Mr Paul Burgess
Bluecube Construction Ltd

WB/10/0038/FULL
CEN
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Location : 33 St. Matthew's Road

Proposal: Application for new planning permission to replace extant planning permission WB/07/0144/FULL (dated 29th March 2007) to demolish existing detached garage to rear of property and construction of new two storey detached dwelling with basement and off street parking.



Not to Scale

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1. THE PROPOSAL AND THE SITE

The application relates to the site of a double width pitched roof garage on the north side of St. Matthew's Road, close to the junction with Shakespeare Road, which previously formed part of the rear garden of a semi-detached Victorian property at No. 33 St. Matthew's Road. The existing structure is

beyond the gardens of Nos. 33 and 34 St. Matthew's Road with access from Shakespeare Road.

The immediate area is characterised by two-storey Victorian/Edwardian development forming a mix of terraces, semis and detached properties, and forms the north-east part of the Shakespeare Road Conservation Area. The adjoining properties in Shakespeare Road are local interest buildings, which display many original features such as timber sash windows, decorative brickwork dentil and stucco detail with repeated gable features on the frontages. The majority of surrounding buildings have also been defined as positive contributors to the Conservation Area.

Permission is sought to replace an extant planning permission granted on the 29th March 2007 for a two storey, partly subterranean dwelling on this plot, (WB/07/0144/FULL refers). It is proposed to demolish the existing garage and to erect a 2-storey 3-bedroom detached dwelling. It is believed that the existing demolition of the existing garage does not in itself require conservation area consent because its volume is less than 115 cubic metres. The applicant has been asked to confirm, with calculations, the exact volume and Members will be advised at the meeting. The garage itself has no merit of its own and is not of value to the conservation area.

The lower storey of the proposed house would be set underground so that the building would appear single-storey when viewed from adjacent ground levels and neighbouring properties. Members may remember seeing this application before. The Planning Committee of March 2007 overturned the Officers' recommendation to refuse permission for this dwelling and granted planning permission subject to conditions. Since that decision it is understood the site has been sold off as a separate plot.

The proposed house is contemporary in its design, with a simple parapet roof set at approximately 4 metres above ground level (the same height as the ridge of the roof on the existing garage). It would be finished in white render, with grey aluminium windows and an entrance feature column on the front corner with a projecting zinc-clad canopy above. The building would be rectangular, with the rear portion set down in height (to 3.3 metres above ground level) and finished in hardwood cladding. Three roof lights would be provided for additional light. The upper ground floor would receive light from both sides through high-level windows (and rear and front sets of patio/Juliet balcony doors); and the basement would gain light through a lightwell at the front (surrounded by glass guarding), and high-level windows just above ground floor level on the northern flank serving the bedroom, bathroom and en-suite.

An off-street parking space would be provided in front of the new dwelling, with ramped access into the building. The applicant's supporting statement suggests that to provide both the appearance of a garden and the function of car parking, this area could be constructed from 'polycarbonate honeycomb lattice' which when seeded, appears as a grassed area, but has sufficient robustness for vehicle hardstanding. It is also proposed to plant a mature

'pseudo acacia' tree within the frontage. The dwelling would be provided with decked side access and a rear decked garden area measuring approximately 2.8 x 5.6 metres.

2. APPLICANT'S DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

As this is an application to replace an extant permission no Design and Access Statement was submitted. The previous application was supported by the following statement:-

"DESIGN

Use

The proposed site will be formed from the sub-division of the existing garden area belonging to No. 33 St. Matthew's Road, Worthing and which is under the applicant's ownership. We believe that sub-division of the existing garden can be supported by the existing dwelling, because the original property is an end of terrace condition and is therefore provided with an additional side amenity space. It is calculated, that after development, the retained area of garden to the original dwelling (excluding the front garden) will be equal to 60m^2 and this is comparable to other surrounding garden amenity areas.

