

Delegated or Committee Planning Application Report and Report of handling as required by Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 relative to applications for Planning Permission or Planning Permission in Principle

Reference No: 10/01302/PP

Planning Hierarchy: Local Application

Applicant: Mr and Mrs P Cairns

Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse and associated works

Site Address: Ground to the North of Dean House, East Abercromby Street,
Helensburgh

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT NO 2

1.0 SUMMARY

Members will recall that this application was continued from the January meeting to enable dialogue to be entered into between the Council's conservation officer and the applicant/agent, in order to be able address conservation issues in full prior to the application being considered by Members at a local hearing. The purpose of this supplementary report is to advise Members of a subsequent meeting held on Wednesday 9th February 2011 between planning staff, including the Built Heritage conservation Officer and Mr. Rob Sills, the applicants' architect. Set out below is a summary of Mr. Sills' comments on the issues raised at the meeting and comments from the Council's Built Heritage Conservation Officer.

Applicants' Architect (e-mail dated 11 February 2011):

Given all that has gone before, you will appreciate our reluctance, at this very late stage, to alter any significant aspect of what are very carefully considered proposals. That said there are some areas where we may be able to make some relatively minor changes without prejudicing our design.

Tarmac is used for vehicle parking and turning areas extensively throughout the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area. I agree however that it is not the most attractive of materials so, if you are able to suggest a suitable and cost effective alternative material suitable for wheelchair traffic, we will gladly consider its use. Meantime I shall alter the note on the drawing to read "Tarmac or other suitable material to be agreed with the Planning Office". A suitably worded condition could then be attached to the Planning Consent.

We would be happy to discuss the type and extent of any boundary fencing and again this could be covered by a note on the drawing and a suitably worded condition on the Planning consent.

In terms of tree removal, I think you referred to this at the meeting and I drew your attention to the fact that the matter had been resolved with the Planning Authority some

time ago. I would refer you to item 4.1.4 of the Response to Representation document for a detailed explanation of the circumstances pertaining to the trees in question.

The applicants have no desire to include a gate in the proposals but I agree with you that the damaged gate pillar should be reinstated. We shall add a note to the relevant drawing to that effect.

The hard and soft landscaping specified in our Design Statement and illustrated on the site layout drawing has all been carefully selected, having been used successfully on previous projects in the area and we would resist making any changes to them.

With regard to wall finishes we originally specified a large proportion of render relieved by a limited amount of high quality cast stone as external wall finishes. The proportion of cast stone was subsequently increased, the proportion of render decreased, and some areas of Siberian Larch cladding introduced following our discussions with the Planning Officers prior to the submission of our revised proposals. We are now perfectly happy with the proposals as they are, but may reluctantly consider removing the cast stone altogether (other than as the base course). However we would only be agreeable to this late change if it were able to be dealt with as a non material variation and did not result in a further consultation period. As regards the type of render to be used, our preference is for a high performance textured polymer based material such as we have used recently elsewhere in the Helensburgh and Rhu Conservation Areas, rather than a cementitious or lime based product. We could however, if necessary, and to allow time for further discussion, cover the final approval of the actual material by a condition on the planning consent.

Built Heritage Conservation Officer (e-mail dated 17 February 2011):

Context

The first indication of a property on this site appears between 1896 – 1900. According to the historic maps the house has undergone 4 significant periods of alteration. Originally there was a conservatory on the west side of the house and a glass house type structure to the rear of the building on the west side, the current garage first features on historic maps between 1918 – 1922. The original conservatory and glass house no longer exist; in their place is a relatively modern carport and timber shed.

The position of Dean House within the boundary walls is such that a symmetrical compartment around the house is created. Within the plot the house sits on a central axis that is still aligned to the rear entrance. The two mature “guard” trees that were recently removed from either side of the rear entrance were an important part of this design and the setting of the house. These alterations have contributed to erosion of architectural merit and of the spatial relationship described above. The absence of any official listing from Historic Scotland reflects the significance of the alterations and the perceived “erosion” of the original design.

When considering a new development in a conservation area, its ability to be absorbed into the conservation area without eroding (or further eroding) its special character will be a primary consideration. Amongst other factors, this consideration will take into account the proposed developments impact on and location within the conservation area and surrounding streetscape. Dean House and East Rossdhu Drive sit on the northeast boundary of the conservation area, bound by the railway line and adjacent modern development. The streetscape of East Rossdhu Drive has been significantly impacted by a mix of modern development and conversion over recent years.

Guidance

Argyll and Bute Council has a statutory duty to protect and enhance conservation areas and has adopted the Helensburgh Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Argyll &

Bute's Sustainable Design Guidance as supplementary planning guidance to help manage new development in the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal sets out a detailed explanation of the special characteristics of the conservation area, with regards to the historic built environment these are as follows:

The grid pattern of the street layout.

Large south facing villas set in spacious designed grounds (often containing glasshouses and ancillary buildings to the rear).

The repetition of a tree lined streetscape.

The eclectic mix of Victorian, Edwardian and Arts and Crafts Architecture.

Significant boundary walls, hedges, trees.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal, in section 7.3, *Current development issues and the design of new-build*, discusses the challenges facing development in the conservation area and recommends consulting Argyll & Bute's Sustainable Design Guidance (volume 3 working with the historic built environment, p47 "upper Helensburgh Conservation area") for anyone considering development in the conservation area. In this guidance Helensburgh's distinctive spatial arrangement is discussed and the potential to develop to the rear of large villas is proposed as being possible, depending on location, design, scale and massing.

