flats being occupied in the manner proposed. A condition can be used to restrict the occupancy of the flats to persons aged over 60, but a Section 75 Agreement is required to ensure that the flats remained in the social rented sector.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The proposed design and scale of the development would be in keeping with the neighbouring residential developments that are currently under construction. It would provide modern homes for older people and would create a more diverse mix of residents and housing types within the development as a whole. Notwithstanding the slight increase in housing numbers beyond the level allowed by the outline permission it is not considered that there would be any adverse impact upon the local road infrastructure, and all other technical considerations are likewise considered acceptable.

9. CONDITIONS

01. The occupant of each unit within the development hereby approved shall be limited to residents of a minimum of 60 years

of age unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

- 02. Exact details and specifications of all proposed external materials shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority prior to any work commencing on site and shall be implemented as approved.**
- 03. Prior to the commencement of works, full details of the design and location of all walls and fences to be erected on site shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority and shall thereafter be implemented as approved.**
- 04. Prior to the commencement of works, full details of all hard surfaces shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority and implemented as approved.**
- 05. A landscaping scheme for the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development on site and shall be implemented not later than the next appropriate planting season after the occupation of the first residential property. The scheme shall include details of the maintenance arrangements and the landscaping shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with these details.**
- 06. Prior to the commencement of development on site full details of the foul and surface water drainage system shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority and shall be implemented as approved. The drainage system shall incorporate the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems within its design and thereafter shall be implemented as approved.**
- 07. Prior to the commencement of development on site a plan showing the proposed ground levels and minimum finished floor levels of the building shall be submitted for the further written approval of the planning authority and implemented as approved.**
- 08. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority, no development shall commence on site until such time as a scheme for the control and mitigation of dust has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The scheme shall identify likely sources of dust arising from the development or its construction, and shall identify measures to prevent or limit the occurrence and impact of such dust. The approved scheme shall thereafter be implemented fully prior to any of the identified dust generating activities commencing on site and shall be maintained thereafter, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Authority.**

09. During the period of construction, all works and ancillary operations which are audible at the site boundary, or at such other places that may be agreed by the Planning Authority shall be carried out between 8am and 6pm Mondays to Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or Public Holidays.
10. Where piling works are proposed account must be taken of the guidance in BS 6472: 1984 Evaluation of Human Response to Vibration in Buildings. A competent person shall carry out an assessment and the findings of the assessment to be submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and any actions arising implemented within a timescale agreed with the Planning Authority.
11. Remediation of the site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation plan. On completion of the remediation works and before the commencement of development the developer shall submit a report to the Planning Authority for their written approval confirming that the works have been carried out in accordance with the remediation plan. Any amendments to the approved remediation plan shall not be implemented unless approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
12. The presence of any previously unsuspected or unencountered contamination that becomes evident during the development of the site shall be brought to the attention of the Planning Authority within one week. At this stage, if requested, a comprehensive contaminated land investigation shall be carried out and any actions arising shall be implemented within a timescale agreed with the Planning Authority.
13. Prior to the commencement of development details of the design and location of the bin stores for the flats shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority and implemented prior to the occupation of the approved flats.

FOR NOTING

Informatives

01. ***The applicant is advised that under the terms of Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), the development hereby approved must commence within a period of 3 years from the date of this decision notice.***
02. ***The applicant is advised that under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)***

(Scotland) Regulations 2008, the developer is required to submit to the Planning Authority in writing upon the forms specified for the purpose and attached to this decision notice:

- a) A Notice of Commencement of Development as soon as practicable once it is decided to commence the development hereby approved (which shall be prior to the development commencing);***
- b) A Notice of Completion of Development as soon as practicable once the development has been completed***

Elaine Melrose
Executive Director of Housing, Environmental
and Economic Development
Date: 17 September 2012

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Appendix: None

Background Papers: 1. Application forms and plans
2. West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010.

Wards affected: Ward 3 (Dumbarton)