The allotted site area for the new dwelling is currently occupied in part by a dilapidated and disused single storey brick garage with asbestos sheet pitched roof. The garage is directly accessed from Shakespeare Road and a dropped kerb provision already exists for vehicular access. The garage is designed to house one car. Although the garage is proposed for demolition, the new proposed detached residential dwelling will afford one off street car parking space with access from Shakespeare Road to a dedicated forecourt area belonging solely to the proposal. Existing controlled zone parking provisions for No. 33 St. Matthew's Road, will remain unaffected immediately adjacent to the existing property entrance. However, the applicant is keen to promote and encourage car free parking on the site and local surrounding area and would therefore be willing to enter into an agreement with Worthing Borough Council, to provide additional cycle stands for the local community.

The proposed site resides within the Shakespeare Road Conservation Area which is an established residential area. In accordance with Local Plan Policy H1, the requirement to provide smaller and larger family sized dwellings in the Borough would, we believe, be met by the proposal.

The existing garage makes a poor design contribution to the streetscape along Shakespeare Road and holds no architectural merit for its retention. It is therefore considered that demolition of the garage to make way for a residential development would be welcomed. Local Plan Policy H2 requires that development of land should be considered in the context of it being the best and most efficient use of the land. Since the proposal resides within an established residential area, one must conclude that the proposal meets this Policy fully.

Importantly, the location of the site within a long established residential neighbourhood means that there already exists a broad range of community facilities within comfortable walking distance. Access to the proposal is well served by local public transport and in addition, off street car parking is provided by the proposal.

Access to the ground floor is by means of a ramped sequence approach. Both sets of access ramps would be constructed to a gradient of 1: 12 with landings at top and bottom equal to 1200mm in length and not less than 900mm wide. These access arrangements would fulfil both the criteria set out in the Lifetime Homes Standard and those stipulated within Pt.M of the Approved Documents.

The car parking forecourt area is designed to be wheelchair accessible and would be constructed to a gradient of 1:20. Vehicles parking on the forecourt would be provided with at least 900mm clearance to either side, so that vehicle occupants can easily alight.

Amount

The proposal is to form a two storey residential dwelling which, when viewed from surrounding adjacent ground levels and neighbouring properties, provides the appearance of being only single storey in nature. However, the building would be of sufficient scale to hold its own with the surrounding buildings and make an impact on the Shakespeare Road streetscape. Importantly, the proposed height of the building would be no higher than the ridge height of the existing garage proposed for demolition. To achieve this arrangement, the proposed internal accommodation is split over two floor levels; one being a basement level. The dwellings accommodation at ground floor level would comprise one double bedroom, a shower/ cloakroom, open plan kitchen and living room accommodation leading onto an external screened private amenity space. At basement level, two double bedrooms are proposed, one of which is en-suite, plus a family sized bathroom. In order to achieve good quality natural daylight to the basement accommodation, the ground floor has in part been raised relative to the existing surrounding external ground levels. This arrangement facilitates the introduction of windows at high level and also allows architectural feature alignments to be established with the neighbouring property No. 56 Shakespeare Road. These alignments are discussed later under the Appearance section of this document.

The proposed site area measured to the existing and new boundary line across the garden of No. 33 St. Matthew's Road, measures approximately 114m^2. The proposed gross ground floor area (excluding entrance ramps and side access circulation) measures approximately 50m^2, whilst the basement gross area including lightwell footprint and pumping room measures 61 m^2.

The existing garage volume measures 101 m^3. Measured to the proposed internal finished floor of the ground floor and taken to the top of the proposed parapet line, the ground floor building volume measures 181 m^3.

Overall, the building measures 11.920m long by 4.530m wide and this equates to a total footprint area of 54m^2. By comparison, the existing garage proposed for demolition measures 5.920m long by 5.530m wide and this equates to a total footprint area of 32.73m^2.

Importantly, the width of the proposed dwelling is 1.0m narrower than the existing garage and this helps to provide a more favourable outlook for the flank windows at ground floor level belonging to No. 56 Shakespeare Road.

