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| Report To: | The Planning Board | Date: | 5 December 2012 |
| Report By: | Head of Regeneration and Planning | Report No: | 12/0199/IC Plan 12/12 |
| | | | Local Application Development |
| Contact Officer: | David Ashman | Contact No: | 01475 712416 |
| Subject: | Construction of 38 no. flatted dwellings with associated access/site entrance; access road; car parking; lock-ups and landscaping at Site Of Demolished Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Cloch Road, Gourock | | |

SITE DESCRIPTION

The grounds of the former Ramada Jarvis/Gantock Hotel on Cloch Road, Gourock have lain vacant for several years since the building caught fire and was subsequently demolished. The area of the application site extends to 1 hectare, incorporating the site of the former building, car park, service area and garden grounds, but excludes the former tennis courts.

Beyond the former tennis courts is an area of unmaintained soft landscaping; to the north across Cloch Road is foreshore; to the east are three large bungalows which also front onto Cloch Road, with 3 storey flats beyond; and to the south Pritchard Wood is sited on steeply rising land.



PROPOSAL

The applicant seeks planning permission for the construction of 38, mostly 2-bedroom flats within 4 separate blocks. These vary in height, starting at 3 storeys adjacent to the nearest bungalow to 5 storeys within the westernmost block. The ground floor level and features are to be finished in blonde smooth ashlar cast stone. The upper level is to be finished in a proprietary powder-coated grey aluminium cladding and intermediate levels are to be finished in white render. Windows are to be composite timber with a powder-coated grey aluminium finish, with

rainwater pipework finished to match the upper level cladding. Roofs are to be finished in natural black slate.

88 car parking spaces including 14 garages are located to the rear of the blocks. Vehicular access is located between the two westernmost blocks, at which point Cloch Road is to be surface marked to show a right turn access stacking lane into the site. A footway is to be provided along the frontage of the site.

An open watercourse runs through the eastern part of the site and culverts are known to run under the site draining towards the foreshore.

The application has been supported by statements on design and access and on transport and by noise, floods risk and drainage impact assessments. Some supporting documents indicate that the proposal is phase one of a two stage development with additional flatted blocks located further west. It is only the current 4 blocks that are under assessment as part of this application.

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 H2 - Redevelopment of Brownfield Sites

The redevelopment of brownfield sites for housing and community uses will be supported, in principle, in the residential areas identified on the Proposals Map, except where:

- (a) an alternative use of greater priority or greater social or economic/employment benefit is identified; or
- (b) an alternative use is identified through an agreed area renewal initiative; or
- (c) it would result in unacceptable loss of locally valued amenity open space; or
- (d) the terms of Policy H8 (residential development control) or other relevant policies are not satisfactorily addressed.

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 H11 - Residential Development Proposals and Open Space Provision

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, requires developers of new housing to make provision for public open space, play areas and private garden ground, or a comparable financial contribution towards either the provision of, or maintenance and improvement of,

existing play equipment in a park or play area in the vicinity of the development, in accordance with the Inverclyde Council Planning Practice Advice Note 3.

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.

Local Plan Policy DS1 - Preference for Development on Brownfield Sites

A sustainable settlement strategy will be encouraged by having a clear preference for all new development to be located on brownfield land within the urban areas of existing towns and smaller settlements.

Local Plan Policy DS5 - Promotion of Quality in New Building Design and in Townscape/Landscaping

The urban environment and built heritage of Inverclyde will be protected and enhanced through controls on development that would have an unacceptable impact on the quality of this resource. Quality in new building design and landscaping will be encouraged to enhance Inverclyde's townscapes.

Local Plan Policy UT3 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will encourage the inclusion of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems in appropriate developments, and where included will require agreement to be reached in respect of the continual maintenance of the proposed system prior to planning permission being granted.

