

ITEM: 09

Application Number: 10/01749/FUL

Applicant: Spectrum Housing Group

Description of Application: Priority supported housing project for families consisting of eleven residential rooms together with associated communal and staff facilities, and secure ground floor parking area

Type of Application: Full Application

Site Address: 11 TO 13 LOWER COMPTON ROAD PLYMOUTH

Ward: Compton

Valid Date of Application: 15/10/2010

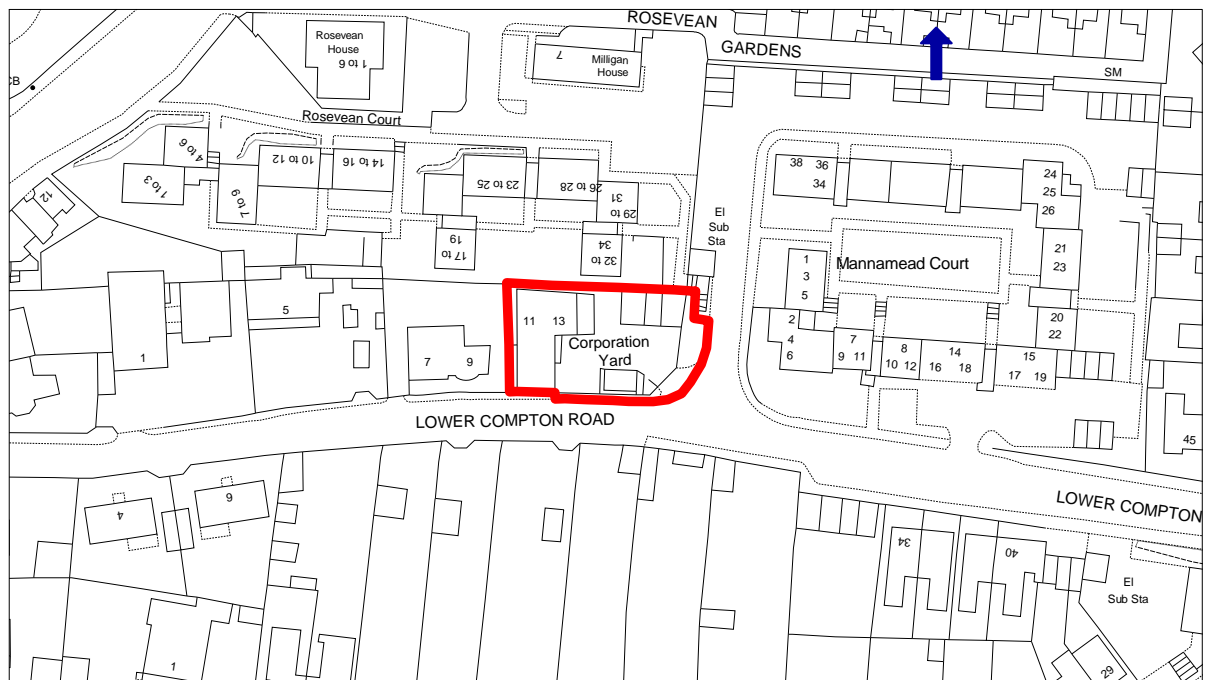
8/13 Week Date: 10/12/2010

Decision Category: Member Referral

Case Officer : Jeremy Guise

Recommendation: Grant conditionally subject to S106 Obligation, delegated authority to refuse if not signed by 30th January 2011

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This application is reported to committee following referral by Councillor Richard Ball, Ward Member, whose concerns include serious reservations about traffic access, the consultation exercise may not have covered every negative aspect of this proposed development, thus failing to achieve a balanced view; that the Mannamead area is rapidly becoming overloaded with managed multiple occupancy establishments, and that that the proposal has insufficient place for children's play and parking in the area is difficult.

OFFICERS REPORT

Site Description

The application site is a roughly rectangular shaped piece of land (approx.0.5 ha in area) located on the corner of Lower Compton Road and Belle Acre Close in the Compton ward, an established residential neighbourhood, to the north of the city centre. It is currently occupied by a mixture of single and two storey buildings surrounded by high stone and brick walls in association with its' previous use as City Council housing deport. The main building is a flat roofed utilitarian structure which contains windows at first floor level that face in all directions, including northwards towards the communal gardens of Rosevean Court.

Land levels in the surrounding area rise quite steeply towards the north (Higher Compton), with ground level for the Rosevean flats being a full storey height higher. There is also a gentler fall across the site from west to east.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character: comprising three storey blocks of purpose built flats to the north, Rosevean Court, and east and the extensive walled rear gardens of older Victorian and Edwardian houses to the south. An architectural practice occupies Lansdowne House, the attractive, bay fronted, villa that neighbours the site to the west.

Proposal Description

Planning permission is sought for a 2-4 storey building, to provide a new 'Priority supported housing project for families'(Gross internal floor space 410sqm). This would consist of eleven residential rooms together with associated communal and staff facilities, and secure ground floor parking area. The applicants, Spectrum Housing Association, explain that the existing refuge provides unsuitable, outdated accommodation.