Layout

Careful consideration has been given toward the positioning of the proposal on the site, so that its impact is minimised and not overbearing on neighbouring properties. Analysis of the existing site topography, surrounding neighbouring buildings, existing building lines and boundary constraints dictated the final proposal's positioning. Maintaining Rights of Light to existing surrounding buildings was imperative and this in turn dictated the scale and height of the proposed development. As can be noted from the 45° splay angle indicated on the proposed drawings, the flank elevation to No. 56 Shakespeare Road remains unaffected in terms of its Right to Light, whilst the rear elevation to No.34 St. Matthew's Road remains too distant from the proposal to raise any concern in this respect. Importantly, because the proposed dwelling has been limited to the height of the existing garage, the status quo with respect to the visual outlook from No. 56 Shakespeare Road remains the same, if not bettered by the proposed building being narrower and therefore more distant.

The existing garage building line fronting onto Shakespeare Road sits back by 1.3m from the general building line of No. 56 Shakespeare Road. Similarly, the proposed building frontage line respects this setback and adopts the same positioning. However, in order to readdress the general building line with No. 56, the proposed standing seam zinc finished canopy projects forward of the proposed frontage by 1.3m to establish a relationship with Shakespeare Road's general building line.

Residences along Shakespeare Road and St. Matthew's Road are typically fronted by small garden areas, followed by the dwelling itself and gardens to the rear. Garden amenity areas are generally proportionate to the size of the dwelling that they serve and vary where original dwellings have undergone later sub-division into smaller dwellings/apartments. The proposed dwelling adopts this layout approach and provides a decked garden amenity area to the rear, but also has the potential of using the front forecourt area as an additional amenity space. To reinforce the forecourt area as usable garden amenity space, a proprietary grassed paving system has been specified across the forecourt area, so that when established, provides the appearance of a lawned garden along the Shakespeare Road streetscape. The system specified is robust enough to take vehicular traffic over, but also significantly reduces the amount of surface water run off compared to traditional hard standing forecourts.

Access to the dwelling is facilitated directly off Shakespeare Road. In order to comply with the current legislative requirements of the Building Regulations

(Pt. M) and criteria suggested within the Lifetime Homes Standard, a ramped access strategy has been adopted for the dwelling. As stated earlier, in order to provide good natural daylight to the basement areas of the dwelling, the ground floor slab is set higher than the retained external land levels so that high level windows can be accommodated. Positioning of the ground floor level is a reconciliation exercise between the prescriptive legislative requirements for ramped approaches and providing sufficient daylight to the basement areas. In order to achieve this balance on the site, the existing front forecourt area is proposed to be raised from the pavement boundary toward the proposed lightwell by 150mm. Raising of the forecourt area from an existing 1:40 gradient to 1:20 gradient, permits the two short entrance ramps indicated on the drawings to achieve a 1:12 gradient and fall within legislative guidelines.

The ramp positions indicated on the drawings are considered to be the best solution, since they are integral to the design, rather than 'tagged' on. The first entry ramp is positioned to run parallel to the building frontage, so that its impact is minimised when viewed from Shakespeare Road. In addition, had the ramp been orientated toward the street, and then its width take up would have precluded the provision of an off street car parking space on the site.

All ramps at their head and base will be provided with a 1200mm long level landing area and are designed to have a clear access width of 900mm. The main entrance door will have a threshold of no higher than 15mm above adjacent finished levels. In addition, the main entrance door will have a clear opening width of 775mm to meet the current legislative requirements of Pt. M of the Approved Documents.

Scale

The development resides in the Shakespeare Road Conservation Area and in accordance with Local Plan Policy BE21, aspires to achieve a high quality design, with a discerning use of materials which are conservative and appropriate in their specification and application.

The aim of the proposal is to enhance and be sympathetic to the scale and character of the local area. The scale or size of the proposed dwelling is in part the direct result of the surrounding site influences. These include, neighbouring building scales, neighbouring outlook and visual amenity, existing garage height and proximity to boundaries.

Important design decisions were taken early on concerning building height limitation. Clearly, a two storey residential dwelling to the scale of existing Shakespeare Road properties would raise questions concerning scale of the development, possible overbearing and loss of visual outlook to neighbouring properties. In order to limit the visual impact of the building and not compromise the area requirements for the internal accommodation, the design was limited in height to equal the existing garage ridge height and a basement accommodation area included to preserve the intention to provide a good quality family sized dwelling on the site.