Local Plan Policy UT4 - Reducing Flood Risk

Inverclyde Council will seek to reduce the risk of the flooding of non-agricultural areas by resisting development on functional flood plains. Where development is proposed for an area considered to be at risk from flooding, the Council will:

- (a) require the preparation of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA);
- (b) seek the incorporation of flood prevention measures able to cope with, as a minimum, a 1 in 200 year rainfall event, depending on the type of development proposed, taking into consideration predicted climate change and sea level changes in the period to 2050, or justification as to why this standard of protection is not required;
- (c) consult with SEPA where development is likely to result in a material increase in the number of buildings at risk from flooding; and
- (d) require Clyde waterfront and coastal development to be protected against coastal flooding to a level of 5 metres above the ordnance datum.

Flood prevention measures and sea defences should not increase the risk flooding elsewhere or have an adverse impact on the natural or built environment. For planning permission to be granted, the Council will require agreement to be reached in respect of the continual maintenance of flood prevention infrastructure and sea defences associated with the proposed development.

Local Plan Policy LR9 – Rights of Way and Other Routes

Inverclyde Council will endeavour to protect the claimed Rights of Way and Other Routes in Inverclyde. Where new development occurs which makes it necessary to close sections of footpaths, provision of an alternative will be required.

Planning Practice Advice Note No.3 (private and public open space provision in new residential development) applies.

CONSULTATIONS

Land Use Consultants – Supportive of the proposed planting scheme. Clarification is required in respect of tree felling and vegetation clearance.

Head of Environmental and Commercial Services - The development will generate pedestrian movements from its frontage on the south side of Cloch Road westwards to Faulds Park Road. The general public and children will access the moorland and woods adjacent Faulds Park Road for general recreational purposes, walks, dog walking etc. Consequently the footway network requires to be completed over the frontage of the development and extended to Faulds Park Road to safely accommodate the pedestrian movements generated by the development. If the footway is not constructed pedestrian safety in Cloch Road will be prejudiced. The application should be refused on the grounds pedestrian movements generated by the development are not accommodated, the development will therefore be detrimental to pedestrian and road safety.

As there is a residual flood risk associated with culvert blockage on the site drainage details and a fully costed long term inspection and maintenance programme for the life cycle of the development should be submitted prior to work commencing on site.

The field drain at the back of the proposed retaining wall will require a separate cut off. Concerns are expressed over the capability of twin 675 diameter pipes.

Scottish Water - No objections. A series of advisory notes are suggested.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency West –Flood risk issues have been satisfactorily addressed, but a maintenance scheme for the culvert should be detailed by the applicant.

Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities – Conditions are suggested in respect of Japanese Knotweed, contaminated land, and waste containers.

Scottish Gas Networks – Plans showing the position of Scottish Gas plant in the vicinity were provided.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in the Greenock Telegraph on 3rd August 2012 as there are no premises on neighbouring land.

SITE NOTICES

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The application was subject to neighbour notification and press advertisement. Four representations have been received including one objection, two in support and one seeking clarifications. The points of objections may be summarised as follows:

- The blocks are too high for a “gateway” to Gourock and will adversely affect the character of the area.
- A block above 3 storeys is uncharacteristic of what has previously been allowed in the area.
- The proposal will block a right of way through the site.
- The proposed cross hatching on Cloch Road to address traffic safety issues will, based on previous experience nearby, be ineffective.
- The exit from the site has the potential to become an accident black spot.

The points of support welcome the proposed development as impressive and long overdue for this part of Gourrock and complementary to existing waterfront developments.

The representation seeking clarification raises the following points:

- What is to happen to the electrical sub-station within the site which provides electricity for the adjacent bungalows?
- Previous flooding at the former hotel was noted and it is questioned how the developer intends to address this issue.
- It is requested that a wall be built to the rear of the existing bungalows to address possible noise and privacy issues from the rear car park.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in determination of this application are the Inverclyde Local Plan, PPAN No.3, the applicant's supporting information, consultation replies, Circular 4/1998 on the use of conditions and public representations.

