

Report To: The Planning Board

Date: 1 June 2016

Report By: Head of Regeneration and Planning

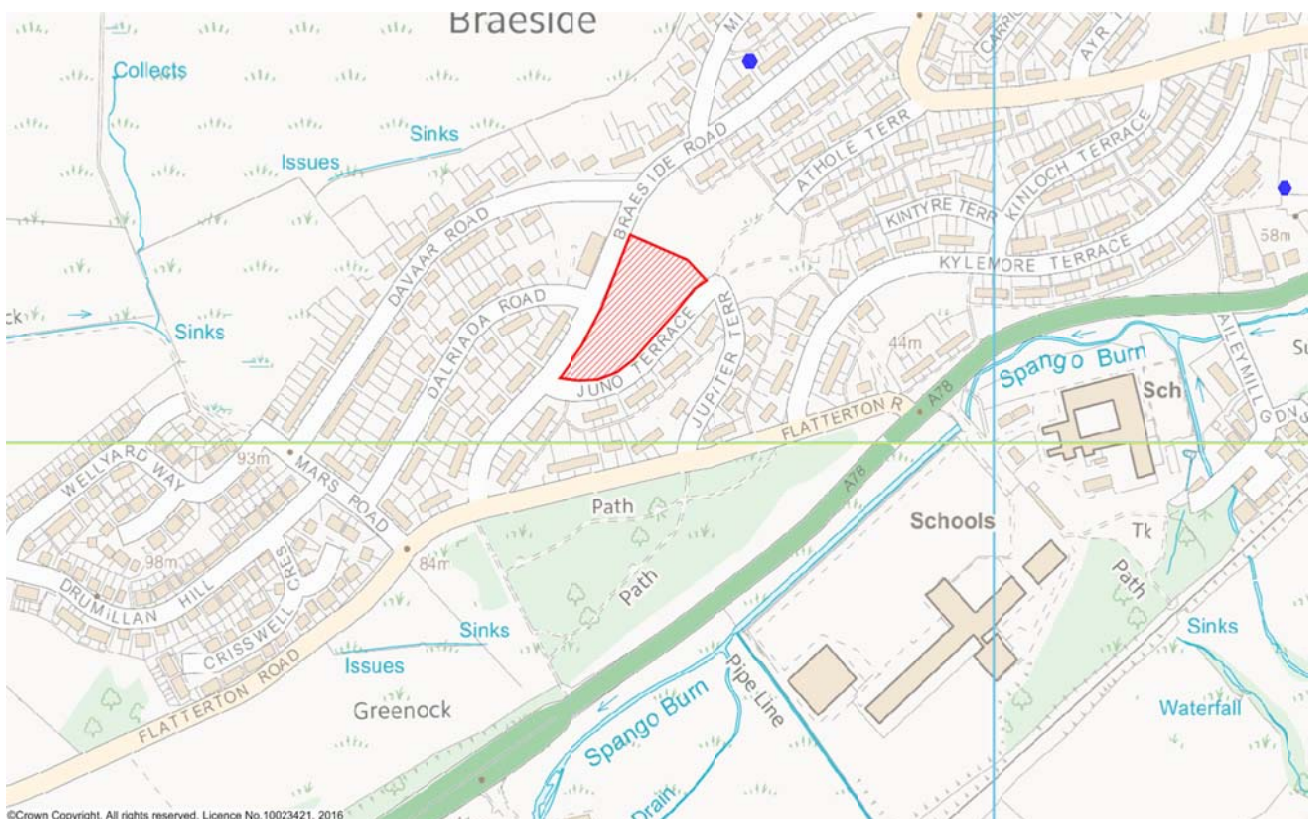
Report No: 15/0245/IC
Plan06/16

**Local Application
Development**

Contact Officer: Guy Phillips

Contact No: 01475 712422

Subject: Erection of 23 new dwellings and associated works at
Former St Gabriel's Primary, Juno Terrace, Greenock



SUMMARY

- At the May meeting of the Planning Board the application was continued for a site visit and discussion of site access arrangements with the applicant.
- The proposal accords with the Inverclyde Development Plan.
- 40 representations have been received on issues including road safety, parking, design and over development.
- There have been no adverse comments from consultees.
- The recommendation is to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions.