Impact of current proposal

Potentially the most significant impact of this proposal on the conservation area is the loss of the important spatial relationship between the main house and its designed grounds, an arrangement which is normally considered a key characteristic of the conservation area. Additionally there will be the introduction of a sizable natural slate roof with dormer window and velux windows to a streetscape already impacted by backland development. Also part of the rendered walls will be visible above the boundary walls and, from the entrance, the tarmac drive will be visible as well as the south east part of the new development.

With regards to design my main concerns are the scale of the development, the prominence of the large dormer window, the simulated cast stone and the surrounding hardscaping. I have made various suggestions regarding render, slates, hard and soft scaping materials. The applicants and their agent have agreed to changes to some of the materials proposed: render in place of cast stone and alternative hardscaping materials but they are unwilling to alter the scale of the design or the dormer window. Should the final recommendation be for approval, the changes to the proposed materials will help to ameliorate the integration of this development to the conservation area, however this would be further achieved by the scaling back of the dormer or a simpler roof design.

Conclusion:

In determining this application I consider that the key issues that require to be taken into account are as follows. Firstly, whether the loss of the original setting of Dean House will have an adverse effect on the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the area. Secondly, that the site layout and building orientation reflects those characteristic of the area and that the materials and building methods which are to be used are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings. Thirdly, that the building height and general roof form reflects existing dwellings in the street. Finally, that the development respects the scale of neighbouring buildings (*Note: It is not within my remit as Conservation Officer to consider whether or not the proposed new house might have an adverse impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties*).

2.0 ASSESSMENT

The applicants have amended the original design of the proposed house on this site. Following a meeting with the Built Heritage Conservation Officer further changes to finishing materials are proposed. These include an increase in an appropriate render on the walls of the proposed house, a partial reduction in the area of tarmac on the driveway and substitution with an agreed material and a more traditional boundary treatment. These can be covered by a non-material amendment to the drawings and appropriate conditions.

The comments of the Built Heritage Conservation Officer are noted. The changes suggested above will add to the overall design which is considered acceptable in terms of massing and scale. As such my recommendation to approve remains unchanged.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and that planning permission be approved as per the conditions set out overleaf.

Angus J Gilmour
Head of Planning & Regulatory Services
18 February 2011

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CONDITIONS AND REASONS RELATIVE TO APPLICATION 10/01302/PP

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun within three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

2. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details specified on the application form dated 30/07/2010 and the approved drawing reference numbers 485/PA1A, 485/PA2A, 485/PA3A, 485/PA4A, 485/PA5A, 485/PA6A and 485/PA7A unless the prior written approval of the planning authority is obtained for other materials/finishes/for an amendment to the approved details under Section 64 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Reason: For the purpose of clarity, to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with the approved details.

3. Development shall not begin until samples of materials to be use (on external surfaces of the buildings and/or in constriction of hard standings/walls/fences) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Development shall thereafter be carried out using the approved materials or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to integrate the development into its surroundings.

4. No development shall be commenced until details of the surface water drainage system to be incorporated into the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Such measures shall show separate means for the disposal of foul and surface water, and the provision of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) The scheme shall be prepared in accordance with the advice given in Planning Advice Note 61 (PAN 61) 'Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' and the 'SuDS Design Manual' (CIRIA C697). The development shall be implemented in accordance with the duly approved surface water drainage system.

Reason: To ensure that an acceptable scheme of surface water drainage is implemented.

5. Prior to the commencement of development the developer shall submit written evidence to the Planning Authority that an agreement with Scottish Water is in place for the connection of the proposed development to the public water supply (and/or public sewer).

Reason: In the interests of public health and to ensure the availability of an adequate water supply (and/or drainage system) to serve the proposed development.

6. The new vehicle access should be surfaced in a bituminous or other approved material details of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to works commencing on site. In addition, the existing drainage ditch along the verge should be maintained in perpetuity at the crossing point.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

NOTES TO APPLICANT

1. In order to comply with Section 27A(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, prior to works commencing on site it is the responsibility of the developer to complete and submit the attached 'Notice of Initiation of Development' to the Planning Authority specifying the date on which the development will start.
2. In order to comply with Section 27B(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 it is the responsibility of the developer to submit the attached 'Notice of Completion' to the Planning Authority specifying the date upon which the development was completed.
3. Regard should be had to the enclosed consultation response from Scottish Water dated 19/08/2010.

It should be noted that the Planning Authority views this to be a 'no objection' response to the development proposal at the time of the consultation. It does not however guarantee that a connection will necessarily still be available at the time when it is proposed to implement this consent. In advance of development being commenced, direct contact should be made with Scottish Water to ascertain whether sufficient capacity still remains at that time in order to be able to secure a connection to the public water supply (and/or public sewer). Confirmation of the availability of a connection should be forwarded to the Planning Authority in order to satisfy the requirements of the condition above.

It should be noted that in the event that Scottish Water refuses a connection to the public water supply (and/or public sewer), the provision of an alternative private water supply (and or private foul drainage system) would be considered a material amendment to the approved details, and would require to be the subject of a further application for planning permission.

APPENDIX TO DECISION APPROVAL NOTICE

Appendix relative to application **10/01302/PP**

(A) Has the application required an obligation under Section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended)?

No

(B) Has the application been the subject of any “non-material” amendment in terms of Section 32A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) to the initial submitted plans during its processing?

No

(C) The reason why planning permission has been approved.

The proposed finishes are traditional and the proposed dwellinghouse has a hipped roof, single dormer window, irregular pattern of fenestration and an area of glazed roof and walls on the east/southeast elevation. It is considered that it would not have a detrimental impact on adjoining properties in terms of loss of amenity either in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy or daylight/sunlight. It will complement the existing Victorian architecture and in terms of the Council’s Sustainable Design Guidance the building would fit with the suggested approach to urban infill. While the building would have a different architectural style from surrounding properties, it is acceptable within this part of the conservation area which already has a mix of architectural styles.