

NOTES OF INFORMAL MEETING WITH NINE SQUARE TRUST ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2020

PRESENT: Councillor P. Goater (Chair)

Councillors: Axten, Birch, Carswell, D. Goater, Leafe, Napper and Prior

County Councillor Leyshon

J. Clothier, A. Harvey and B. Trickey – The Nine Square Trust

S. Thomas – Principal Planner with WYG

D. Evans – Master Planner with Clifton Emery Design

A. Wozniczco – Highways Consultant with AWP

The development team gave details on the deferral points. This was an outline application dealing only with the principle of development, the number of houses and access points. The master plan produced had been quite detailed but was only illustrative at this stage. It demonstrated how 280 houses could fit on the site together with the access, space for drainage, relationship with neighbours etc.

During the consultation on the application that had been 6 separate meetings with the Parish Council which was more than with much larger developments. A one day consultation event had been held and details had been available on the website. The applicants had responded to comments made with changes.

NORTHERN EDGE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH NEIGHBOURS

Comments had been made that the development would be overbearing and have potential for overlooking existing houses. With regard to the physical relationship between the buildings themselves it was acceptable to include gardens, roads, parking etc. Information on the buffer referred to the relationship between the properties. Initial proposals had been to provide back to back housing but following consultation, the blocks had been turned 90% so that the northern elevation with no windows faced existing houses. There would be an access road and wide buffer to create a bigger separation on the northern boundary. As there were bats in the area it needed to be a dark corridor with additional tree planting which would enhance the buffer between the existing and new houses. At the next stage the buildings along that edge could be designed to be really recessive with 1.5 storey accommodation using the roof space. The density at that edge of the site would be higher following good urban design principles as it was near existing housing. Also people would be closer to facilities and hence need to travel less and be encouraged to walk or cycle.

HIGHWAYS ISSUES

The vehicular and pedestrian access for the site would be on to Somerton Road which would be widened slightly to allow for a new footway on the western side to connect to the existing footway. There would be a new controlled pedestrian crossing and dropped kerbs. There would also be a pedestrian only connection to the west of the site on to Burleigh Lane. As there was no footway there a traffic regulation order would be made to restrict vehicle movements. An additional access for emergencies had been discussed. Quite a lot of residents had objected to this and it had been removed as it was not required.

The Planning Board had some issues with sites with only one access point and Mendip District Council had been asked to clarify this. Councillor Goater explained that developments of 300 houses or more were required to have a second access.

Keens Elm Lane had been raised as a concern if people used it to go to Glastonbury. Alternative journey times had been assessed and the route from Somerton Road to the A39 was quicker and shorter. Around 50% of traffic would be going towards Glastonbury as there was employment at other destinations. County Highways had not raised this as a concern. Millfield School were worried as students needed to cross the Lane to get to playing fields and it was already an issue. A. Wozniczco stated that the additional traffic generated would not add a significant risk.

PROVISION FOR EDUCATION

A new school was only required for a development of 400 + houses. There was no need for secondary provision. There was a need for provision of early years and primary places and a contribution of just under £2 million would be secured through a legal agreement. The Education Department was discussing provision with Mendip policy officers. County Councillor Leyshon explained that there was a concern that if the provision was accommodated in existing schools the funding might be spent with a bigger development on a new school. No site had been identified for additional nursery, primary or secondary provision. A Section 106 agreement was much more specific than the Community Infrastructure Levy, which was not operated in Mendip and the funding should be spent in Street. Schools did have catchment areas and those in the new houses would have precedence over others from outside the area.

NUMBERS AND DENSITY

D. Evans explained that the land rose up to the north and so would need a lower density. There was a requirement to have a large buffer between the development and the adjoining conservation area with listed gazebo. In view of the various constraints on the site it had been determined that 280 houses could be built.

Councillor Napper asked if some of the funding for education could be used to bring the library building back into use but others explained that this was a completely separate issue and good plans were in place for the future of the library. He also queried the distance between the new houses and those in Petvin Close and Clemence Road. S. Thomas explained that the distance between houses was more than generous at 28 to 40 metres. Normal distances would be around 20 metres. If houses were moved down further the drainage etc. would not be in the right place. This was not a material consideration in planning terms.

Councillor Axten thanked the Trust for listening to local people and acting on concerns. She asked that it continued to understand the views of people while looking at material considerations only.

SERVICES

Bristol Water had stated that there was sufficient capacity to supply the development and thus there would be no problem with water pressure. Provision of GPs and dentists was a much wider issue. A new surgery would only be provided for a much larger development. These were private businesses and it was their decision what provision they gave and where. Some new residents may already live in the area.

Councillor Leafe was concerned about the solution to deal with flooding issues. S. Thomas explained that the drainage scheme had been discussed and agreed with the local flood authority. There would be a pumping station and the existing situation with run off etc. would be improved.

Councillor Birch asked about a bus service for the site and was informed that these were run on a commercial basis and could not be controlled by the developer.

S. Thomas explained that there would be a written response to the deferral and then an amended application would be submitted. The Parish Council and neighbours would be able to comment on this. The development team would come to the next public meeting of the Council when a final decision was made. It was hoped that it would be considered by the Planning Board in April or May and all outstanding points would be covered.

Application 2019/2946/OTS - Land West of Somerton Road, Street



Changes made to the northern section of the scheme as requested by Street Parish Council and Mendip District Council



Key
3 Storeys
2.5 Storeys
2 Storeys

Key
1 Storey
2 Storey
2.5 Storey

Key changes made to address the impact with the neighbouring properties:

- New properties re-oriented north to south so that the smaller gable ends are facing towards the neighbours rather than larger principal elevations.
- Deeper section of hedge retained together with additional landscaping along northern boundary to increase overall depth and retain bat corridor.
- Internal access road positioned next to hedge to set properties further away from northern boundary and neighbours. This also provide access for future maintenance to ensure hedge is retained.
- Maximum scale (height) within northern section reduced from mix of 2 and 2.5 storey to maximum 2 storey.