

Report To: The Planning Board **Date:** 3 August 2016

Report By: Head of Regeneration and Planning **Report No:** 16/0063/IC
Plan 08/16

**Local Application
Development**

Contact Officer: James McColl **Contact No:** 01475 712462

Subject: Erection of a dwellinghouse fronting Newark Avenue at
Land Adjacent To 6 The Craigs, Greenock

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is an area of ground which was formerly part of the garden of 6 The Craigs, Greenock. It extends to 852 square metres and slopes down to the north, consists of grass and ornamental shrubbery, and has a frontage to both Newark Avenue and The Craigs. Houses of varying design are located on The Craigs and Newark Avenue.



SUMMARY

- The proposal accords with the Inverclyde Development Plan.
- Nine representations have been received in respect of the application, of which 8 are objections. Issues relate to the impact on the streetscape and on neighbours.
- There have been no adverse comments from consultees.
- The recommendation is to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed to construct a split level dwellinghouse which extends to three storeys at the highest point. Finishing materials will comprise primarily white render, a slate roof and aluminium clad timber window and door frames. The building has a footprint of around 150 square metres and it extends to a height of around 10.7 metres at the highest point relative to the sloping site.

Both vehicular and pedestrian access will be taken from Newark Avenue. A driveway is located between the house and the boundary with 4 Newark Avenue enabling parking for four cars and providing access to a garage to the rear of the house at the lower ground floor level. The hard surfacing will continue to the front of the house to define the entrance, with the remainder of the site forming landscaped garden ground. Boundaries will be marked by a combination of 1200mm high metal fencing to the road boundaries and an 1800mm high timber fence to enclose the rear garden area.

PROPOSED 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.

Planning Application Advice Note (PAAN) 2 on "Single Plot Residential Development" applies

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Environmental and Commercial Services – Four off street parking spaces should be provided. This is achieved within the driveway. Any retaining walls along the edge of the roadway and details of the 1.2 metre high metal fence will require to be submitted for a technical approval process prior to the commencement of works on site. All surface water should be intercepted within the site.

Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities – Conditions relating to bin provision, external lighting and working hours during construction are recommended.

PUBLICITY

The nature of the proposal did not require advertisement.

SITE NOTICES

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Eight objections on behalf of nine individuals have been received. The concerns raised can be summarised as follows:

- The size and height of the proposed house makes it out of scale and incongruous in relation to neighbouring properties.
- The large frontage of the house will be harmful to the character of The Craigs and Newark Avenue.
- The balconies appear odd and will be unsympathetic to neighbouring properties.
- The southern boundary of the house is very close to the roadway of The Craigs and the site is not being developed to advantage.
- The retention of some of the existing planting within the garden would enhance the development.
- The house is too large for the site.
- On the opposite side of Newark Avenue, a precedent was set in the 1950s with a requirement that the building being constructed at the time was no higher than its neighbours.
- The previous planning permission was for a single storey dwelling.
- Building works will cause upheaval and congestion within the narrow cul-de-sac.
- The building site may cause danger to youngsters living beside it.
- There is a restriction in title that states that the houses erected in this area shall be neither more nor less than two storeys in height.
- The existing permission is for a single storey house.

One further representation was submitted which raises no objection but seeks reassurance that the address of the new property will not be such that there is confusion with existing houses.

I will consider the concerns raised in my assessment.

ASSESSMENT

In 2014, planning permission was granted in principle for the erection of a house on this site and did not specify detail relating to its size or height. This application does not seek approval of matters specified by condition in this permission and is a detailed planning application in its own right.

Recognising that the principle of developing a house on this site is established, the determining factor is whether this application complies with the Inverclyde Local Development Plan (LDP), Planning Application Advice Note (PAAN) 2 on "Single Plot Residential Development" and, if it does whether there are other material considerations to suggest that planning permission should be refused contrary to policy.

In terms of the advice and guidance within PAAN2, it is noted that developments should have a plot size and proportion of built ground to garden reflecting the immediate locality. The distance to garden boundaries should also reflect the immediate locality together with the established street front building line. Height, roof design, use of materials and colours should also reflect the immediate locality.

A wide variety of building designs are found within Newark Avenue and The Craigs. These designs are of the architectural styles of the time and vary in appearance. The applicant has sought a bespoke solution and given there is no prevalent building style within Newark Avenue and The Craigs, it is considered that this is the correct approach. This ensures that the proposed development will contribute positively to the continuing evolution of the built form.

The design utilises a split level arrangement to follow the topography of the site. The ridge height steps up from the adjacent house at 4 Newark Avenue to the north whilst remaining below the level of the neighbouring house across The Craigs to the south. I note the concerns raised relating to the height of the proposed house and that the house immediately opposite on Newark Avenue is a bungalow which does not project higher than the neighbouring house to the north. I consider, however, that the height of the proposed house is appropriate, being split level increasing in height following the slope while at the same time ensuring that the house on The Craigs facing directly down Newark Avenue maintains visual prominence.

In further considering the house in context, despite the variety of designs of adjacent buildings, there is a common theme of a co-ordination and uniformity of window designs both within individual the houses and between their upper and lower levels. The fenestration of the proposed house reflects this theme. External materials comprise a slate roof and a primarily white render to the external walls, being materials and colours which are found in the street. The use of a contrasting wall cladding material at lower ground floor level would, I consider, also be acceptable.