BACKGROUND

At the May meeting of the Planning Board the application was continued for a site visit, subsequently arranged for 17 May, to allow Members the opportunity to consider the site and its environs. It was also remitted to the Head of Regeneration & Planning to discuss with the developer a temporary access road during the construction works and the possibility of a variation to the access to the site.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site of the former St. Gabriel's Primary School in Greenock covers approximately 0.69ha and is irregularly shaped. It is grassed and slopes down from Braeside Road to meet Juno Terrace at its south east boundary. Adjoining to the north-east is an area of grassed open space with a children's play area.

Dalriada Road meets Braeside Road in a T-junction opposite the north-west side boundary. To the north-east of this T-junction is a parade of shops and to its south-west is a terrace of two storey houses.

Opposite the site across Juno Terrace are the rear gardens of two storey terraced houses which front the pedestrian-only Juno Lane. A number of the terraced houses have driveways and garages which take access from Juno Terrace.

PROPOSAL

Twenty three residential units for social rent to the elderly are proposed within two short cul-de-sacs to be formed off Juno Terrace. Excepting a single three bedroom bungalow, the units are within two storey flatted blocks and provide a mix of one and two bedroom apartments.

The buildings have monopitch roofs with a standing seam, grey-coloured metal finish. Walling comprises a mix of buff-coloured facing brick and grey-coloured cladding panels.

Twenty six off-street parking spaces are proposed.

An area of open space intervenes between the proposed buildings and Braeside Road. It is at higher level and bound by a 1.6m high timber retaining wall topped by a 1.8m high close boarded fence. Facing brick walling topped by a mix of timber fencing and metal railings runs along the Juno Terrace frontage and to the rear of an approximately 4.2m deep grass verge.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Policy RES1 - Safeguarding the Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

The character and amenity of residential areas, identified on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded and where practicable, enhanced. Proposals for new residential development will be assessed against and have to satisfy the following criteria:

- (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of the area;
- (b) details of proposals for landscaping;
- (c) proposals for the retention of existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site;
- (d) accordance with the Council's adopted roads guidance and Designing Streets, the Scottish Government's policy statement;
- (e) provision of adequate services; and
- (f) having regard to Supplementary Guidance on Planning Application Advice Notes.

Policy RES2 - Development on Urban Brownfield Sites

Development on brownfield sites for housing and community uses in the residential areas identified on the Proposals Map, and in particular the designated renewal areas, will be supported where it accords with Policies RES1 and RES5, except where:

- (a) an alternative use of greater priority or significant social and/or economic/employment benefit is identified; or
- (b) an alternative use is identified through an agreed area renewal initiative (refer Policy SDS7); or
- (c) it would result in an unacceptable loss of designated and locally valued open space (refer Policy ENV4).

Note: the designated renewal areas referred to are the "Major Areas of Change" and "Areas of Potential Change" depicted on the Proposals Map.

Policy RES3 - Residential Development Opportunities

Residential development will be encouraged and supported on the sites and indicative locations included in Schedule 6.1 and indicated on the Proposals Map. An annual audit of the housing land supply will monitor and review, and where necessary, augment the Effective Land Supply, to maintain a minimum five year's supply in accordance with the GCV SDP and SPP guidance.

