

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration

Planning Committee: 29 January 2014

DC13/241 Erection of flats (54 units) with associated landscaping roads and parking at land at corner of Bridge Street and Beardmore Place, Clydebank by CCG (Scotland) Limited

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1** The proposal is classified as a major development and under the terms of the approved Scheme of Delegation it therefore requires to be determined by the Planning Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1** That the Committee indicate that it is **Minded to Grant** planning permission, and delegate authority to issue the decision to the Planning and Building Standards Manager subject to (a) the conditions set out in Section 9 below, (b) to the completion of a Section 75 Planning Obligation requiring that the new flats remain in social rented use, and (c) a Section 69 legal agreement (or such alternative arrangement as may be agreed) securing a financial contribution towards improvement of play facilities in the area.

3. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

- 3.1** The application relates to a site located at the corner of Bridge Street and Beardmore Place in Dalmuir. The site is rectangular in shape, 0.61ha in area and generally level. The site fronts Beardmore Place to the south, with a disused railway line beyond, and Bridge Street to the east with bungalows opposite. To the west is a modern housing development of two storey terraced houses and four storey flats, while to the north the site backs onto the towpath of the Forth and Clyde Canal. The site previously contained a group of industrial buildings but these have now been cleared and the site is vacant. There are a few self-seeded trees of limited ecological value around the perimeter of the site and some larger semi-mature trees on the northern and eastern boundaries.
- 3.2** Planning permission is sought to erect 54 flats on the site. These would comprise 4 three-storey blocks: two linear blocks located along the Beardmore Place frontage, and 2 individual blocks at the north-west and north-east corners of the site close to the canal. Vehicular access to the site would be via a new access from the centre of the Beardmore Place frontage, opening out into a central parking courtyard within the site. The flatted units fronting Beardmore Place would have pedestrian access from the street, whilst the two smaller blocks would be accessed via the parking court only.

There would also be pedestrian access from the courtyard area onto Bridge Street and the canal towpath. The development would contain a total of 24 one-bedroom flats and 30 two-bedroom flats, along with 67 car parking spaces (including 4 disabled spaces).

- 3.3** The buildings would have a simple, contemporary design, with large window apertures featuring contrast panels to add depth. Roofs would have a shallow 22.5° pitch, but each block would include a contrasting mono-pitch feature at one end to add visual interest. Materials would comprise white render, aluminium string courses and coloured cladding panels. The courtyard between the blocks would be landscaped and would include communal amenity areas with grass, shrubs and tree planting as well as the car parking spaces. The existing hedgerow along the northern boundary with the canal would be maintained (with trimming and new planting as required), whilst street boundaries would be low metal railings. Some trees on the site are to be retained, comprising several sycamore on the Bridge Street frontage, a group of trees at the street corner, a spruce on Beardmore Place, an ash tree next to the canal, and these would be supplemented by additional new planting within and around the site.
- 3.4** The proposed development would be a joint venture between the applicant and Cube Housing Association, and the flats are intended to be social rented units owned by the housing association.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1** Glasgow Airport, Scottish Canals, Scottish Water and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland all have no objection on the application.
- 4.2** West Dunbartonshire Council Environmental Health Service has no objection subject to conditions relating to contamination and construction activities.
- 4.3** West Dunbartonshire Council Road Services has no objection to the proposal subject to a Section 75 planning obligation requiring that the properties are used for social rent from Registered Social Landlord (RSL), as the parking provision is below that which would be required for owner-occupied units.
- 4.4** West Dunbartonshire Council Greenspace has confirmed that there is play provision near the site and any financial contribution by the developer can be used to upgrade the play equipment.

5. REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1** A total of nine representations have been received. Five of these are from residents of Beardmore Street and Bridge Street; two are from properties elsewhere in Dalmuir and two are from person's resident outwith West Dunbartonshire. All of the representations have all expressed similar concerns:

- the site is between two wildlife corridors (canal and old railway) and its development would have a detrimental effect on local wildlife;
- the new homes would be affected by odour from the Dalmuir sewage treatment works;
- concerns about the density of development, including the suitability of the site for flats, the size and height of the blocks, and the number of units;
- objections to social housing and to the building of small flats rather than family houses;
- flats built facing onto Bridge Street would affect the privacy and sunlight of the existing homes opposite;
- the proposal would cause an increase in traffic congestion;
- the proposed level of parking provision is inadequate;
- there would be lack of usable open green space within the site;
- boundary treatment should match what is in place for adjacent homes;
- a robust maintenance plan for the site is needed;
- there should be no direct access onto Bridge Street as this is a private residential street;
- there should be no direct access from the site to the canal towpath as this would create an escape route for antisocial persons;
- there is an existing problem with quad bikes using the canal path and a new access would create a pedestrian safety issue;
- a promise was made that when the adjacent site was developed there would be no more housing in the area

The concerns of objectors are addressed in Section 7 of the report.

