

Report To:	The Planning Board	Date:	6th June 2012
Report By:	Head of Regeneration and Planning	Report No:	12/0067/IC Plan 06/12
			Local Application Development
Contact Officer:	Guy Phillips	Contact No:	01475 712422
Subject:	Erection of 6 semi-detached houses and 4 flats at Larkfield Water Station, Weymouth Crescent, Gourock		

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is on the north side of Bournemouth Road, Gourock and adjoins a covered reservoir to the west and the rear of two storey houses which front Weymouth Crescent and Plymouth Avenue to the north. On the south side of Bournemouth Road are two storey, terraced and flatted properties arranged around parking courts. Within the site is a two storey former water treatment building with a slate roof and off white rendered walls.



PROPOSAL

It is proposed to construct 6 three bedroom semi detached houses and a block of 4 two bedroom flats. The buildings are two storey and are finished in concrete roof tiles, render, timber cladding and facing brick walls and have timber windows. The flats and four of the semi detached houses will front Bournemouth Road. Two semi detached houses are situated at the north east corner of the site and accessed via a new vehicular access to be formed off Bournemouth Road. Each house has two off street parking spaces and the four flats are provided with six parking spaces.

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Local Plan Policy H1 - Safeguarding the Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

The character and amenity of existing residential areas, identified on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded, and where practicable, enhanced. New residential development will be acceptable, in principle, subject to other relevant Local Plan policies.

Local Plan Policy H8 - The Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

Proposals for residential development that are acceptable in principle in terms of the Development Strategy of the Local Plan will still be required to satisfy the following development control criteria:

- (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of an area in terms of land use, density, design and materials used;
- (b) visual impact of development on the site and its surroundings;
- (c) landscaping proposals;
- (d) open space proposals (see also Policy H11 and guidance in Policy DC1);
- (e) proposals for the retention of existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site;
- (f) assessment against the Council's Roads Development Guidelines 1995 with regard to road design, parking and traffic safety;
- (g) provision of adequate services; and
- (h) accommodation of, in appropriate cases, the requirements of bus operators regarding road widths, lay-bys and turning areas.

Local Plan Policy DC1 - Development Control Advice

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will support applications for planning, listed building and advertisement consent, where applicable, which accord with the principles established in the Council's Planning Practice Advice Notes. PPAN3 "Private & Public Open Space In New Residential Development" applies.

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Environmental and Commercial Services - No objections subject to the management of surface water, the provision of detailed drainage proposals, SEPA and Scottish Water approval of the drainage arrangements and detailed design of pavements, pavement crossings, parking layout, and driveways.

Scottish Water – No objections.

Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities - No objections subject to conditions regarding the control of Japanese Knotweed and any potential contamination and advisory notes on waste storage, external lighting and hours of construction.

Scottish Natural Heritage – No objections as there are no bats roosting within the disused water treatment works.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in the Greenock Telegraph on 2nd March 2012 as there are no premises on neighbouring land.

SITE NOTICES

The nature of the proposal did not require a site notice.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Eighteen written representations have been received. They comprise two individual Emails and sixteen copies of a standard letter, one of which has a petition attached bearing ten signatures.

The objectors are concerned that:-

Impact on adjacent residents

- loss of privacy in Weymouth Drive.
- loss of sunlight in Weymouth Drive.
- Noise, disturbance and car headlights impacting upon properties in Weymouth Crescent and Bournemouth Road.
- Disruption and noise from the site works.
- Property values shall be adversely affected.

Road safety and parking

- Road safety shall be adversely affected by construction traffic.
- Road safety on Bournemouth Road would be adversely affected.
- The proposal contains no visitor parking. Visitors shall use private parking designated for use by Bournemouth Road residents.
- Existing residents park their vehicles on Bournemouth Road to avoid vandalism which occurs within residents parking courts.

Design

- Flats are out of keeping with the area.
- The proposed external finishes will have an adverse impact on the area. Timber cladding suffers from weathering.

Nature Conservation

- Bats have been observed in the vicinity of the site.

Application procedures

- The submitted plans contain no measurements.
- Ownership of the site is unclear.
- The application form incorrectly states there to be no trees on site.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are the Local Plan, the Council's PPAN 3 "Private & Public Open Space in New Residential development, the consultation responses and the written representations.



Policy H1 of the Local Plan seeks to safeguard and, where practicable, enhance residential amenity and character. The best measure, I consider, to determine whether or not the proposal satisfies this aim is to assess it against the design guidance in the Council's PPAN3 and Policy H8.

PPAN3 classifies the development as small scale infill. As such, it is required to accord with the established density and pattern of development in the immediate vicinity with due regard to front and rear garden sizes and distances to plot boundaries. In all instances windows in habitable rooms have an 18metre separation or more from windows in neighbouring properties, thus ensuring that privacy is not compromised. The PPAN further confirms that there is no requirement for public open space. The semi detached houses on plots 3, 4 and 6 have rear gardens smaller than those in the surrounding area but are provided with generous side gardens which I consider to be a satisfactory alternative. Overall, the proposal is acceptable when assessed against the PPAN 3's guidance.

Policy DC1 advises that applications for planning permission which accord with the design principles established in the Council's PPANs will be supported.