Particular attention has been paid to issues surrounding Rights of Light pertaining to No. 56 Shakespeare Road and the building has been accordingly positioned away from the boundary, so that the notional 45° Rights of Light splay angle is not bisected by the proposed building plane. Importantly, the splay angle has been calculated from the projecting side bay of No. 56 Shakespeare Road as this provides the most onerous constraint on the proposal site.

The existing buildings along Shakespeare Road diminish in scale as their footprints extend into their respective plots. Despite the proposed dwelling only providing the appearance of a single storey house, this vernacular massing pattern has still been achieved with the proposed design by providing a stepped section longitudinally through the proposed building to mimic on a reduced scale, that of the local building stock.

The scale of the proposal is modest and commensurate with the site plot area. It aims to provide a good quality residential dwelling that serves to enhance the conservation area and existing streetscape.

Scale has been an important influence on the architectural style of the proposed dwelling. Limits on building height, plot depth and width, precluded the design of a two storey above ground reproduction of neighbouring buildings. Instead, the proposal is an architecturally honest modern residential dwelling, which is of its time and employs modern construction techniques.

The limit on building height, in particular, has influenced the design appearance, since building height in this case affected the visual proportions of the proposed building. A single storey building, constructed with decorative brickwork dentil and stucco detail would have looked incongruous in the current streetscape grandeur of Shakespeare Road and would proportionately not be akin to the area. However, it was suggested that the building had to have its own sense of place and impact on the streetscape and so an overtly contemporary design has been developed instead.

<u>Appearance</u>
The submitted proposal's appearance is the culmination of a thorough and detailed design process. The site offers the exciting opportunity to replace a visually unsympathetic brick constructed garage with a modern contemporary dwelling, which would enhance the existing mix of architectural styles within the Shakespeare Road Conservation Area.

The design appearance of the building has been strongly influenced by factors such as scale, layout and access. The building unashamedly presents itself to the street and its surroundings as modern. Scale has strongly influenced the design process, especially where building height is concerned. The design intention is for the dwelling to present itself as a single storey residential building, which is in scale to the building that it replaces and in proportion to buildings that surround it. The proposal's intention is not to dominate or overbear the site, but by its own scale, be slightly subservient and respectful to

its architectural surroundings and their occupants. Scale and proportion are entwined with each other and for this reason, it would not have been appropriate to adorn, what appears to be a single storey dwelling, with intricate stucco detail and the like. Had this approach been taken, then the design would have presented itself as something which was trying to be similar to the grandeur of its neighbours, but would have failed in its conviction.

Although the building is overtly contemporary in design, it does have some architectural correlation with buildings along Shakespeare Road. As mentioned earlier in this report, it was important that the ground floor accommodation deck be raised, so that high level windows could provide daylight into the basement accommodation areas. However, this was not the sole reason for raising the deck. It can be noted from the drawings that the frontages to dwellings in Shakespeare Road are demarcated above their ground floor window heads by a horizontal stucco and corbelled brickwork frieze detail. This horizontal line is a strong architectural statement for the road generally and one that needed to be subtly referenced into the proposed building frontage. This has been achieved by the introduction of the flying canopy which serves as cover and entrance announcement into the dwelling, but is also aligned with the original frieze line pertaining to Shakespeare Road properties. On elevation, the canopy presents itself as a horizontal line and provides an important visual linkage with No. 56 Shakespeare Road. On a similar note, the window heads to properties along Shakespeare Road also align visually with the ground floor French door head on the proposals front elevation.