6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010

- 6.1** The site is identified in Schedule H4 as a Housing Opportunity Site suitable for social rented housing with an estimated capacity of 37 units. Policy H3 encourages development of such sites by Registered Social Landlords.
- 6.2** Policies H4 and GD1 set out standards expected of new residential development, which is expected to be of a high quality in terms of scale, form, layout and materials. Policy H4 sets out a number of criteria against which new residential development should be assessed including providing a range of house types, open space provision, landscaping and natural features, road and parking standards, plot setting and residential densities. Policy GD1 includes these criteria and others such as massing, height, aspect, crime prevention and privacy, historic and natural environment and drainage through SUDS.
- 6.3** Policy R2 sets out open space standards and developers are required to provide open space in accordance with the targets set out. Flexibility regarding location, need and extent of open space provision may be acceptable if existing areas of open space are readily accessible from the

development site and developers contribute to the provision or improvement of facilities in these areas.

- 6.4** The principle of a residential development on this site is compatible with Policies H2 and H3 of the local plan. Detailed consideration of the design, scale, form, layout and materials is contained in section 7 below. It is considered that whilst the proposal does not fully comply with open space standards set out in Policy R2 the applicant proposes a financial contribution which is allowed in terms of the policy and this is also discussed further in section 7.

7. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1** West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (WDLDP), Proposed Plan
The site is identified in Schedule 3 as a Housing Opportunity site suitable for affordable housing with an indicative capacity of 37 units. The plan does not have an affordable housing quota policy but seeks to meet local housing needs through housing supply targets. Policy BC1 supports the development of such sites for residential purposes subject to compliance with supplementary guidance on residential development. This guidance seeks to ensure that housing developments give importance to the local context, are design-led, promote the six qualities of good design and are accompanied by supporting documents including Design and Access Statements. These matters are discussed fully below. The proposal would accord with Schedule 3 and Policy BC1.

- 7.2** Pre-Application Consultation
A pre-application consultation event took place where a series of presentation boards and visuals were displayed. The architects and representatives of the Housing Association were available to answer any queries. A “comments box” was provided at the event, and interested persons were also able to submit their views to the applicant directly. Issues which were raised were generally similar to those raised by the objectors, with the majority supportive of the principle of residential development, but concerns being raised about the number and size of units, social housing, impact on neighbouring houses and traffic/parking. Having considered the issues raised, the applicant did not consider that any significant amendments to the proposed development were needed.

- 7.3** Principle of Residential Development
The development of the site for social rented housing would be in accordance with the policies of both the adopted local plan and the emerging local development plan. Whereas Beardmore Place was once a primarily industrial location, the redevelopment of this vacant gap site will complete its redevelopment as a residential street and would create a more clearly defined boundary between the residential and industrial areas off Beardmore Street. Whilst there is a large industrial estate to the south of the site, this is well separated from the proposed site by the old railway cutting which is heavily overgrown with trees which provide visual screening. The development of the site for social rented housing is to be welcomed.

Proximity to Water Treatment Works

- 7.4** The Dalmuir waste water treatment works is located 400m to the south-west of the development site. In the past there have been problems of odours from the treatment works affecting local residents, however recent improvements and changes to work practices in recent years have greatly reduced the problem, and work is currently taking place to build an updated odour treatment plant which will further reduce the risk of odour. Whilst it is accepted that residents are likely to experience occasional foul odour from the sewage works, this is not likely to be a regular occurrence and the Environmental Health Service have not raised any concerns regarding further residential development at this location. The application site is further away from the sewage works than the adjacent housing development at the west end of Beardmore Place, and is a similar distance away from many long established homes in the Jellicoe Street and Durban Avenue areas.