The proposal is for a residential development within an area allocated by the Local Plan for residential purposes. It therefore accords in principle with Policy H1. This is also a brownfield development within the existing built-up area, and with no greater priorities for the site identified, it accords with Policies H2 and DS1.



Nevertheless, in considering the detail of the proposed development, Policy H8 identifies a range of criteria which require satisfying if the development is to be accepted. Residential land use predominates in the vicinity. Flatted development, which creates the highest density, is evident nearby, although one of the proposed blocks rises to a maximum of five storeys, two higher than the nearest existing flats. By comparison, however, the proposed flats are set in more generous grounds, reducing the relative site density. Gourrock has a variety of flatted developments, from traditional sandstone tenements to more modern buildings, with designs and materials reflective of the architectural styles in vogue at the time. This proposal continues that trend, consequently reflecting the character of the area. Greatest impact from the development is on the residents of the bungalow at 101 Cloch Road. A three storey section is to be sited alongside the bungalow with an intervening space of approximately 18 metres between the buildings. The adjacent proposed block has windows on the rear and front elevations and limited gable windows associated with the front balconies. These windows and balconies overlook the publicly visible front garden. Overall I am satisfied that there will be no unacceptable impact on privacy and that the flats are sufficiently distant to ensure that daylight and sunlight is not adversely affected. Other neighbours are more directly impacted by a

parking area and garages. Concern over a barrier between the properties is to be addressed through the erection of a screen fence. Overall, I consider the proposals to be a quality design acceptable with reference to Policy DS5 and Policy H8 (criterion a). Due to the current derelict appearance of the site, and recognising the design of the previous hotel building, I am satisfied that the proposal will have a positive visual impact (Policy H8 (criterion b)).

In addition to Policy H8 criteria (c-e), consideration of open space and landscaping within the development is addressed by Policy H11 and PPAN3. The landscaping proposals have been accepted by the Council's landscape consultants and the open space provision meets the guidance contained within PPAN 3. Overall, approximately 1,600 square metres is required and approximately 3,700 square metres is provided wholly within the application site and there are no existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site which merit protection. In summary, I consider that the requirements of Policy H11 and PPAN3 are satisfactorily addressed and that the development is acceptable when considered with reference to Policy H8 (criteria (c-e)).

The proposal accords with the Council's Roads Development Guidelines with regard to road design, parking and traffic safety (Policy H8 (criterion f)), although I note the objection from the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services to the lack of a footway extended beyond the frontage of the site in the direction of Faulds Park Road. I do not consider that the requirement can be justified as either necessary or reasonable under the tests for conditions set by Circular 4/1998. Pedestrian movement westwards from the site is presently accommodated by a footway on the opposite side of Cloch Road. Considering the existing pedestrian movement in this area and the previous use as a hotel and the level of pedestrian activity it generated it is difficult to envisage a level of additional pedestrian movements in this direction as a consequence of this development that could justify the provision of an extended connecting footway.

The applicant's submissions in respect of drainage and flooding have been accepted by the relevant bodies and I am satisfied that the requirements of Policies UT3 and UT4 have been addressed and may be satisfied through the use of appropriate conditions. The electrical sub-station within the site is to be re-housed, but not moved. Traffic noise has been considered by the Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities and is expected to be within acceptable limits. All other matters raised by consultees may be addressed through the use of conditions and advisory notes. The lack of objection from statutory consultees to the development satisfies Policy H8 (criterion g).

Finally with reference to Policy H8, located adjacent to a bus route, additional or specific provision for bus operators is not, in this instance, required (criterion h).

This leaves the issue of the suggested right of way between Faulds Park Road and Cloch Road. While Policy LR9 seeks to protect such routes, the Council's records show no confirmed or previously claimed right of way through the site.

In conclusion, the proposal presents no conflict with Inverclyde Local Plan Policies H1, H2, H8, H11, DS1, DS5, UT3, UT4, LR9, DC1 and PPAN3 on Private and Public Open Space in New Residential Development. Whilst I am mindful of objections received, there are no material planning considerations that would warrant refusal of this welcome development which will help to regenerate this crucial site at the western gateway to Gourrock.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. That samples of all facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to their use.