Policy RES4 - Provision of Affordable Housing

Residential developments of 20 or more dwellings on the prescribed sites in Schedule 6.1 will require developers to contribute towards meeting the affordable housing requirements identified in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Housing Need and Demand Assessment for Inverclyde. Provision is to be delivered by developers in accordance with Supplementary Guidance on Affordable Housing through the following means:

- (a) a benchmark of 25% Affordable Housing Contribution or another agreed percentage on specified 'quota sites'; or failing that and in exceptional circumstances:
 - (i) off-site provision within the same HMA/HNDA sub area*; or
 - (ii) commuted payments in lieu of on- or off-site provision;
- (b) allocated Registered Social Landlord sites in the effective land supply; and
- (c) greenfield land release for a negotiated Affordable Housing Contribution, subject to assessment in accordance with the GCV SDP Strategy Support Measure 10 and Policy RES3.

* Note: refer to Supplementary Guidance, Annex 1.

PAAN3 "Private and Public Open space In New Residential Development" applies.

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Environmental and Commercial Services – no objections on matters relating to road safety, car parking and potential flood risk.

Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities – no objections subject to the attachment of conditions to control the spread of Japanese Knotweed and potential ground contamination, waste storage, external lighting, construction noise and sound insulation, and the issuing of advisory notes on site drainage, vermin, CDM Regulations, surface water, septic tanks and seagulls.

Council Landscape Advisor – no objections subject to the attachment of conditions reserving issues of landscape design, layout and specification, drainage proposals, colour and specification of paving materials, colour and specification of fencing and railings, location and form of lighting, and service layouts for water, gas, electricity and telecommunications.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised as there are no premises on neighbouring land.

SITE NOTICES

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Forty written representations, including one from Larkfield, Braeside and Branchton Community Council and twenty seven copies of a standard letter have been received. All raise objections to the proposal.

The objectors have concerns over a range of matters, including:

ROAD SAFETY

- Road safety shall be adversely impacted by the formation of two accesses onto the narrow Juno Terrace which is congested with parked cars and serves as the route to other houses on Flatterton Lane. On road parking shall create blind spots for vehicles attempting to exit the site.
- Juno Terrace has only one pavement and the proposed accesses shall reduce its length creating a hazard for pedestrians.
- The proposed level of off-street parking is inadequate leading to a likelihood of additional pressure for parking on Juno Terrace and inconvenience to existing residents who have nowhere else to park.
- Traffic on Juno Terrace shall increase.
- Access for emergency vehicles to Juno Terrace is difficult due to the presence of parked cars and can result in the pavement being mounted.
- Construction traffic shall create a hazard.
- The presence of the playpark adjacent to the site results in children being around, some of whom are brought by car, leading to further pressures on the street.
- The single length of pavement on Juno Terrace shall be reduced by the proposed accesses to the development. It is used by children as a route to the play area.
- Parked cars on Juno Terrace make it difficult for large vehicles, including emergency vehicles, to negotiate and can result in them mounting the pavement. There shall be difficulties with loading and turning.
- Access to existing houses shall be compromised.
- Inconsiderate parking when the former school was in operation led to friction with neighbours.
- Access to the site should be from Braeside Road.

DESIGN

- Metal roofing is not in character with the area.
- The proposed colour scheme is over-bearing and out of character with existing development.
- Flats are out of character with the area.
- There shall be overlooking and a loss of privacy.
- The provision of flats is out of character with housing in the area.

OVER-DEVELOPMENT

- The number of houses in Juno Terrace shall more than double and the 23 houses proposed exceeds the indicative site capacity of 20 in the Local Development Plan.
- Development is too dense.

OTHER MATTERS

- There is conflicting information regarding the type of residential properties being proposed.
- The provision of housing suitable for older persons does not tie in with local housing allocation policies in Inverclyde.
- No evidence has been provided of elderly residents within Braeside wishing to downsize their living accommodation.
- The housing may be used to accommodate parties who shall engage in anti-social activities, including abuse of drugs. Accommodation should be primarily one bedroom units to rehome the aged, infirm and disabled thus allowing larger three and four bedroom houses in the area to be freed up. Social housing should not be provided.
- Braeside has lost open space in recent years.
- A commemorative tree planted within the former school grounds may be at risk.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are the Local Development Plan, the Council's PAAN3 "Private & Public Open Space in New Residential Development", the consultation responses and the written representations.