Impact on Wildlife Corridors

- 7.5** Concerns were expressed by some objectors that the development of the site for housing would have an adverse affect on wildlife corridors. The site lies between two wildlife corridors (the canal and the old railway), and the local plan also identifies the old railway line as a Local Nature Conservation Site. The proposed redevelopment of the application site would not impact upon the old railway, which is separated from the development site by the road, and the development would not have any adverse effects on this wildlife corridor. Whilst there would be alterations to the hedgerow facing the canal, this would be at a location very close to the Dalmuir drop lock which forms a barrier to wildlife using the canal bank, and it is not considered that the development would impact significantly upon the canal as a wildlife corridor. Whilst linkage between wildlife corridors is to be encouraged, the application site is a brownfield site which has only recently been cleared, and its redevelopment would not remove any existing green link between the two corridors (which are in any event connected to one another a short distance to the west of the site).

Scale and Layout of Development

- 7.6** The development site has a varied site context with modern 2 and 4 storey homes to one side and older bungalows to the other. The proposed development would consist entirely of three storey flats, which would be comparable in scale to the new housing to the west. Whilst the new development would be higher than the bungalows to the east of the site, the surrounding area contains a mixture of housing types including traditional tenements, and planning permission was previously granted for 4 storey flats on the corner of Beardmore Street and Auld Street diagonally opposite the site (albeit that that permission has recently lapsed). It is therefore considered that 3 storey buildings in principle are appropriate for the site. Whilst the local plan and emerging LDP give the site an indicative capacity of 37 units this assumed a mixture of houses and flats, and a 54 unit development consisting entirely of relatively small flats can be accommodated on the site.

- 7.7** The layout of the proposed development has been informed by the Council's draft supplementary guidance on residential developments. It is desirable to provide an attractive frontage onto adjacent streets and onto the canal. The proposal involves two linear blocks positioned along Beardmore Street in a traditional tenement-style arrangement with closes opening onto the street, and these would follow the building line established by the existing properties to the west. This would strengthen the streetscape along Beardmore Place. The two smaller blocks at the north of the site have been designed to have their principal frontages overlooking the canal. It is also generally desirable in urban design terms to have properties fronting the street, however Bridge Street is currently a quiet cul-de-sac with few properties and existing residents have objected to the street being used as a significant means of access into the site. It is therefore proposed to have landscape planting along the Bridge Street frontage to soften the boundary, and whilst there would be a pedestrian link into the parking court and Bridge Street.

Building Design

- 7.8** Visually, the development would have a contemporary appearance with simple, clean lines. The proposed roof form, with a mix of pitched and feature monopitch elements, would echo the design of the adjacent site to the west, thus providing a degree of visual continuity. The entrance to the courtyard would be flanked by the mono-pitch features on either side in order to create a visual gateway marking the entrance into the site. To break up the mass of the two long blocks parallel to Beardmore Place, bay windows would be used, with vertical emphasis on all the windows. The use of contrast panels beneath windows would make the window apertures appear larger and more regular in shape. In respect of materials, a palette of white render, cladding panels and smooth interlocking tiles is proposed. This would complement the flats to the west of the site which are white render with some small facing brick details and grey interlocking tiles. Grey cladding panels are used to highlight feature areas of all four blocks and mock balconies are used on the gable ends except along Block 3 which is close to the west boundary and immediately adjacent to terraced housing and their rear gardens. Overall, it is considered that the design of the buildings would be appropriate for the site.

Impact on Existing Housing

- 7.9** Each flatted block would be three storeys high with a roof height of 11.2m (12.9m to the tip of the mono-pitch roof). The flats would be lower in height than the four-storey properties to the west but higher than the three bungalows along Bridge Street which are approximately 5.3-5.5m high. However, there would be a separation distance of more than 30m across a public road between the flats and the nearest bungalow, and it is not considered that the flats would detract from the privacy of these properties. There would be mock balconies on the gable wall of Block 4, but these would be purely decorative features and would not cause significantly greater overlooking than an ordinary window. Overshadowing would be very limited due to the orientation of the flats and the distance between properties. Overshadowing to properties on Bridge Street would be limited to late afternoon/early evening when the sun is low in the sky due to the orientation of the flats and the distance between properties. Some overshadowing already occurs at these

times due to the existing trees. Whilst any development of the application site has potential to have some impact on the neighbouring houses, it is not considered that the impacts of the proposal would be particularly significant.