In examining the design and plot layout, the proposed house follows the building line established by the neighbouring building. The distances to the boundaries are also appropriate when compared to neighbouring properties, as is plot coverage. In response to the concerns that the large frontage would be harmful to the character of Newark Avenue and The Craigs, I note that while the design results in an elongated front elevation, it remains less than the building at nos.1-5. Furthermore, the combined frontage of the buildings to the eastern side of Newark Avenue will remain greater than that of the western side even after the construction of the proposed house. Finally, the use of a metal fence to the front and side facing The Craigs and a timber fence between plots is considered appropriate.

Assessing neighbouring amenity, the house at 4 Newark Avenue has a number of windows to the gable facing towards the proposed house. Only two of these are for rooms (a kitchen and bedroom) for which it is appropriate to undertake an assessment of the impact to daylight and sunlight. This has been done utilising the methods set out by the BRE Trust. Whilst there will be a reduction in the daylight received, this is within the acceptable limits set out to ensure that the amenity of the neighbouring property is not unacceptably affected. It is acknowledged that the proposed house will also result in a reduction in sunlight to the two windows in the first part of the afternoon. An assessment utilising sunpath indicators also shows the reduction in sunlight is within acceptable limits within which the amenity of neighbouring property is not considered to be unacceptably affected. The positioning of the windows ensures there is no unacceptable intervisibility, overlooking or loss of privacy to neighboring property.

The two smaller balconies and the larger raised patio proposed by the new house all have privacy screens to ensure these do not result in unacceptable overlooking and loss of privacy. Their sizes will allow for limited seating in good weather but are not such that they will afford residents the opportunity of undertaking a wide range of functions over extensive periods of the

day and evening to the extent that this regular or continuous activity would be to the detriment of the amenity of other residents. Overall, I am satisfied that the development will have an acceptable impact on residential amenity. As the proposal is considered compatible with the character and amenity of the area, criterion (a) of policy RES1 is addressed.

The Head of Environmental and Commercial Services advises that four parking spaces should be provided for the proposed house and this is achieved (criterion (d) of policy RES1). The requirement for details of retaining walls along the edge of the roadway to be submitted for a technical approval process together with the details of the 1.2 metre high metal fence can be addressed by condition. The requirement to ensure that all surface water should be intercepted within the site can also be addressed by condition. Matters relating to bin provision, external lighting and working hours during construction raised by the Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities can be addressed by condition or advisory note as appropriate.

With regard to the outstanding criteria set out within policy RES1, there is no particular landscaping requirement for this single house and hard landscaping materials can be controlled via a condition (criterion (b)). There are no existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site (criterion(c)) and there are adequate services for the new development within this established residential area (criterion (e)). Finally, the proposal accords with the advice and guidance within PAAN2 (criterion (f)).



I am satisfied that the proposal complies with the Local Development Plan, therefore it rests to consider if there are any other factors that would persuade refusal against policy.

Turning to the outstanding points raised in the representations received, whilst I note the suggestion that the retention of some of the existing planting within the garden would enhance the development, these are limited to garden shrubbery over which there are no restrictions on removal independent from any planning application.

It is recognised that construction works can cause an element of disturbance however and working hours are controlled by the Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities via separate legislation. Equally, the use of the public road for equipment and materials is controlled via the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services. There is nothing to suggest that the works will cause congestion within the cul-de-sac. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the site is secure and does not cause a danger or a health and safety risk.

The granting of planning permission would not counter the content of title deeds or any legal agreements that may be in place. Finally, the applicant will require to submit a request for an address for the new property separately from the planning process. As is standard, any new address which is issued will be on the basis that it does not conflict with existing addresses. Overall, there are no material planning considerations which would warrant determination of the application contrary to policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to their use on site, samples of all external materials (inclusive of hardstandings) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Development thereafter shall proceed utilising the approved materials unless an alternative is agreed in writing by the Planning Authority
2. The driveway shown on the approved proposed site plan shall be formed and provide for four off-road parking spaces for use by vehicles prior to the occupation of the dwelling. The driveway shall then remain in place and available for use at all times thereafter
3. All surface water run off shall be intercepted within the site.
4. The privacy screens to the balconies and raised patio above the garage shall be erected to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the dwelling. The screens shall then remain in place at all times thereafter unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
5. That prior to the commencement of works on site, full technical details of any retaining walls along the edge of the roadway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Development thereafter shall proceed as approved unless an alternative is agreed in writing by the Planning Authority
6. Prior to their erection on site, details of the boundary treatments for the plot shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Development thereafter shall proceed as approved unless an alternative is agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.
7. That prior to the occupation of the dwellinghouse hereby permitted, details of the location and any enclosure for bin storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reasons

1. To ensure the external materials are appropriate.
2. To ensure that an appropriate driveway is completed and to prevent overspill parking onto the roadway, in the interests of road safety.
3. To ensure surface water does not encroach onto the public road, in the interests of road safety.
4. To ensure there is no unacceptable overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring property.
5. To ensure the integrity of the public road is maintained, in the interests of road safety.
6. To ensure the boundary treatments are visually acceptable.
7. To ensure suitable bin storage provision for the new dwellinghouse.

Stuart Jamieson
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