The ground floor would provide a parking court for 6 vehicles (2 suitable for use by people with disabilities) accessed off Lower Compton Road. The existing site access, on the chamfered corner of Lower Compton and Belle Acre Close, would be downgraded to a secondary pedestrian access, with the main vehicular and pedestrian access relocated to a new, more centrally positioned, opening. Apart from parking, the remainder of the ground floor would comprise: entrance hall; lift and stair wells; administrative office and kitchenette; plant room; refuse store and WC. A small external smoking area and cycle store would be included at the eastern end.

The first floor would contain most of the communal accommodation associated with the use centred on a courtyard, which opens to the south: a large shared kitchen and dining room; children's room; communal lounge; teen room and laundry at the western end clustered around a small (85sqm) central courtyard that doubles as an external play area. In addition it would provide three standard rooms (3 bed capacity) and one bedroom capable of use by a person with disabilities (3 bed capacity). The second floor would contain a further three standard rooms (3 bed capacity); another bedroom capable of use by a person with disabilities; a small meeting room and office with roof terrace. The third floor would contain one standard room with kitchenette; two single rooms a plant room and store room.

In the Design and Access statement that architect describes the proposal as follows:-

'A contemporary design aesthetic with a limited number of materials has been developed for the scheme. Whilst the building does not seek to be 'iconic' we are conscious that, as a new building, it will inevitably have an impact on the surrounding area. It is therefore important to achieve a coherent design that will complement and enhance its existing context.

The existing site benefits from a stone boundary wall to Lower Compton Road. Although the site is enclosed with existing masonry walls it is anticipated that, due to the formation of new openings, the existing stone wall will need to be rebuilt during the construction stage. It is proposed that the wall will be reconfigured and rebuilt and the design team will look at the possibilities of reusing the existing stone during the detail design stages.

The stone boundary wall at ground floor level will create a 'plinth' to the proposed building. In conjunction with the massing and the horizontal subdivision of the uses within the building, the design concept seeks to express the elevations as a series of horizontal elements. The horizontal elements, or slices, start with the stone plinth, continue with the slightly smaller first floor and then the much reduced second and third floors which have their short elevations facing towards Lower Compton Road.

The proposed enclosure and guarding detail to the first floor courtyard has been incorporated as an integral part of the elevation design. It is configured as a wide opening to continue the horizontal design theme and is unfilled with timber fins to provide a level of privacy whilst at the same time allowing as much light as possible into the courtyard and communal rooms beyond.

In order to help minimise the overall height of the building it is proposed to incorporate a flat roof behind a low parapet wall.

The palette of materials that is being proposed includes: stone for some of the plinth areas, through coloured white render, powder coated aluminium, windows and contrasting coloured cladding panels as a feature material.

We are proposing to incorporate a recessed channel detail to separate the floors and further emphasise the horizontal design concept. The channel detail will match the proposed coping detail.'

Eight parking spaces proposed, two of which suitable for use by people with disabilities, together with 9 cycle spaces are shown on site.

Relevant Planning History

Ref. 89/01512/OUT - Outline application to develop land for residential purposes (Regulation 5 proposal) 1st August 1989.

Consultation Responses

Highway Authority: Do not wish to raise any objections in principal to the proposed Supported Housing Project development on what is currently a disused council depot.

The application site is close by Manamead Road, which is a Classified Local Distributor Road and part of the strategic highway network, and located within an easily accessible and largely residential area. There are existing bus stops on Manamead Road, Compton Park Road, and Egguckland Road that provide good access to the City Centre and wider areas beyond. There are also local shops close by on Egguckland Road that are within easy walking distance of the proposed development. Additionally the Mutley Plain shopping centre is within easy and convenient reach of the application site. The Local Development Framework (LDF) indicates that the application site is considered to be highly accessible, having an accessibility score of between 70 & 79%, and this high level of accessibility also supports lower car parking levels at the application site.

The application site is situated on the north side and toward the west end of Lower Compton Road, on a corner plot at the junction of Rosevean Gardens. This section of Lower Compton Road is a no through road, having long since been closed off with bollards at its west end junction with Manamead Road. It no longer serves as a feeder road for the wider residential area, but is now a relatively quiet residential cul-de-sac. There are cul-de-sacs of Rosevean Gardens and Belle Acre Close coming off it on the north side, with no through vehicular traffic. The carriageway in this section of Lower Compton Road between Manamead Road and the junction of Compton Park Road varies in width from between 6 and 9 metres, which is sufficient to provide for two-way traffic and also accommodate the on-street car parking that occurs in places along the street where car parking is unrestricted.

As the section of Lower Compton Road between Compton Park Road and Manamead Road is not a through road, vehicle speeds are expected to be relatively low. Incidence of accidents and conflict are also very low, there has been just one recorded incident within a five year period. (The incident recorded as 'Slight', was a low speed non-impact conflict between a car and a motor bike that occurred just west of the Bell Acre Close junction and was attributed to driver error). The City Council records indicate that apart from

this one single incident of conflict, there have not been any further recorded incidents within the whole length of Lower Compton Road in the last 5 years.

The Lower Compton Depot site (formerly a Plymouth City Council maintenance base and yard) when in use would have generated associated vehicle trips by both private cars and commercial vehicles, along with a demand for car parking, of a level commensurate with that of a commercial depot type use, with a likelihood of overspill car parking occurring within the street.