The ground floor accommodation is contained within two linked volumes. The larger of these two volumes accommodates bedroom one, the kitchen and shower/ cloakroom, whilst the other volume contains the main living space to the dwelling. When viewing the proposed section drawings and elevations with the flank wall of No. 56 Shakespeare Road as the backdrop, it can be seen that the proposed ground floor volumes bear a similar stepped relationship to that displayed by No. 56. This stepped volume arrangement across the depth of the site is further enforced by a change in material usage. With No. 56, the building frontage and half of the flank return wall are red brick finished with ornate stucco work. Toward the rear of No. 56, the building's volume reduces in height and architectural importance and so therefore does its material finish to painted render. Taking these existing established design metaphors as design criteria, the proposed dwelling also reduces in volume height and material usage deeper into the site. The larger of the proposed ground floor volumes has a direct relationship with the length of red brickwork pertaining to No.56 and is finished in a proprietary colour impregnated render system, whilst the other smaller volume is finished externally in solid wrot Iroko t&g horizontal boarding. Selection of a suitable hardwood cladding was based upon durability, sustainability, economy and material robustness. It was also important that the living room volume should be finished in a timber treatment, since this evoked a sense of 'garden shed' architecture befitting to the back garden views of other neighbouring buildings.

The proposed building fabric consists of reinforced concrete retaining walls forming the basement envelope up to approximately ground floor level. From ground floor to roof level a timber framed construction will be implemented and this promotes both speed of construction sustainability. The ground floor timber framed external walls are to be deep filled with 'Warmcell' blown recycled newspaper insulation. Rather than using traditional OSB boards or plywood sheathings, a bitumen impregnated recycled saw dust composite board has been selected for it excellent sustainable credentials, thermal retention qualities and good racking strength.

The visual appearance of the building from the street is intended to be one that is crisp in composition and this will be best achieved using modern construction materials and manufacturing techniques. Current legislative standards in respect of thermal heat loss and C02 emissions from the building have been considered at the planning stage, rather than as an after thought at Building Regulation stage. Achieving these legislative efficiencies and standards, has to some extent determined from the outset, the fabric and therefore the final material appearance of the building.

Externally, the building will present itself to the street as a painted rendered building. The rendering system is a silicone based thin coat application which is already colour impregnated at the application stage. There are several benefits for specifying this system, but one of the most important is that it is a low maintenance application. Once the system has been applied, there is no future need to repaint. This consideration is especially important in the context of the new walls adjacent to the new boundary walls of No. 34 St Matthew's Road where future maintenance to the property might be precluded through lack of neighbourly compliance with the Neighbourhood Act to permit easement for future upkeep and repair.

As stated earlier, the living room volume is treated externally with Iroko t&g horizontally set cladding boards. These would be finished with a Danish Oil application.

Because the ground floor storey is of a timber framed construction, treatment of the parapet detail had to be carefully considered. Application of a pre-cast concrete coping system would not be suitable from a technical standpoint, because of potential frame settlement and movement. Instead, an appropriate technology was considered in the form of a pressed zinc coping, which would be secretly fixed at the wall head. Precision pressing of the coping would also reinforce the crisp architectural language that is trying to be achieved with the building.

The introduction of a pressed metal coping to the wall head, steered to some degree the finish specification of the window and door sets around the building. These openings are filled by composite aluminium and timber double glazed, gas filled, windows and doors, which provide thermal efficiency and architectural harmony to the building. Rooflights located at roof level are designed to be frameless, so that sightlines, when viewing from inside to outside are unobstructed.

The most prominent feature on the front elevation is the supporting column. The column itself is structurally bearing and supports the 'eroded' corner of the building. Importantly, the column visually announces the main dwelling entrance. The column itself gives the appearance of being fabricated from a solid Iroko log. However, it is in fact a composite arrangement of materials comprising central mild steel circular hollow section, with a sleeved Iroko facing over.

A laminated glass guarding is proposed immediately in front of the ground floor French doors to bedroom 1. The guarding would be visually clear and fixed with s/steel planar type countersunk fixings to the main building fabric.

The lightwell to the frontage affords the basement front bedroom natural daylight penetration and the opportunity for a private step out amenity space relating to the bedroom. The lightwell at basement level also provides access into the drainage pumping room, which will be required on the site due to existing sewer invert levels in Shakespeare Road. The lightwell construction would be render finished and painted in matching colour to the main dwelling walls. At the head of the lightwell, a frameless laminated glass guarding is proposed on three sides of the light well.

Ramps and steps provide alternative access routes to the principle entrance. Ramp walls would be rendered and paint finished, whilst ramp pathways would be tiled in anti-slip, frost resistant tiling. The intermediate landing area at the head of the first ramp up from the forecourt would also be in matching tile to that applied to the ramps."

