

**Report To:** The Planning Board

**Date:** 1 August 2012

**Report By:** Head of Regeneration and Planning

**Report No:** 12/0059/IC  
Plan 08/12

**Local Application  
Development**

**Contact  
Officer:** David Ashman

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**Subject:** Erection of a dwellinghouse at  
Holy Family Church, Parkhill Avenue, Port Glasgow

**BACKGROUND**

At the June meeting of the Planning Board consideration of the above planning application was continued for a site visit to allow Members to consider the proposal within its environs. The site visit was undertaken on 19 July 2012.

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application site consists of an irregular shaped 560 square metre area of ground within the curtilage of the Grade “A” listed Holy Family Church, Parkhill Avenue, Port Glasgow. The site fronts onto Northfield Avenue and sits between the house at no. 54 and the footpath access to the church. There is a high hedge along the road frontage and the common boundary with the house to the west; a metal handrail forming the eastern boundary. The rear (northern) boundary is not defined. The application site slopes down steeply northwards from Northfield Avenue. The wider area consists of a mix of flatted, terraced and semi-detached housing.



## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant seeks planning permission to construct a 2 bedroom single storey detached dwelling. As the dwelling is not to be split level, the topography of the site will result in the dwelling being raised to the rear, particularly to the northeast, where the rear stair access reaches a maximum height of 3 metres above ground. A planted hedge is proposed on the north and east site boundaries.

A new driveway is to be formed providing a vehicular connection to Northfield Avenue. There is a bus stop along this section of frontage that will require to be moved.

## **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.

Planning Practice Advice Note Nos. 2 (Single Plot Residential Development) and 3 (Private and Public Open Space Provision in New Residential Development) apply.

### Local Plan Policy HR1 - Designated Environmental Resources and Built Heritage

Development that would adversely affect, directly or indirectly, the natural or built heritage resources listed in Schedule 9.1 and where indicated, on the Proposals Map, will not normally be permitted.

Having regard to the designation of the environmental resource and built heritage, exceptions will only be made where:

- (a) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) will not be compromised;
- (b) visual amenity and townscape will not be compromised;
- (c) no other site, identified in the Local Plan as suitable, is available;

- (d) the social and economic benefits of the scheme outweigh the total or partial loss of the environmental resource;
- (e) the developer has demonstrated that the impact of the development on the environment will be minimised; and
- (f) the loss can be compensated by habitat creation/site enhancement elsewhere, and where there are satisfactory arrangements to achieve this.

#### Local Plan Policy HR15 - The Setting of Listed Buildings

Development will be required to have due regard to the effects on the setting of, and principal views from, Listed Buildings and shall be without detriment to their principal elevations and the main approaches to them.

### CONSULTATIONS

**Head of Environmental and Commercial Services** - A dropped kerb footway crossover should be provided to access the driveway. The driveway and existing access path to the Church should be segregated by means of a fence or wall. The driveway gradient should not exceed 10% and it must be paved for a minimum distance of 2 metres to prevent loose driveway material being spilled onto the road. It is to cater for a minimum of 2 cars and should be a minimum of 4.8 metres wide to allow two vehicles to pass and a minimum of 6 metres long. Where possible, site run-off after the development has been completed shall be less than that of the site prior to development. A visibility splay of 2.5 metres by 35 metres by 1.05 metres high is required.

### PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in the Greenock Telegraph on 16th March 2012 as development affecting the setting of a Listed Building.

### SITE NOTICES

A site notice was posted on 16th March 2012 for development affecting the setting of a Listed Building.

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Eight objections and three letters of support have been received to the proposal. The points of objection may be summarised as follows:

#### Safety

- The street is too narrow and is not suitable for construction traffic.
- Potential damage to the road during construction that will consequently damage vehicles using the road.
- Implications for the safety of children playing in the street during construction.
- Poor visibility for any future driveway potentially leading to accidents.
- Access to the Church would be hindered.

#### Amenity and context

- The creation of noise and dirt during construction to the detriment of amenity.
- The style of the house is at variance with that in the area.
- The house would be overbearing.
- The layout and siting in relation to neighbouring buildings and spaces is uncharacteristic of the area.
- Concerns over loss of the bus stop which is used by the elderly and infirm.

## Miscellaneous

- Obstruction of view.
- Devaluation of neighbouring property.
- Concerns over lack of notification of the sale of the land.

The points of support may be summarised as follows:

- The proposed bungalow will be of good construction in view of other properties built by the applicant in the vicinity.
- The proposal supports local regeneration initiatives.
- It will help to protect the architectural value of the Grade A listed church.
- It will help address vandalism experienced by the church and associated hall in providing a greater degree of passive supervision of property.
- Precedent has been established through the construction of a house (convent) at the Northfield Avenue end of the grounds.
- The money raised will be spent on upgrading the parish hall for the benefit of the wider community.
- Development will benefit parishoners in reducing ground maintenance costs and will help towards finance being focused on the maintenance of the Grade A listed church building.
- The existing access to the Church is not heavily used.
- There are other examples of adjacent driveways along Northfield Avenue operating without incident.
- The house will help eliminate vandalism and dog fouling within the Church grounds.

## ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in determination of this application are the Local Plan, the Planning Practice Advice Notes, the consultation reply and the letters of representation.

As a residential development within a residential area it accords, in principle, with policy H1. Assessment is required, however, against the relevant criteria of policy H8:

- (a) Comparing the proposed plot with adjacent established dwellings I find the density comparable. The design is slightly at variance with the older established dwellings but is an acceptable contemporary approach. The proposed finishing materials are coloured to match nearby houses.
- (b) I consider the visual impact on the site and its surroundings to be acceptable.
- (c) The landscaping consists of a hard landscaped driveway, boundary hedges and grassed garden ground. This is an acceptable landscaping approach for a small residential proposal within an established area.
- (d) PPAN No. 2 sets the general principle that plot size and plot coverage should reflect the immediate locality while PPAN No.3 requires that open space associated with the proposal be assessed on the basis of according 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. I am satisfied that the open space criteria of these PPANs have been met. On this basis policy DC1 is also satisfied.
- (e) There are no existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site.
- (f) Parking can be contained within the plot.
- (g) Servicing of the plot will be the responsibility of the applicant should planning permission be granted.

As the proposal is satisfactory with respect to policy H8 I conclude that it accords with policy H1. With respect to policies HR1 and HR15, although the application site is within the grounds of the Grade "A" listed Church, I am satisfied that there is sufficient distance between the Church and the site so as not to impact upon its setting. I therefore conclude that proposal accords with the Local Plan.

Consideration requires to be given to the other material considerations, however, to determine whether or not planning permission should be granted. In this respect, the requirements of the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services in respect of driveway gradient, width, depth and surfacing can, according to the submitted plans, be achieved. The requirement for the provision of a dropped kerb is more properly addressed under the relevant section of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. The issue of drainage may be controlled by condition. I note from the submitted plans that the applicant wishes to retain the frontage hedge but I do not consider this acceptable with respect to visibility unless it can be reduced in height to less than 1.05 metres above road channel level. This matter can be also addressed by condition.



With respect to the points of objection raised by neighbours that have not already been addressed, any problems relating to dirt on the road or footway during construction and the relocation of the bus stop would be addressed by the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services. Concerns over the suitability of the road network for construction traffic and possible road safety hazards, in particular child safety, cannot be considered as part of the assessment of the planning application.

Should noise over and above that to be expected during any normal construction works be experienced, this may be addressed by the Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities who operates the appropriate regulatory control.

As a single storey dwelling within a street context of two storey dwellings, I do not consider that it will be overbearing. This is confirmed by one of the elevation plans which sets the proposed dwelling in the context of the adjacent dwelling. The layout and siting in relation to neighbouring buildings is similarly acceptable with reference to building lines and spacing between dwellings.

The remaining matters (loss of view, perceived devaluation of properties, lack of notification of sale of the land and possible restricted access to the church) are not material considerations.

I note the comments made in support of the application but I do not consider that any of the issues raised are material to determination of the application.

I am therefore satisfied that there are no material considerations suggesting that planning permission should not be granted.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to conditions

### Conditions

1. That prior to their use, samples of all facing and surfacing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
2. That the gradient of the driveway hereby permitted shall not exceed 10%.
3. That the driveway shall be finished in a hard sealed surface to be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the dwellinghouse hereby permitted being occupied.
4. That a visibility splay of 2.5 metres by 35 metres by 1.05 metres high shall be provided at the vehicular entrance to the site before the dwellinghouse hereby permitted is occupied.
5. That details of the soft landscape planting along the northern and eastern boundary of the application site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to planting. The planting shall thereafter be carried out during the first planting season following occupation of the dwelling.
6. That any of the planting approved in terms of condition 5 above which dies, is damaged, removed or becomes diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced during the following planting season with others of a similar size and species.
7. That the existing hedge along the boundary with the existing dwelling to the west shall be protected at all times during construction. Details of protection measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of construction and shall remain in place thereafter throughout the construction process.

### Reasons

1. To ensure the appropriateness of these materials to the local context.
2. To ensure that the driveway may be safely used.
3. To prevent deleterious material being carried onto the carriageway.
4. In the interests of vehicular and pedestrian safety.
5. To ensure the provision of appropriate boundary treatment.
6. To ensure the long term retention of a soft landscaped boundary in the interests of amenity
7. The hedge provides an appropriate and natural barrier between the application site and the neighbouring property which should be retained in the interests of amenity.

Stuart Jamieson  
Head of Regeneration and Planning

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form and plans.
2. Inverclyde Local Plan.

3. PPANs 2 and 3.
4. Consultation reply.
5. Letters of representation.



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