Policy RES1 seeks to safeguard residential amenity and character and identifies a range of criteria against which new residential developments require to be assessed. The relevant criteria in this instance are (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of the area; (b) details of proposals for landscaping; (d) accordance with the Council's adopted roads guidance and the Scottish Government's policy statement Designing Streets; (e) provision of adequate services; and (f) having regard to Supplementary Guidance on Planning Application Advice Notes.



Considering compatibility with the character and amenity of the area, the proposal is for residential development, is within a part of Greenock which is wholly residential in character and is identified in Schedule 6.1 referred to by policy RES3 as being suitable for affordable homes. The principle of residential development is acceptable. Houses opposite the site on Juno Terrace and Braeside Road are terraced and I am content that the scale and layout of the proposed 2 storey flatted blocks and single attached bungalow is consistent with this pattern of development. I am further content that design of the proposed blocks, the generalities of the finishing materials, boundary treatment and open space and garden provision combine to ensure that the development integrates sympathetically into the surroundings and the distances from existing housing ensures that there are no valid concerns relating to overlooking and privacy. Given all of these circumstances, I am content that the proposal satisfies criterion (a) of policy RES1.

The Council's landscape advisors raise no objections to planting details submitted with the planning application and I am in agreement with the recommended suspensive condition to ensure the provision of a quality landscape setting for the development. As such, I am content that the proposal satisfies criterion (b) of policy RES1.

While noting concerns over the potential for increased traffic and demand for parking, formation of two accesses onto Juno Terrace, the presence of only one pavement on Juno Terrace which shall be reduced in length by the accesses to the development, current on road parking and access for emergency vehicles and existing houses, the adjacent playpark and the impact of construction traffic, the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services offers no objections. It is recognised that the site operated as a school previously and that demand for parking for a development of social rent to the elderly will be less. Furthermore, the development incorporates 26 off street parking spaces and the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services advises that this accords with the National Roads Development Guide requirement for one space per housing association unit. Accordingly, the proposal accords with criterion (d) of policy RES1.

In response to the request of the Planning Board that there be discussions with the developer on a temporary access road during the construction works and the possibility of a variation to the access to the site, there has been a review of the site access arrangements by the contractor which concludes that Juno Terrace is considered to be the only realistic solution for construction traffic. It is advised that the difference in level from Braeside Road to the new finished levels is quite considerable, almost 8 metres in some locations. Delivery vehicles and large items of plant could not safely negotiate these extreme slopes. It should be noted that the developer is also required to incorporate a 2 metre high retaining wall along the full length of the site to allow the construction of the units off a safe and level platform. This factor also rules out access from Braeside Road.

Access from the junction of Braeside Road and Juno Terrace was also examined. While this junction provides the only fairly level piece of ground within the site if a haul road were to start here its route will be down through the site and will cut across Blocks 6, 2 and 4 resulting in severe programming issues. This route also encounters level issues including a 1.5m retaining structure half way along. Once again utilising this route for delivery vehicles and large areas of plant will present several Health & Safety risks. In addition the installation of this road does not fully address the issue as Blocks 6, 4 and 2 still require access from Juno Terrace to allow works progression.

The developer understands that many people will be anxious about the effects that the works will have on their everyday life. It is advised that to deal with these concerns the developer will hold an open day/evening in conjunction with Link Housing Association where locals can meet the contracts team and view proposals for carrying out the works. At this event residents can get detailed information including timescales, traffic management arrangements, and contact details and ask staff questions or raise any concerns that they may have about the construction phase.

Introductory letters, site information booklets and Considerate Constructors Scheme 'neighbour flyers' will be delivered to all nearby businesses, residents and property owners to introduce them to Cruden and the Considerate Constructors Scheme. Contact name and telephone number for the site agent will also be provided.

Overall, after consideration of road safety concerns it is considered that the proposal accords with criterion (d) of policy RES1.