Amenity Space and Play Provision

- 7.10** The proposed layout shows amenity open space of 1343sq m which exceeds the requirements for a 54 unit development as set out in Policy R2. The proposal does not include provision of a children's equipped play area or a sports pitch/greenspace. However, there is an existing community park 160m from the site at Beardmore Way and adjacent to Golden Jubilee National Hospital. It is considered that in this instance the provision of an equipped children's play area on site would not be appropriate due to the constraints of the site and the availability of facilities nearby. Therefore, it is proposed that the applicant pays a financial contribution of £743 per unit (£40,122) towards provision of play equipment and sport pitch/greenspace in the local area in lieu of direct provision. Greenspace have confirmed that the existing community park would benefit from an upgrade and the developer contribution would be welcome to match funding for this. This could be included in the Section 75 Planning Obligation, or secured by alternative means such as a Section 69 Legal Agreement. The applicant is agreeable to this financial contribution. Under the circumstances it is considered that this would be a suitable alternative to the provision of additional open space on the site.

Trees and Landscaping

- 7.11** There are numerous existing trees located around the perimeter of the site, mainly along the canal and Bridge Street, although there is a single spruce tree in the middle of the Beardmore Place frontage. Although few of the trees are individually significant, collectively they contribute to the character of the area and it is therefore desirable to retain some of them. The applicant proposed the retention of five trees, however it is considered that there is opportunity to retain some additional trees on the south-east corner of the site and to enhance/supplement the existing overgrown hedge along the canal boundary rather than replacing it as originally proposed. The applicant has therefore agreed to carry out a survey of these trees and a condition is recommended to ensure that this work is carried out and that amended landscaping details are agreed. The retention of the existing trees and hedging would allow the development to integrated better with its surroundings. New planting is also proposed including 18 new ornamental trees, shrubs, daffodil beds and hawthorn/ blackthorn hedging. Overall it is considered that the landscaping for the development would be appropriate for the appearance and character of the area.

Roads and Parking Provision

- 7.12** In respect of traffic volumes it is accepted that there will be an increase in traffic using Beardmore Place. Beardmore Place is a cul-de sac which provides access only to the new development to the west, the application site, and the houses on Bridge Street. The junction of Bridge Street and Beardmore Place is an unconventional layout being positioned very close to junction with Beardmore Street, but the modest level of traffic using Bridge Street would not be increased and it is considered that Beardmore Place is

capable of accommodating the development. Although the site's main route to Dumbarton Road will be via Beardmore Street, which also accepts traffic from the industrial estate and the hospital, there is a signal controlled junction in place at Dumbarton Road/Beardmore Street to cope with peak traffic volumes and that no modifications to the wider road network are necessary. A single vehicular access into the site is proposed off Beardmore Place, and Road Services consider that this arrangement would be acceptable.

- 7.13** The level of parking provision has been subject to discussion with the Roads Service. The normal parking standards for private housing of this type would be 79.5 spaces (based on 165% for 30 x 2-bed units and 125% for 24 x 1-bed units), but for social housing developments it is normal to allow a 'one-step' reduction in the parking ratio to 125% and 100% respectively, as car ownership levels are generally lower for social housing tenants. In this case such a reduction would equate to 61.5 spaces. The proposal would provide 67 car parking spaces for 54 flats (124% overall), which is 5.5 spaces above the minimum for social housing, but which would not be appropriate for a private housing development. Road Services have therefore indicated that they are satisfied with level of parking provided that the applicant enters into a section 75 planning obligation which ties the housing to a registered social landlord. The applicant, in discussion with the Housing Association, has agreed to enter into such an agreement.

Pedestrian Access to Canal

- 7.14** The site layout would include pedestrian access onto the canal towpath, which is a valuable recreational walking route and which also provides a short-cut to Dumbarton Road and Dalmuir local centre. This link is to be supported as it would provide enhanced pedestrian access to the site. Some objectors have referred to concerns about anti-social behaviour and the need to restrict children's access to the canal. However, the link to the canal would be from the centre of the parking courtyard which would be well overlooked by most of the flats. The path meets the criteria of Secured by Design as it is well over-looked with an open aspect and no hiding places. It should also be noted that a similar path has been operational on the residential site to the west for several years. The site would be managed by the housing association which would be able to install a pedestrian gate should this ever be felt necessary by tenants. Use of the canal towpath by quad bikers is a matter for Scottish Canals as landowner and the police, and is not relevant to the current application. The proposed means of pedestrian access is considered acceptable.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1** The site is identified as a housing opportunity for social housing in the local plan and in respect of layout, design, materials and density the proposal would comply with the relevant local plan policies. Road Services have accepted the reduced parking provided a Section 75 legal agreement is concluded to ensure the housing remains for Registered Social Landlords. The applicant has agreed to pay a commuted sum in respect of play provision

in the vicinity. The proposed development will provide much needed social rented housing for the local area.