The existing site benefits from a stone boundary wall to Lower Compton Road, although it is anticipated that, due to the formation of new openings the existing stone wall will need to be removed and rebuilt. The proposed development work would have a direct impact on the structure of the Highway Maintainable at Public Expense, and the work would need to be monitored by the managers of the local highway network.

Six car parking spaces would be provided within the ground floor undercroft area for residents, visitors and staff. It is anticipated the car parking area will primarily be used by staff and visitors. Secure cycle parking will also be provided for residents, visitors, and staff within the undercroft area, and this will be overlooked by the ground floor office to provide a level of natural surveillance. The secure and weather-proof cycle storage would be provided to encourage cycling as an alternative sustainable means of transport.

A new vehicle access is proposed from Lower Compton Road moving the current vehicle access, by five metres or so along Lower Compton Road and away from its existing position on the corner of Mannamead Court. The proposed vehicle access and boundary wall fronting Lower Compton Road would be set back at ground floor level (as shown in the application) to provide a degree of inter-visibility at the proposed new secure vehicle entrance/exit. The proposed secure pedestrian access is shown on the corner of the site where the original vehicular access/egress was positioned. It is shown in the application and would be necessary to reinstate the footway where the existing vehicle crossing is positioned, and construct a new vehicle footway crossing (private driveway type) in the position shown on the application plan.

A condition to require provision of a pair of pedestrian drop pram crossing be provided across the altered junction of Rosevean Court is sought. Further details would be required for the reinstatement of the alterations to the junction including alterations to the kerb-line showing pedestrian crossing points and the proposed new vehicle entrance. Notwithstanding the details shown on the application drawing the new vehicle footway crossing should provide pedestrian priority and be constructed as per the layout for a private driveway entrance, with a continuous but lowered kerb-line to form the entrance (not a junction with radius kerbs as shown in the application). In order to preserve the local distinctiveness the granite kerb-line should be maintained in Lower Compton Road and around the junction into Rosevean Gardens until it meets the required pedestrian drop crossing (a small amount

of reclaimed additional granite kerb is likely to be required for this), at which point it would seem convenient to make the change to concrete kerbs as currently existing in Rosevean Gardens.

Conditions relating to reinstatement of footway, communal car parking provision, cycle provision, cycle storage, further details, and code of practice during construction are sought in the event that planning permission is granted.

Public Protection Service - Have no objection to the above application, but recommend conditions relating to reporting of unexpected contamination and code of practice are attached in the event that planning permission is granted.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer (PALO):- The Police Architectural Liaison Officer is generally supportive of the proposal considering it to be a defensible, secure, structure. However, he recommended the use of solid wooden doors to prevent sight and verbal abuse of clients through a mesh or railed gate and offers advise on this and window specification.

Housing need / Affordable housing

The Housing Enabling team has been working in partnership with Spectrum Housing Association to identify a suitable site and has identified this former council depot site as being ideal.

The Housing need for this proposed development has the highest level of priority, and has been strategically identified by the Council for a number of years. Subject to receipt of funding, the development will contribute to the City's growth agenda, not only in the building phase but also in the longer term - by increasing the capacity of affordable housing development in the City.

The location of this development proposal has been carefully chosen to meet the needs of the project/ clients, in a location selected to ensure minimal impact on its surroundings. The design of the proposed development has been adjusted to take account of local residents' comments and is reflective of the massing of surrounding buildings. The design of the project will also meet on site energy production objectives as set out in policy CS20.

Representations

A site notice has been posted and neighbouring properties notified of the application. This has resulted in receipt of 20 letters of representation (L.O.R.'s), including one from councillors Ball and Stark, a local ward members, which contains a petition signed by 138 people opposing the proposal and another from Cllr Watkins (Cabinet Member for Children & Young People) supporting the proposal:-

Member Referral Cllr. Ball - I must register a "Call In" to ensure that the Planning Application for the former Compton Depot is determined by the Planning Committee after hearing from those who object to the development.

There are a significant number of residents, who live close to the former Depot, who have been in touch with me to voice their concerns.

The Residents have serious reservations about traffic access, a marked increase in the number of vehicles using a road where little facility exists for extra traffic and a significant increase in the requirement for vehicle parking.

Moreover, and because of the sensitivity of the this programme, I am concerned that the Consultation exercise may not have covered every negative aspect of this proposed development but could have placed a biased emphasis of the benefits - therefore failing to achieve a balanced view.

There is also a deep concern amongst residents that the general Mannamead area is rapidly becoming overloaded with managed multiple occupancy establishments. The City Council abandoned the "Saturation Policy" that might, in the past, have mitigated the profligacy of one type of business in an area – now no protection exists within the City's Constitution from such over exploitation.

- This is a quiet residential area. Placing a refuge in its midst is beyond belief
- Insufficient place for children's play - concern that if insufficient space is provided it will be displaced into the communal grounds of adjacent flats disturb the peace and quiet of the area
- Parking in the area is difficult

Councillor Joan Watkins - if this application goes before full Committee I intend to speak at the Planning Meeting in support of the application.