Policy H8 advises that proposals for residential development which are acceptable in principle require to satisfy a range of criteria. The relevant criteria in this instance are:-

- (a) Compatibility with the character and amenity of the area in terms of land use, density, design and materials used.

The adjoining area is predominantly two storey semi detached, terraced and flatted residential properties. The plots are comparable in size and the development is two storey and pitched roof throughout. External finishes comprise concrete tiles, render, facing brick and timber cladding. The use of timber cladding is restricted to above first floor cill height. The predominant wall finishes are facing brick and render as used in adjoining houses.

- (b) Visual impact of development on the site and its surroundings.

The development is in scale and character and the proposed buildings will make a positive impact to the street frontage on Bournemouth Road, being an improvement on the water treatment building presently on site.

- (f) Assessment against the Council's Roads Development Guide with regard to road design, parking and traffic safety.

There are no objections on road safety grounds from the Head of Environmental & Commercial Services.

I am satisfied that the proposal complies with the Inverclyde Local Plan. It now rests to consider if there are other material considerations which indicate that the application should not be determined in accordance with the Plan.

SNH is satisfied that there are no nature conservation conflicts. The consultees also find no objections over road safety matters, the level of car parking provision or construction noise. It is appropriate to attach the conditions and advisory notes which the Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities recommends and the condition on drainage design and surface water control recommended by the Head of Environmental & Commercial Services to a planning permission. Other detailed matters raised by the Head of Environmental & Commercial Services relating to roads construction are most appropriately controlled under Roads legislation. Overall, the consultations present no impediment to development.

Moving on to consider objections not previously addressed, I note that the height and separation of the proposed houses from the rear of properties in Weymouth Crescent is such that gardens will continue to enjoy sunlight. Vehicle noise levels and light pollution from headlamps is unlikely to be different to that to be expected within residential areas. This development provides an appropriate level of off street car parking and, as such, the parking

habits of nearby residents should have no bearing on this application. Property values similarly cannot be taken into account.

Finally, considering procedural objections, I can confirm that the proposed plans contain all of the information necessary to allow the impact on neighbouring property to be assessed (including the positions of small boundary trees) and the ownership certificate on the planning application form has been correctly completed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to conditions

Conditions

1. No development shall commence until samples of all external materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority: development thereafter shall proceed utilising the approved materials, unless the Planning Authority gives its prior written approval to any alternatives.
2. No development shall commence until details of the management of surface water, site drainage details and confirmation of Scottish Water and SEPA approval of the drainage arrangements have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
3. That prior to the start of development, details of a survey for the presence of Japanese Knotweed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and that, for the avoidance of doubt, this shall contain a methodology and treatment statement where any is found. Development shall not proceed until treatment is completed as per the methodology and treatment statement. Any variation to the treatment methodologies will require subsequent approval by the Planning Authority prior to development starting on site.
4. That the development shall not commence until an environmental investigation and risk assessment, including any necessary remediation strategy with timescale for implementation, of all pollutant linkages has been submitted to and approved, in writing by the Planning Authority. The investigations and assessment shall be site-specific and completed in accordance with acceptable codes of practice. The remediation strategy shall include verification/validation methodologies. This may be incorporated as part of a ground condition report and should include an appraisal of options.
5. That on completion of remediation and verification/validation works and prior to the site being occupied, the developer shall submit a Completion Report for approval, in writing by the Planning Authority, confirming that the works have been carried out in accordance with the remediation strategy. This report shall demonstrate that no pollutant linkages remain or are likely to occur and include (but not limited to) a collation of verification/validation certificates, analysis information, remediation lifespan, maintenance/aftercare information and details of imported/disposed/reused materials relevant to the site.
6. That the presence of any previously unrecorded contamination or variation to reported ground conditions that becomes evident during site works shall be brought to the attention of the Planning Authority within one week. Consequential amendments to the Remediation Strategy shall not be implemented unless it has been submitted to and approved, in writing by the Planning Authority.
7. That no fill or landscaping material shall be imported onto the site until written details of the source and intended reuse of the imported materials has been submitted for approval, in writing by the Planning Authority. The report shall characterise the chemical quality (including soil-leachate and organic content etc), volume and source of the imported materials with corresponding cross-sections and plans indicating spatial distribution and depth/thickness of material placement within the development site. The material from the source agreed only shall be imported in strict accordance with these agreed details.

8. None of the houses and flats hereby approved shall be occupied until the off street parking detailed in docquetted drawing 0924/P02rev1 has been completed.

Reasons

1. To ensure a choice of materials sympathetic to this part of Gourrock.
2. To prevent surface water run off onto Bournemouth Road.
3. To help arrest the spread of Japanese Knotweed in the interests of environmental protection.
4. To satisfactorily address potential contamination issues in the interests of environmental safety.
5. To provide verification that remediation has been carried out to the authority's satisfaction.
6. To ensure that all contamination issues are recorded and dealt with appropriately.
7. To protect receptors from the harmful effects of imported contamination.
8. To ensure that appropriate levels of off street parking is available to residents and visitors and to reduce the potential for obstructive parking on Bournemouth Road.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form and plans
2. Inverclyde Local Plan
3. Consultation replies
4. Letters of objection
5. Bat survey



Ordnance Survey maps, and maps created from Ordnance Survey material are subject to Crown copyright. Information on Ordnance Survey map licensing can be found on their website <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite>.