9. CONDITIONS

- 1. 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.**
- 2. Prior to 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 approval of the Planning Authority, and shall be implemented as approved.**
- 3. 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 shall be implemented as approved.**
- 4. A landscaping scheme for the amenity open space and boundaries of 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.**
- 5. No development shall commence until the trees marked for retention on the approved plans have been protected by suitable fencing around the extremities of their crowns. Details of the fencing shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority and shall be implemented as approved.**
- 6. Any excavation works through the root areas of the trees shall only be undertaken by hand.**
- 7. Prior to the commencement of development details of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and its maintenance following installation shall be submitted for the approval of the Planning Authority. The SUDS shall be designed to ensure that that contaminants are not mobilised and that pollution pathways are not created. The Sustainable Urban Drainage System shall thereafter be formed and maintained on site in accordance with the approved details.**
- 8. No development (other than investigative works) shall commence on site until such time as a detailed report on the nature and extent of any contamination of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The report shall be**

prepared by a suitably qualified person and shall include the following:

- a) a detailed site investigation identifying the extent, scale and nature of contamination on the site (irrespective of whether this contamination originates on the site)
- b) an assessment of the potential risks (where applicable) to:
 - human health;
 - property (existing and proposed), including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes;
 - ground waters and surface waters;
 - ecological systems;
 - archaeological sites and ancient monuments.
- c) an appraisal of remedial options, including a detailed remediation scheme based on the preferred option.

9. No development (other than investigative works) shall commence on site until such time as a detailed remediation scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The scheme shall be prepared by a suitably qualified person and shall detail the measures necessary to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risk to human health, buildings and other property, and the natural and historical environment. The scheme shall include details of all works to be undertaken, the remediation objectives and criteria, a timetable of works and/or details of the phasing of works relative to the rest of the development, and site management procedures. The scheme shall ensure that on completion of the remediation works the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IIA in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

10. The approved remediation scheme shall be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. The Planning Authority shall be notified in writing of the intended commencement of remediation works not less than 14 days before these works commence on site.

On completion of the remediation works and prior to the site being occupied, a verification report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the completed remediation works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

11. 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, and work on the affected area shall cease. At this stage, if requested, an investigation and risk assessment

shall be undertaken and an amended remediation scheme submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the recommencement of works in the affected area. The approved details shall be implemented as approved.

12. A monitoring and maintenance scheme, to include monitoring the long-term effectiveness of the proposed remediation over a period of years determined by the scheme, shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority. Any actions ongoing shall be implemented within the timescale agreed. Following completion of the actions/measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a further report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the monitoring and maintenance measures shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.
13. During the period of construction, all external 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 Fridays, 8am and 1pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or Public Holidays.
14. During the period of construction the applicant /operator shall provide and maintain on site suitable means for the washing of vehicle wheels at all times during the hours of operation, to ensure that roads and footpaths adjoining the site are maintained free from mud and other material carried from the site by construction and any other vehicles.
15. Prior to the commencement of development details of the design and location of the bin stores shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority and thereafter implemented prior to the occupation of the first residential unit.
16. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority, no development shall commence until 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 measures to prevent or limit the occurrence and impact of such dust. The approved scheme shall be implemented fully prior to any of the identified dust generating activities commencing on site.
17. Prior to the occupation of the last flatted unit in the development all roads and footpaths within and serving the development shall be completed to their final specification and adoptable standard.
18. Prior to work commencing on site a tree survey shall be carried out of all trees and hedging on the site and submitted for the

further approval of the Planning Authority. The survey shall include details of trees to be retained and proposals for the enhancement/supplementing of the existing hedge along the northern boundary of the site. Any re-planting works shall then be implemented not later than the next appropriate planting season after the occupation of the first residential property.

Richard Cairns
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Date: 14 January 2014

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Appendix: None

Background Papers:

1. Application documents and plans
2. West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010
3. West Dunbartonshire LDP - Proposed Plan
4. consultation responses
5. representations

Wards affected: Ward 6 (Clydebank Waterfront)