

Reference No:	08/02199/FULL	Full
Proposal:	Construction of a block of five flats (four x one bedroom and one studio)	
Location:	Garages Between Marlborough House And Kent Lodge Courtlands Maidenhead	
Applicant:	Greendale Property And Investment Co. Ltd	
Agent:	Mr J Smith - JSA Architects Ltd	
Date Received:	8th September 2008	
Case Officer:	Sheila Bowen	Member Call-in: Not applicable
Recommendation:	DD	Date of Expiry: 3 November 2008

Planning Context: Excluded settlement

Sustainable Development Implications: More efficient use of urban land

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:

1. **Main Relevant Policies**

Local Plan - DG1, R3, R4, R5, H3, H5 H6, H8, H10, H11, P4, T5, T6, T7, T8, IMP1, N6

Structure Plan - DP4, DP5, H3, T5

2. **Previous Relevant Decisions**

05/01199	4 x 1-bedroom flats with parking	Withdrawn
05/02683	6 x 1 bedroom flats	Refused 12.12.2005

3. **Highway Authority**

No objections, conditions and informatives suggested.

4. **Tree Officer**

5. **Neighbour Notification Responses**

None received apart from a letter from SUSTRANS asking that S106 monies be spent on cycle improvements

REMARKS

The Site

1. The site is located on Courtlands, a residential street located just across the road from and to the south of Maidenhead Railway Station. It is characterised by a mixture of flatted development and semi-detached dwellings with the buildings neighbouring the site being three storey blocks of flats. The application site is narrower than those in the immediate area and although presently vacant it formerly contained a block of four garages with a forecourt area and access onto Courtlands. There is a noticeable

difference in levels across the site with the Kent Lodge site around a metre lower than the Marlborough House site. The site area is 0.026ha.

The Proposal

2. The proposal is the construction of a block of 5 flats, four of them one-bedroom flats, and one being a studio flat. The building would be 3 storeys in height and L-shaped, with a narrower façade facing Courtlands than the façade facing Shoppenhangers Road. The style of the building would reflect the blocks of flats on either side in the Courtlands development, it would be brick built, with a hipped roof similar to the adjoining roofs, and horizontal decorative cladding between the central windows on the Shoppenhangers Road façade. There would be a gap of 2 metres between it and the building to the west, widening to 6 metres, and another of some 1.3 metres between it and the building to the east. Access would be via a permeable block-paving footpath from Courtlands to the south. A roofed bin store and cycle store for 5 bicycles would be provided near the entrance to the site. Boundary treatment would be 1.8metre high close-boarded fences, with native hedge planting behind. There would be no parking provision on site.

Principal Planning issues

3. Since the site is excluded from the Green Belt, its redevelopment to provide additional dwellings is acceptable in principle subject to consideration of detailed matters, compliance with relevant development plan policies and the provision of the necessary associated infrastructure. The principal matters for consideration are:
 - i) Appropriateness of the proposed density of development
 - ii) Impact on the character and appearance of the area
 - iii) Impact on the living conditions of neighbouring and future occupiers
 - iv) Parking provision and impact on the highway
 - v) Developer contributions for associated infrastructure.

Density

4. The application site is located within the urban settlement of Maidenhead. The principle of a residential development of five small flats close to the station and to the town centre is acceptable given the location and the residential densities on neighbouring land uses.
5. Government policy in PPS3 Housing encourages the more efficient use of urban land, partly by achieving densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare, and seeks greater intensity of development in locations with good public transport accessibility such as town centres or around major transport nodes and public transport corridors. This is consistent with Structure Plan Policy H6. However, the guidance is also clear that proposals should not be viewed in isolation and that they must be informed by the wider context and should focus on the quality of the places and living environments they create. In this context Local Plan Policy H11 requires development proposals not to be incompatible with or cause damage to the character of the area.
6. The proposed development will have a density of 192 dwellings per hectare however, this is in part caused by the fact that these are 5 small units rather than say 2 or 3 larger ones. The area is highly sustainable, where higher densities are acceptable

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

7. The new building would have an average height of about 11.8metres over three floors of accommodation, with a pitched roof above. It would fit into a gap between other similar blocks of flats, and would be in line with the block to the west (when viewed from Shoppenhangers Road), and be set forward of the block to the east. The site was formerly occupied by garages, now demolished, and has stood empty and

derelict for some time, to the detriment of the street scene. The elevations of the building have been designed to reflect the architectural detailing on the two neighbouring blocks. The building is slightly lower than Marlborough House and higher than Kent Lodge. This is in part due to the slope across the site but the height and scale of the proposal is considered to be in keeping with both the neighbouring buildings. It is considered that the development of the site with a building sympathetic to the others on either side would be a positive improvement to the character and appearance of the area.

Impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and adequacy of future living environment

- 8. The site faces the railway station but views of the station are partially screened by the large tree in the garden of the block of flats to the east. It is not considered that the proximity to the railway line would cause any harm to the amenities of the future residents of the block, as the station building would mitigate the noise of the trains.
- 9. The amount of amenity space on the site is considered adequate for the number of residents of the proposed development, and the living conditions of the future occupants of the flats would be acceptable.
- 10. In the case of the previous proposal, concern was raised by the owner of one of the flats in Marlborough House (to the west) over the potential impact the development would have on the windows on the east elevation of Marlborough House. These windows, one on each floor, each serve a bedroom however these bedrooms are also served by a second smaller window on the south facing front elevation that also illuminates the room. The revised proposal, currently under consideration here, would not have a side wall so close to the windows, because of its L-shaped design, and would allow sufficient light to enter the windows in question.

Access, highway and parking considerations

- 11. The site is located opposite the railway station and a very short distance from the town centre. The Highway Authority considers this area to be within the high accessibility category as defined within the Parking Strategy (May 2004). The site proximity to the town centre and rail station coupled with the parking restrictions make this site viable for zero parking. Future residents would not be eligible for parking permits in this location, and this matter should be included in a unilateral obligation.
- 12. Cycle parking has been provided at 1 space per flat, which is in keeping with policy guidelines.

Developer contributions to associated infrastructure/affordable housing

- 13. Under Policies IMP1 and R3 of the Local Plan and Policy DP4 of the Structure Plan, developers are required to make adequate provision to offset the additional impacts of new developments on various kinds of infrastructure, services and facilities. Provision is normally secured by means of a unilateral obligation.
- 14. Although a unilateral obligation has not been received at the time of report preparation, it is anticipated that one will be submitted within the 8 - week period.
- 15. Amounts requested for projects related to this proposal are as follows:

Community and youth facilities	£2900
Library Services	£2975
Public Open Space	£11470
Indoor Sport and Leisure	£2573
Highways/Public Transport	£14100
Waste Disposal/Recycling	£400

Public Art and Heritage
Total

£1476
£35894

If the agreement has not been received by the expiry of the 8-week period (3 November 2008), then this application is recommended for refusal.

Conclusion

16. The proposed development accords with development plan policy and is recommended for approval, unless a satisfactory unilateral agreement has not been received by the 3rd November 2008.

Recommendation

Defer and delegate for approval if a satisfactory Section 106 obligations securing appropriate developer contributions and preventing future occupiers from obtaining parking permits is received by the 3 November 2008, or refusal if this is not received by this date.

Conditions and Reasons

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2 No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used on external surfaces of the development(s) hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development(s) shall be carried out and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1.
- 3 Details of the siting and design of all walls, fencing and/or other methods of enclosure (including any retaining walls) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced on site. Such walls or fencing as may be approved shall be erected before first occupation of the development unless the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority to any variation has been obtained.
Reason: To ensure a satisfactory resultant appearance and standard of amenity of the site. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1, H10.
- 4 The bathroom windows in the East elevation of the development hereby permitted shall be of a permanently fixed, non-opening design with the exception of an opening toplight, that is a minimum of 1.6 m above the finished internal floor level and fitted with obscure glass which shall thereafter be permanently maintained as such.
Reason: To prevent overlooking and loss of privacy in the interests of the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties.
- 5 No further windows shall be inserted in the flank elevations of the development hereby permitted without first obtaining the prior approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To prevent overlooking and loss of privacy in the interests of the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties.
- 6 Details of all finished slab levels in relation to ground level (against OD Newlyn) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any part of the development. The development shall be carried and maintained in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: In the interest of the visual amenities of the area and the street scene.