

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P07/2231

Type of approval sought	Full Planning Permission
Ward	Wollaston & Stourbridge Town
Applicant	Mr RICHARD SHERRATT, HYPERION HOMES LTD
Location:	METHODIST CHURCH, WEST STREET, STOURBRIDGE, STOURBRIDGE, WEST MIDLANDS, DY8 1XN
Proposal	DEMOLITION OF CHURCH AND BUILDINGS ON SITE AND ERECTION OF 5 NO. DWELLINGS WITH ACCESSWAY THROUGH TO REAR GARDENS AND CAR PARKING COURTYARD (RESUBMISSION OF REFUSED APPLICATION P06/2349)
Recommendation Summary:	APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1. The site lies within a residential area close to Stourbridge town centre. The site is presently occupied by a church, which is no longer in use, with associated outbuildings and an area of tarmac which serves as an onsite car parking area. The remainder of West Street is entirely residential, characterised predominantly by Victorian and Edwardian era terraced properties. These properties have no available off-street car parking, therefore on-street parking is utilized.

PROPOSAL

2. Permission is sought to demolish the existing buildings and to erect a terrace of 5no. 2-bed houses at the site, at a density of 62.5 dwellings per hectare. Each of the properties will have a 10 metre long rear garden. At the rear of the site is a parking area accessed via a driveway through the terrace – this area provides two tandem parking spaces for each of the houses and a single visitor parking space.
3. A bat survey has been submitted which states that no evidence of bat activity was found within any of the buildings at the site. However as there are potential roosting opportunities for bats at the site it is advised that a further bat survey is undertaken

prior to development commencing. If bats are found to be using buildings as a roost then a Natural England development licence in respect of a European Protected Species must be sought. The survey recommends that features be incorporated into the development to allow bats the opportunity to roost within the completed buildings.

HISTORY

4.

APPLICATION	PROPOSAL	DECISION	DATE
P06/2349	Demolition of Enville Street Methodist Church and Outbuildings and Erection of Five Dwellings	Refused	August 2007

5. Application P06/2349 was refused for the following reason:

'The proposal fails to provide sufficient off-street parking to serve the proposed houses, resulting in additional on-street parking which may potentially exacerbate existing parking problems along West Street. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DD4 of the UDP'.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

6. No representations received at the time of producing this report. Any comments subsequently received will be reported to Members in the pre-Committee note.

OTHER CONSULTATION

7. Head of Environmental Protection: no comments received at the time of writing this report.

8. Group Engineer (Development): No objection.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

9. Adopted 2005 UDP

Policy DD1 (Urban Design);

Policy DD4 (Development in Residential Areas);

Policy DD7 (Planning Obligations);

Policy DD8 (Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities);

Policy H3 (Housing Assessment Criteria);

Policy H6 (Housing Density);

Policy NC6 (Wildlife Species);

10. Supplementary Planning Guidance

Parking Standards SPD

ASSESSMENT

11. Key Issues

- The feasibility of conserving and converting the existing church buildings to residential use;
- The principle of residential development at the site;
- The impact of the development on the character of the area and residential amenity;
- Parking provision and highway safety;
- Wildlife;
- Planning Obligations

Conversion

12. The buildings to be demolished are not statutorily listed. The potential for converting the buildings to residential use was discussed by Historic Environment Officers with the developer at the pre-application stage. Although from an architectural point of view the loss of the building would be regrettable, Officers were satisfied based on information provided by the developer that the building would have been difficult to convert.

Principle

13. Policy H3 of the UDP advises that in order to achieve the aims of sustainable forms of development new housing development should be located on previously-developed land within the urban area, and should result in the productive use of vacant sites within the urban area which are not allocated for another use. This site is classed as previously-developed - the proposal is in compliance with the aims of this policy and is therefore acceptable in principle.