The proposal also accords with criterion (e) of policy RES1. The site was previously developed and services are present.

PAAN3 "Private and Public Open space In New Residential Development" of the Council's Supplementary Guidance Planning Application Advice Notes series applies. The proposal falls into the category of flatted infill development and flats should reflect the existing scale of buildings and townscape in the immediate environs. Flatted infill developments need only provide open space where surplus land is available following the provision of any off-street parking required. Notwithstanding the limited requirement for open space provision, the proposed layout incorporates gardens for each of the proposed blocks and a landscaped slope up to the boundary with Braeside Road. It, therefore, follows that the proposal accords with criterion (f) of policy RES1.

Policy RES2 supports residential development on brownfield sites (such as the application site), where such proposals accord with Policy RES1 and the site is covered by Policy RES3 as a location where residential development shall be encouraged and supported, with Schedule 6.1 indicating an approximate capacity of 20 affordable homes. Given that this figure is indicative and that the proposed layout meets all requirements on building scale, open space, car parking and service requirements, I am content that the number of units proposed is acceptable.



Policy RES4 requires developers of developments of 20 or more dwellings to contribute towards meeting the affordable housing requirements identified in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Housing Need and Demand Assessment for Inverclyde. As a development of accommodation for social rent to the elderly this policy requirement is met.

Overall, I am satisfied that the proposal complies with the Inverclyde Local Development Plan. It rests to consider if there are other material considerations that indicate a decision should not be taken in accordance with the Development Plan.

Consultation responses present no impediment to development and conditions recommended to control Japanese Knotweed and potential ground contamination are appropriate.

In noting matters raised by the objectors and not previously addressed by my assessment against the Local Development Plan: the submitted plans clearly illustrate the type of residential properties being proposed; local housing allocation, evidence of Braeside residents wishing to downsize their accommodation and perceived occupation by parties engaged in anti-social activities are not material planning considerations; and the commemorative tree was relocated from the school grounds following its closure.

I consider there to be no material considerations that justify determining this application contrary to the Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The use of the development shall not commence until the applicant has submitted a completion report for approval, in writing by the Planning Authority, detailing all fill or landscaping material imported onto the site. This report shall contain information of the material's source, volume, intended use and verification of chemical quality (including soil-leachate and organic content etc.) with plans delineating placement and thickness.
6. No development shall commence until full details of the landscape design, layout and specification, drainage proposals, colour and specification of paving materials, colour and specification of fencing and railings, location and form of lighting, and service layouts for utilities have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority: development thereafter shall proceed in accordance with the approved details, unless the Planning Authority gives its prior written approval to any alternatives.
7. The approved scheme of landscaping shall be completed within the first planting season following completion of the 23 residential units hereby approved and any specimens which in the subsequent 5 years die, become diseased or are damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with a similar specimen, unless the Planning Authority gives its prior written approval to any alternatives.
8. None of the 23 residential units hereby approved shall be occupied until the parking layout detailed on docquetted site layout plan 2510 L1(00)001 Revision T02 has been completed.
9. 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 be completed utilising the approved materials, unless the Planning Authority gives its prior written approval to any alternatives.
10. 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) and in accordance with Sewers for Scotland. Before the development commences, details of the surface water drainage and a maintenance regime shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reasons:

1. To help arrest the spread of Japanese Knotweed in the interests of environmental protection.
2. To satisfactorily address potential contamination issues in the interests of environmental safety.
3. To provide verification that remediation has been carried out to the Authority's satisfaction.
4. To ensure that all contamination issues are recorded and dealt with appropriately.
5. To protect receptors from the harmful effects of imported contamination.
6. To ensure the provision of a quality landscape setting for the residential development.
7. To ensure the provision of a quality landscape setting for the residential development.
8. To prevent obstructive parking on Juno Terrace.
9. To ensure a continuity of finishes with this part of Greenock.
10. To prevent harm from flooding.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 – Background Papers. For further information please contact Guy Phillips on 01475 712422.