The other LORs can be summarised as follows:-

Inadequate access and parking

The access road to the site is from a dangerous corner where numerous accidents have already occurred. The volume of traffic using the top end of the cul-de-sac has increased substantially in recent years particularly staff visiting Halcrow Engineering Consultancy and the Design Development architectural practice. With additional users / fire engines /ambulances turning into limited space there is the potential for a serious head -on collision. Increasing traffic flows in the area, and this particular junction, seems irresponsible (a set of photographs which show the narrowness of the junction on the upper part of Lower Compton Road is enclosed)

Six parking spaces, two reserved for use by people with disabilities, is insufficient for staff, residents and visitors. Parking is at a premium. Roads in the area are over-parked with local services - residential care homes, doctors' surgeries, business allotments and special schools. The area is already heavily congested and the road is frequently completely full of parked cars. Inevitably with much increased traffic entering what is effectively a 'dead end' there will be further congestion and parking issues. Adding 31 bed spaces

and 8 staff plus their visitors' and the inevitable number of support services will make the existing problems intolerable.

We have a garage directly opening onto Lower Compton Road will make it impossible to use, if a car is parked opposite as the road is quite narrow.

Over concentration of institutional uses / additional pressure on services

Fully support the principle of a refuge of this kind, but do not consider this site to be a suitable location for it in view of the restrictive size of the plot and concentration of residential institutional uses - such as care homes, and multi let properties and charity homes - in the area. The refuge should be sited in an area of the city where few care homes and hostels already exist. The number and scale of these developments is now altering fundamentally the whole character of the area in a way that will put pressure on other local facilities - schools, children's' playgrounds, doctor's practices and social services provision. Wish to object in the strongest possible terms. Granting approval to this new proposal will only serve to exacerbate the situation further and will place excessive pressure on both local infrastructure and services.

The application is being made on the basis that there is a need for the service to be provided. It is beyond the remit of the city council and should be dealt with in some other way.

Design & appearance

The proposed building is totally out of keeping with the area. It is not of an appropriate type, form, scale, mix and density in relation to its location

The building will be much higher than what is currently built there. It will be second only to the church as the largest building in the area and dominate the adjacent block of flats. The developers seem to be cramming too much into an already fully developed area fails to see how it will make a positive contribution to the character of the area. It appears to be overdevelopment.- out of proportion to the existing buildings.

The surrounding close density buildings are finished in soft brick. A four storey building with lilac paintwork will stand out like a sore thumb against the brick built blocks of Mannamead Court Rosevean Court. The use of metal grills is out of keeping with the area. There is no green landscaping to soften the harsh affects.

The so-called 'south facing playground' is nothing more than a well in the middle of the building which will be unsuitable when it is raining, only getting sun in the middle of the day. Outside play space wholly inadequate for number of occupants. There could be a substantial number of children wide range from 0 to 16.

The building could look quite smart in the right setting but it is feared that it might stand out and dominate the area. It looks like an office block / hostel or other commercial building. A smaller building would fit in and be less of an

eyesore. The building is directly on the road and not set back. It would extend over the pavement dripping water over the pedestrians when it rains. Reconsider the size and shape of the building before giving planning permission

The appearance of the buildings is 'defensible' it will be obvious that it is not an ordinary block of flats. These types of buildings are supposed to be discrete. The design of the building will mitigate against residents having any real prospect of being part of the community.

Extra noise and disturbance

We are appalled that such a project was ever envisaged for Mannamead. In our opinion it will lead to social problems in the future. The refuge fills us with dread when we think about the noise we can expect from arguing parents, shouting children and skateboards. We do not want potentially violent people with social problems outside the site. The area is poorly lit. There will be call outs to the police if angry people come to the premises. For everyone's safety a unit like this should be highly visible on a main and not tucked in a dark back street

This has always been a quiet residential suburb. The cumulative effect of existing developments has already been to raise disturbance and noise levels to an unacceptable level on many occasions. The proposal will increase the noise, in what is currently a peaceful residential location with predominantly mature and elderly residents. There will be noise day and night from residents with 24 hour access for staff/ residents / emergency vehicles

Impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties

The proposed building shows windows on all sides. These will overlook flats and gardens in Mannamead Court, gardens in Compton Park Road , gardens in Lower Compton Road and flats and gardens in the Rosevean complex . The west elevation is within 12 m of the immediate neighbour's boundary - which is less than the planning guidelines.

Loss of Tree

It does not make sense to remove the only tree on the boundary. No one should touch our lovely tree. The sycamore tree does not require extensive lopping. There is really only one limb 'over the wall' and there is a root protection zone that is not in the control of the developers

Miscellaneous

The site is undervalued at £100,000. It should be £150,000- £200,000. I object to the valuation as a council tax payer. It should be sold on the open market for residential development and the proceeds put back into the city council's coffers.

Double standards planning permission garden Compton Park. In its dealings the Local Planning authority should be seen to be acting even handily. A buyer of my building plot opposite has pulled out when he found out about this proposal. The price of my house will depreciate. I have lived in my house

since 1972 and seen such a lot of building – I'm sure that this will destroy the area.