2. That prior to the occupation of the first of the flats in each of the blocks hereby permitted, the roads and footways leading thereto and the car parking bays associated with the relevant block shall be surfaced to sealed base course level and shall be maintained to that standard thereafter.
3. That prior to occupation of the last of the flats in each of the blocks, the roads and footways leading thereto and the car parking bays associated with the relevant block shall be surfaced to final wearing course level.
4. That the approved landscaping scheme shall be implemented in full prior to occupation of the last flat.
5. That any trees, shrubs or areas of grass that die, are removed, damaged or become diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced within the following year with others of a similar size and species.
6. That no development shall commence until a bond to cover the costs of implementation of the approved soft landscaping scheme has been lodged with the Council.
7. That following completion of the approved landscaping scheme the approved management and maintenance plan shall come into force.
8. That all surface water drainage from the site shall be treated in accordance with the principles of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Manual (C697) (CIRIA 2007). Before development commences, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority of the maintenance regime for the water detention areas.
9. 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.
10. That the development shall not commence until a risk assessment of all pollutant linkages, including any necessary remediation strategy with timescale for implementation, 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.
11. 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 be 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.
12. 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.
13. That no material shall be imported onto the site until written details of the source of the imported material has been submitted for approval, in writing by the Planning Authority.

The details, which shall be submitted no later than four weeks prior to the material being imported onto the site, shall include: the source of the imported material, any potential source(s) of contamination within 50 metres of the source of the material to be imported and verification analysis information. The material must not be imported on to the site until written approval has first been received from the Planning Authority. The material from the source agreed only shall be imported in strict accordance with these agreed details.

14. That the right turn stacking lane shown on the approved drawings shall be implemented prior to the first of the flats hereby permitted being occupied.
15. That the boundary fencing to the rear of the adjoining bungalows shall be erected prior to the adjacent parking spaces being brought into use.
16. That prior to the commencement of development details of a fully costed long term inspection and maintenance programme for all drainage on the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
17. The applicant shall submit to the Planning Authority a detailed specification of the containers to be used to store waste materials and recyclable materials produced on the premises as well as specific details of the areas where such containers are to be located. The use of the residential accommodation shall not commence until the above details are approved in writing by the Planning Authority and the equipment and any structural changes are in place.
18. That prior to any construction work starting on site, tree protection measures in accordance with Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations, currently 5837:2012, shall be erected and not removed during the course of construction work.

Reasons

1. To ensure the appropriateness of these materials.
2. To ensure the provision of adequate vehicular and pedestrian facilities appropriate to each stage of the development.
3. To ensure the provision of adequate vehicular and pedestrian facilities appropriate to each stage of the development.
4. To ensure provision of the approved landscaping scheme.
5. To ensure retention of the approved landscaping scheme.
6. To ensure the provision of the approved soft landscaping scheme.
7. To ensure retention of the approved landscaping scheme.
8. To control runoff from the site to reduce the risk of flooding.
9. To help arrest the potential spread of Japanese Knotweed in the interests of environmental protection.
10. To satisfactorily address potential contamination issues in the interests of environmental safety.
11. To provide verification that remediation has been carried out to the Planning Authority's satisfaction.
12. To ensure that all contamination issues are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

13. To protect receptors from the harmful effects of imported contamination.
14. In the interests of vehicular safety.
15. In the interests of the privacy of adjacent residents.
16. To help reduce the potential for flooding.
17. To protect the amenity of the immediate area, prevent the creation of nuisance due to odours, insects, rodents or birds.
18. To ensure retention of the trees not to be removed.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form and plans.
2. Applicant's supporting information.
3. Inverclyde Local Plan.
4. PPAN N0.3
5. Circular 4/1998.
6. Consultation replies.
7. Letters of representation.



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