Character of the Area and Residential Amenity

14. Policy DD4 states that new development in residential areas will only be allowed where there would be no adverse effect on the character of the area or residential amenity, where the scale and intensity of the proposed development would be in keeping with the surrounding area, and where adequate provision for the parking of vehicles is made. The proposed houses are of an acceptable design which would contribute positively to the character of the area, as required by Policy DD1 of the UDP. The site layout, in terms of plot widths, garden lengths, siting of the buildings and overall density of development, is appropriate in the context of the existing form of development in the surrounding area, in accordance with Policy H6. With regard to potential impact on existing residential amenity, the development would not result in any significant loss of outlook or privacy at houses immediately adjacent the site, in compliance with the requirements of Policy DD4.

Parking

15. The Parking Standards SPD requires the provision of 2 parking spaces for a 2-bed dwelling plus 1 visitor space for every five dwellings, giving a total requirement in this case of eleven parking spaces. The level of parking provision for the development is appropriate, in accordance with Policy DD4 of the UDP.

Wildlife

16. Policy NC6 of the UDP states that development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that measures to protect protected wildlife species are proposed as part of the scheme proposed. The recommendations made in the applicant's bat survey are considered reasonable, and a condition should be imposed to ensure that the development takes place in accordance with those recommendations in order to meet the requirements of Policy NC6 and to ensure that no breaches in wildlife legislation will occur.

Planning Obligations

17. In accordance with Policies DD7 and DD8 of the UDP and adopted SPD 'Detailed Guidance on Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision' the development attracts a requirement for a commuted sum of £7,046.93 to be paid towards the provision and enhancement of public open space and play areas in the locality. This can be dealt with in a legal agreement to accompany the application.

CONCLUSION

18. The proposed development constitutes the productive re-use for housing of vacant, previously-developed land within the urban area. The development would not have any adverse impact on the character of the area, highway safety or residential amenity and is of a scale and intensity which would be in keeping with the character of the area. As such the proposal complies with Policies DD1, DD4, H3 and H6 of the UDP.

RECOMMENDATION

19. It is recommended that the application is approved subject to:
 - a) The development not beginning until a scheme for the submission and approval of a planning obligation to guarantee the provision, maintenance and enhancement of public open space and play provision has been submitted to and agreed by the local planning authority, and

- b) The following conditions, with delegated powers to the Director of the Urban Environment to make amendments to these as necessary

Reason For Approval

The proposed development constitutes the productive re-use for housing of vacant, previously-developed land within the urban area. The development would not have any adverse impact on the character of the area, highway safety or residential amenity and is of a scale and intensity which would be in keeping with the character of the area.

Policy DD1 (Urban Design);

Policy DD4 (Development in Residential Areas);

Policy H3 (Housing Assessment Criteria);

Policy H6 (Housing Density);

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken with regard to the policies and proposals in the Dudley Unitary Development Plan set out below and to all relevant material considerations including supplementary planning guidance:

The above is intended as a summary of the reasons for the grant of planning permission. For further detail on the decision please see the application report.

NOTE FOR APPLICANT: For the avoidance of doubt, this permission relates to drawing no.s 366/15 rev e, 366/13 rev b, 366/10 rev e, 366/11 rev a, and 366/14 rev b.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development shall not begin until a scheme for the provision of off-site public open space and play area improvements has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include the method, timing and arrangements to comply with the Council's policies for the provision of the infrastructure required in connection with the proposed development.
3. None of the dwellings hereby approved shall be occupied until the parking spaces shown on the approved plans have been surfaced and marked out. The spaces shall thereafter be retained in perpetuity and used for no other purpose than the parking of vehicles.
4. Development shall not begin until details of the type, texture and colour of materials to be used in the external elevations have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.
5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order), no development referred to in Part 1 Class A.1(a) of Schedule 2 to that order shall be carried out.
6. The development hereby approved shall only take place in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Bat Survey Assessment dated December 2006 commissioned by Worcestershire Wildlife Consultancy.
7. Development shall not begin until a comprehensive written site investigation strategy (in a form to be agreed by the local planning authority), has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Such a strategy shall facilitate the identification of methane & carbon dioxide. Where the investigations identify the presence of methane and/or carbon dioxide the development shall not begin until a scheme to protect the development from the effects of such gases has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Such a scheme shall: include provisions for validation monitoring & sampling; be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first occupied; and be retained throughout the lifetime of the development.