Concerned about the capacity of the old drains to cope with the extra water and sewerage Requires more adequate street lighting.

The site is too small and meets few basic needs

Analysis

Human Rights Act - The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, and in particular Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 of the Act itself. This Act gives further effect to the rights included in the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance.

- The principle of providing a priority supported housing project for families on this site (policies CS01, CS04, and CS15 of the Core Strategy)
- The design and appearance of the proposed development including the adequacy of the play space (Policy CS02, CS20, CS32 and CS34 of the Core Strategy)
- Impact upon the residential amenity of the neighbouring residential property (Policy CS34 of the Core Strategy)
- Impact upon the character of the conservation area, adjacent listed building and tree (Policy CS03 and Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy)
- Community Benefits / Planning Obligations arising from this development (Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy)
- The adequacy of access and parking arrangements (Policy CS28 of the Core Strategy)

The principle of providing a priority supported housing project for families on this site

The site is currently vacant, but was formerly a council depot. That depot has now been relocated to another site within Plymouth. Notwithstanding the fact that Hartley and Mannamead Sustainable Neighbourhood Assessment identifies the area as providing few local job opportunities, the loss of the existing employment use – the Core Strategy policy CS05 (development of existing sites) consideration – and its' redevelopment to provide specialist residential accommodation can be accepted on the grounds that there are clear sustainable community benefits in meeting one of the City's strategic priority housing need objectives.

The location of this development proposal has been carefully chosen to meet the needs of the project/ clients, in a location selected to ensure minimal impact on its surroundings. Although a number of local residents perceive there to be an overconcentration of residential institutions/ supported housing

premises in the area, and have raised this as one of their main reasons for objecting to the application, the survey evidence does not support this contention. The National data base identifies a total of 4,835 properties as being within half a mile radius of the site. Of these residential institutions/ supported housing premises make up just 17 of these - less than 1%.

The proposed affordable residential units would be provided with low level support and is intended to provide temporary accommodation for vulnerable families. School allocations for children within those families will be assessed on a case by case basis, but no automatic priority will be given to the development's resident children, over other local children in the local school catchment area.

The proposed use, 'Priority supported housing project for families', falls within the C2 (residential institution category) of the use Classes Order. Use of the building by a different client group, within that use class category, would be possible without further planning permission. The view that use by a different client group raises 'wholly different considerations' that should be 'safeguarded' against is not shared. Government advice is clear that Local Planning Authorities should not seek to further sub divide use classes, by narrowly proscribing uses, unless there is sound planning justification for doing so. In this case the proposal has been designed with a specific client group in mind, and is most likely to be used for that client group in the foreseeable future, but alternate clients would not raise substantially different planning considerations. In practical terms, using a condition to restrict the approved use within a use class would simply be to make it more difficult for Spectrum, or subsequent owners, to use the property as an accounting asset when they raising funds.

The design and appearance of the proposed development

The existing depot buildings make little positive contribution towards the street scene, with none being of sufficient architectural merit to justify retention.

The proposed building has been designed specifically for this site to take into account the constraints and opportunities it provides. The highest three / four storey element is located on the eastern side where its' scale and mass would give the building sufficient presence on the street corner to compliment the large three storey flats blocks that surround the site to the north and east. The lower, predominantly two storey element, mediates the transition between the flats and the more domestic scale of the Victorian villa to the west. The ground floor elevation comprises stone walls, ventilation grills and gates. This presents a defensive exterior appearance which aligns with the stone boundary wall of the neighbouring Victorian Villa and in many ways echoes the high stone garden boundary walls and garage openings on the southern side of lower Compton Road, opposite. The horizontal emphasis is followed through at first floor level which, because level differences, aligns with the ground floor of the neighbouring villa. Fenestration details are carefully considered with contrasting feature panels used to create rectilinear openings in a deliberative pattern that is neither random or symmetric. The result is elevations that exude a lively playfulness of bespoke architectural expression.

Satisfying the applicants' requirements for an 11 bed hostel building on a fairly small, suburban, regeneration site, whilst designing a distinctive building that positively contributes to such a diverse exiting townscape is challenging. It is considered that the applicant's architects have exceeded the requirements of Policies CS02 (Design) and CS34 (Planning Application Considerations) and designed a quality building that would be among the best in the area.

Design of proposed residential environment including the adequacy of the play space

The proposal has a number of specific design requirements. It must provide an attractive living environment for the users, both the vulnerable client group and the staff who work with them, whilst providing a secure, safe, refuge in a homely domestic environment. It is considered that the proposed design meets these requirements, although some residual concerns remain about the institutional character of long, artificially lit, corridors on the north west corner of the first floor. Private and public realms are clearly defined with access funnelled through the ground floor gateway, where it can easily be monitored and controlled by staff. This 'defensive' arrangement makes unauthorised access extremely difficult and fully satisfies the requirements of the Police Architectural Liaison officer.

All the residential accommodation is proposed on the upper floors where it follows the general conventions of domestic house layout. The communal rooms, and south facing courtyard, are located on the western side of the first floor where there is space for families to socialise and cook together and for children to play. This leaves the eastern part of the building as the dormitory wing where three floors of bedrooms, in diminishing tiers, allow private sleeping space. The proposal will exceed the 20% 'Lifetime Homes' standard by providing 2 of the 11 units as fully accessible for people with disabilities

The level of external amenity space provided in the central courtyard and smoking area is limited, but considered to be adequate given the temporary nature of residential stays. The Development Guidelines SPD makes some reference to external amenity space in section 2.4 but does not provide useful guidance on the amount of external amenity space required for a residential institution of this kind. The suggestions that it should be of sufficient size to accommodate swings and trampolines are not considered to be helpful, as these are not accommodated in most gardens. Mutley Park is located 5 minutes walk away to the west and Hartley Pleasure Gardens 10 minutes walk away to the north.

The layout provides for light and airy rooms that satisfies the requirements and policy CS15.

The Design and Access statement that accompanies the submission confirms that the proposal will comply with Policy CS20 (Sustainable Resource use) and provide 15% on site renewable energy generation. Conditions to ensure that this is designed and installed are considered appropriate.

Impact upon the residential amenity of the neighbouring residential property

The proposed relationship with neighbouring with neighbouring property is considered to be satisfactory and in compliance with Policy CS34 (Planning Application Considerations).

There will be some overlooking of neighbouring property from the proposed development, but it will be overlooking from a distance. This type of overlooking is a common and accepted feature of the urban environment. Most of the habitable rooms have windows on the south or east elevations, where they primarily face towards the street and only at a distance neighbouring blocks of flats or gardens. No west facing windows are proposed on the boundary. West facing windows are confined to the third and fourth floors, set back from the boundary 11m and 15m respectively, and serving staff offices and corridors. They will afford side angled sight of the communal garden of Rosevean Court and, at a distance, the opposite flank elevation of the flats. This is an area that is mutually overlooked by opposite wings of the existing flats. The north facing windows shown are to be obscure glazed and/or high level. Their purpose is to provide light to service corridors and store rooms. They do not serve habitable rooms.

The third and fourth floors of the proposed building have been located roughly opposite to the side elevation of the neighbouring Rosevean Court flats which contains no windows. This arrangement uses the layout of neighbouring property and the difference in levels to ensure that the height and mass of the proposed building does not cause excessive overshadowing to neighbours.

Concerns have been raised that the proposed use will attract public order offences/disturbances – however this concern is not borne out by evidence. Police call out evidence from the existing priority supported housing premises shows 23 police call outs (requiring immediate site attendance) in the last 14 years of operation. This compares to 12 police call outs (requiring immediate attention) in the same period to the application site maintenance depot premises.

Impact upon the character of the conservation area and off site tree

The Manamead conservation area is located to the south and the west, but is sufficiently distant from the proposed development for it not to affect the character and setting of the area. The proposal does not conflict with Policy CS03 (Historic Environment) of the adopted Core strategy.

The entire red lined application site is covered by buildings or hard tarmac surface, but there is a small area of landscaped verge land between the site and the link road to the east that is in separate ownership. This land contains a semi- mature sycamore tree, and shrubs and is bounded on the western side by a 2-3m high brick wall which steps up with the rising land.

Having explored the implications of designing a building in a way that allows retention of the tree, the applicants concluded that it would be better if the tree

were removed and the area landscaped. This was shown on the original submission drawing. It had the advantage of allowing secondary high level windows be proposed at ground floor level on the eastern elevation of the proposed building, providing better natural light to the staff office / kitchen and reducing the shading to the proposed cycle storage and smoking areas.

However, during the course of consideration of the application it became apparent that the applicants do not control this piece of land and are not in a position to remove the tree or demolish the wall. Amended plans have therefore been sought which show the proposed development contained wholly within the red lined site area with the tree untouched, other than the removal of overhanging branches. (estimated, by the applicant, at approx. 50%)

The tree is not specifically protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and is not located in a conservation area. Consequently there are no planning constraints to prevent it being felled or lopped. But under Policy CS18 (Plymouth's green space) there is a general commitment for the LPA to use its planning powers to safeguard important trees and hedgerows, and to secure provision for soft landscaping where appropriate as part of development.

The tree is pleasant and makes a positive contribution towards the character of the street. Approving a development proposal so close to it will, in all probability, suppress its future growth potential and compromise its contribution to the street scene. But, this is a common sycamore tree and these concerns are not, on balance, considered sufficient to justify either a refusal or further radical redesign of the proposal.

The adequacy of access and parking arrangements

The policy framework for consideration of the adequacy of parking and access arrangements is set out in Policy CS34 (Planning Application considerations) of the Adopted core strategy which states:-

Planning permission will be granted if all relevant considerations are properly addressed. These will include whether the development
8. Provides for safe and satisfactory access and making a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use

The Highway Authority's view that the proposed arrangements are satisfactory is shared. In physical terms relocating the vehicular access away from the corner further to the west, along Lower Compton Road, and segregating the pedestrian entrance improves upon the existing layout.

The site has been vacant for two years, and locals have grown used to it being quiet, but previously it was a council housing depot. In that use there were 4 permanent staff based at the premises, and an average of 6 maintenance vehicles operated from it. About 10 staff also used the premises as their base for off site operations. It is not considered that the proposed use will significantly increase the number of vehicle movements in the area.

The proposed use is unlikely to attract significantly greater levels of traffic. It is well located in relation to public transport, local shops and facilities and the circumstances of prospective residents mean that most are unlikely to have private cars. Limited on site parking is proposed for dropping off and collection, parking for people with disabilities and for staff some of whom will be working night shifts. However, contrary to objectors' perceptions, surrounding streets do not suffer from excessive congestion and are not particularly dangerous. Accident statistics data records just one slight accident in the last 5 years (attributed to driver error). It is considered that the proposal satisfies the requirements of policy CS34 in respect of proposed access and parking arrangements.

Section 106 Obligations

The proposal generates no contribution requirements under the Council's Planning Obligations and affordable housing SPD. It proposes a public facility and is exempt from tariff contribution. But S106 clause to ensure that it remains as 'affordable' housing is required and sought.

Equalities & Diversities issues

The accommodation has been designed to be accessible to people with disabilities with two rooms specially equipped to meet their needs.

Many of the clients housed in the facility will be among the most vulnerable sections of the community in the city and there is much merit in delivering specialist residential accommodation that is safe and attractive whilst they rebuild their lives.

Conclusions

The existing accommodation occupied by the 'Priority supported housing project for families' is less than ideal. The provision of a purpose built facility, built to an attractive design on a disused council housing depot, realises, in tangible form, our commitment to building sustainable linked communities that: improve health well being and social care of local; people, reduce inequalities and help people at all stages of their life to enjoy the best possible health.

Recommendation

In respect of the application dated **15/10/2010** and the submitted drawings, **09715/EX-01;09715_EX02; 09715_EX03; 09715_EX04; 09715_EX08; 09715_EX09; 09715_EX10; 09715_SD09A; 09715_SD10A; 09715_SD11A; 09715_SD12A; 09715_SD13A 09715_SD22; 09715_SD_06; 09715_SD_05B; 09715_SD04J; 09715_SD03K and 09715_SD02J** , it is recommended to: **Grant conditionally subject to S106 Obligation, delegated authority to refuse if not signed by 30th January 2011**

Conditions

DEVELOPMENT TO COMMENCE WITHIN 3 YEARS

(1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years beginning from the date of this permission.

Reason:

To comply with Section 51 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

APPROVED PLAN NUMBERS

(2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans

09715/EX-01;09715_EX02; 09715_EX03; 09715_EX04; 09715_EX08;
09715_EX09; 09715_EX10; 09715_SD09A; 09715_SD10A; 09715_SD11A;
09715_SD12A; 09715_SD13A 09715_SD22; 09715_SD_06; 09715_SD_05B;
09715_SD04J; 09715_SD03K and 09715_SD02J.

Reason:- To ensure that the development accords strictly with the submitted plans hereby approved in accordance with policy CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

EXTERNAL MATERIALS

(3) No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that the materials used are in keeping with the character of the area in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

SURFACING MATERIALS

(4) No development shall take place until details of all surfacing materials to be used have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that the materials used are in keeping with the character of the area in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN PROPOSALS

(5) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works and a programme for their implementation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include

Reason:

To ensure that satisfactory landscaping works are carried out in accordance with Policies CS18 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

LANDSCAPE WORKS IMPLEMENTATION

(6) All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that satisfactory landscaping works are carried out in accordance with Policies CS18 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021)2007.

DETAILS OF BOUNDARY TREATMENT

(7) No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed before the developemnt is first occupied. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that the details of the development are in keeping with the standards of the vicinity in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

REFUSE PROVISION

(8) Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied bins for disposal of refuse shall be provided on site in accordance with the approved plan. The refuse storage provision shall henceforth permanently made available for future occupiers of the site.

Reason: In order to ensure that adequate, safe and convenient refuse storage provision is provided and made available for use by future occupiers in accordance with Sustainable Design SPD.

CODE OF PRACTICE DURING CONSTRUCTION

(9) During development of the scheme approved by this planning permission, the developer shall comply with the relevant sections of the Public Protection Service, Code of Practice for Construction and Demolition Sites, with particular regards to the hours of working, crushing and piling operations, control of mud on roads and the control of dust.

Reason: The proposed site is in immediate vicinity to existing residential properties, whose occupants will likely be disturbed by noise and/or dust during demolition or construction work and to avoid conflict with Policy CS22 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

SOUND INSULATION OF BUILDINGS

(10) The development should be built in such a way that the habitable rooms meet BS8233:1999 Good Room criteria

Reason: To protect the residents from unwanted noise, after occupation of the building.

PROVISION OF PARKING AREA

(11) Each parking space shown on the approved plans shall be constructed, drained, surfaced and made available for use before the unit of accommodation that it serves is first occupied and thereafter that space shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles.

Reason:

To enable vehicles used by occupiers or visitors to be parked off the public highway so as to avoid damage to amenity and interference with the free flow of traffic on the highway in accordance with Policies CS28 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021)2007.

CYCLE PROVISION

(12) No dwelling shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plan for 8 bicycles to be parked.

Reason:

In order to promote cycling as an alternative to the use of private cars in accordance with Policy CS28 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

APPROVAL EXTERNAL LIGHTING SCHEME

(13) Full details of an external lighting scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of work. The lighting scheme shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the building.

Reason:

To ensure adequate and attractive lighting arrangements are in place prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.

LIFETIME HOMES

(14) Notwithstanding the submitted drawings, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, at least 20% of the residential units hereby permitted shall be first constructed and subsequently maintained to Lifetime Homes standards.

Reason:

In order to meet the needs of disabled people so that they may live as part of the community in accordance with adopted City of Plymouth Core Strategy Objective 10, Policy CS15 and relevant Central Government advice.

COMMUNAL CAR PARKING PROVISION

(15) No dwelling shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plan for a maximum of 6 cars to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear.

Reason:

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, although some provision needs to be made, the level of car parking provision should be limited in order to assist the promotion of sustainable travel choices in accordance with Policy CS28 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

CYCLE STORAGE

(16) The secure area for storing cycles shown on the approved plan shall remain available for its intended purpose and shall not be used for any other purpose without the prior consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that there are secure storage facilities available for occupiers of or visitors to the building, in accordance with Policies CS28 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

FURTHER DETAILS

(17) No work shall commence on site until details of the following aspects of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, viz:- reinstatement of footway, kerb-line, vehicle crossing & dropped pram crossings; including plan and section drawings showing levels, construction details, and materials, for approval. The works shall conform to the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that these further details are acceptable to the Local Planning Authority and that they are in keeping with the standards of the vicinity.

LIFETIME HOMES

(18) Notwithstanding the submitted drawings, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, at least 20% of the residential units hereby permitted shall be first constructed and subsequently maintained to Lifetime Homes standards.

Reason:

In order to meet the needs of disabled people so that they may live as part of the community in accordance with adopted City of Plymouth Core Strategy Objective 10, Policy CS15 and relevant Central Government advice.

REPORTING UNEXPECTED CONTAMINATION

(19) In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in

writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken. The report of the findings must include:

(i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination;

(ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:

- human health,
- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes,
- adjoining land,
- groundwaters and surface waters,
- ecological systems,
- archeological sites and ancient monuments;

(iii) an appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of the preferred option(s).

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.

Where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report (referred to in PPS23 as a validation report) that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

REINSTATEMENT OF FOOTWAY

(20) The development shall not be brought into use until the existing footway crossing (now redundant) has been removed and the footway reinstated.

Reason:

In the interests of public safety, convenience and amenity in accordance with Policies CS28 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

FURTHER DETAILS

(21) No work shall commence on site until details of the following aspects of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, viz:- reinstatement of footway, kerb-line, vehicle crossing & dropped pram crossings; including plan and section drawings showing levels, construction details, and materials, for approval. The works shall conform to the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that these further details are acceptable to the Local Planning Authority and that they are in keeping with the standards of the vicinity in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

WINDOWS ON THE NORTHERN ELEVATION

(22) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), all windows on the northern elevation of the proposed development shall be either high level or obscure glazed prior to occupation and permanently maintained in that condition. Reason:- To prevent overlooking of neighbouring residential property and protect amenities.

DIRECT IMPACT ON HMPE

(1) The proposed development work would have a direct impact on the structure of the Highway Maintainable at Public Expense and the applicant would need to contact the managers of the highway network who would authorise and oversee the works in the highway, which should be facilitated by way of a licence and fees in accordance with this authorities procedure for the construction of a Commercial Vehicle Crossings (In the first instance contact the 'Street Care Coordinator' on 01752 237949).

CODE OF PRACTICE

(2) A copy of the Public Protection Service, Code of Practice for Construction and Demolition Sites is available from <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/pollution/noise/construction.htm> or on request from the Environmental Protection and Monitoring Team.

Statement of Reasons for Approval and Relevant Policies

Having regard to the main planning considerations, which in this case are considered to be:

- The principle of providing a priority supported housing project for families on this site
 - The design and appearance of the proposed development including the adequacy of the play space
 - Impact upon the residential amenity of the neighbouring residential property
 - Impact upon the character of the conservation area, adjacent listed building and tree
 - Community Benefits / Planning Obligations arising from this development
 - The adequacy of access and parking arrangements
- , the proposal is not considered to be demonstrably harmful. In the absence of any other overriding considerations, and with the imposition of the specified conditions, the proposed development is acceptable and complies with (a) policies of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-

2021) 2007 and supporting Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents (the status of these documents is set out within the City of Plymouth Local Development Scheme) and the Regional Spatial Strategy (until this is statutorily removed from the legislation) and (b) relevant Government Policy Statements and Government Circulars, as follows:

PPG13 - Transport
PPG25 - Flood Risk
PPS3 - Housing
PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS23 - Planning & Pollution Control
CS28 - Local Transport Consideration
CS32 - Designing out Crime
CS33 - Community Benefits/Planning Obligation
CS34 - Planning Application Consideration
CS20 - Resource Use
CS21 - Flood Risk
CS22 - Pollution
CS03 - Historic Environment
CS01 - Sustainable Linked Communities
CS02 - Design
CS15 - Housing Provision
PPS5 - Planning for the Historic Environment