3. CONSULTATIONS

Previously the **Highway Authority** made the following comments:-

"This proposal seeks permission to demolish the existing garage and construct a new dwelling and gain vehicular access via the existing point of access off Shakespeare Road. Provision for the parking of one vehicle is to be provided on site.

I note that a brick wall is to be provided to the site boundary of the vehicular access however I recommend that this does not restrict the visibility splay for safety reasons. Pedestrian visibility splays of 2m x 2m should also be provided at the access.

The site is located within the centre of Worthing close to the train station. Secure and covered cycle parking provision should be provided on site in accordance with adopted standards.

No Highway objection subject to the following conditions:

WC.5.J - Cycle parking

WC.6.D - Visibility splays."

The **Environment Agency** previously raised no objections, subject to 2 conditions being imposed relating to land contamination.

The **Executive Head of Health, Housing and Community Safety** has no objection subject to a condition and informative relating to the investigation of potential ground contamination.

The **Strategic Planning and Regeneration Manager** has no objection.

4. REPRESENTATIONS

Two letters of objection has been received which raise the following concerns:-

i) The development is completely out of character with the surrounding housing stock and would, as a consequence, be harmful to the appearance of the conservation area.

ii) The design is entirely at odds with the conservation area. In extending or altering homes in the area residents are required to be very respectful of the conservation, at great expense. If this demolition is permitted the replacement building should be more sympathetic not less.

iii) Outlook from neighbouring houses will be impaired by this unsympathetic building. Why are conservation area standards to be applied in this case?

iv) An application for fencing at 2 Browning Road has been refused due to its perceived harm to the conservation area and is the subject of an appeal. Elected officials should display consistency in their decisions and have regard to residents who have lived in the area for many years.

v) When an extension was being built at 2 Browning Road a deeper foundation was required due to the proximity to a street tree. A street tree is very close to this development and a basement development will cause substantially more ground disturbance than a conventional foundation. How can this be good for the longevity of the protected tree?

vi) The development indicates more trees to be removed than planted.

vii) This development is close to a four way junction and there is heavy on street parking. It is also a well used route to St Matthews School. The proposed build will involve many lorries. This level of activity at this junction is potentially very dangerous for road users and pedestrians.

viii) Flat roofs attract seagulls. This is concerning at low level right next to a public footpath and popular school route.

ix) Emergency access from the basement appears to be at the rear which is effectively land locked. The side passage is very narrow. Does this comply with the fire regulations?

x) Dewatering of the soil around the basement may also affect a very large lime tree in Shakespeare Road.

xi) The application will be watched with interest as to allow it will herald the start of our town losing the areas of character that have always made it a desirable place to settle. If the Council does consider this development is acceptable in the conservation area then it should put in writing a

redefinition of Section 69 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as it applies locally so that the query can be raised with the MP or published in the local newspaper.

xii) An explanation would be required to the rate payers of this area as to why the public information leaflets that are supplied at the planning office and paid for by local taxation do not give an accurate refection of the decision making process, or how our elected officials believe that the nations planning act applies to them.

The **Conservation Area Advisory Committee** has no objection.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

On the 27th March 2007 full planning permission was granted subject to conditions for the development being applied for again today.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The main issues raised by this proposal are the principle of an additional residential dwelling on the site, design and impact on the Conservation Area, impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and future occupiers, parking, access and highway safety. As such, the application should be principally considered against Policies, RES7, RES9, RES12, BE1, TR9, H16 and H18 of the saved Worthing Local Plan and South East Plan Policies SP3, CC1, CC4, CC6, H1, H2, H5, T4, NRM1, NRM2, NRM11, M1BE1, BE6, SCT5. The Shakespeare Road conservation area appraisal and PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS3 Housing and PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment are also relevant.

This application follows approval of the same development in March 2007. At the time the Officer's recommendation was that the proposal should be refused on the grounds that:-

"Having regard to the limited size of the plot, the proposed dwelling, by reason of its excessive size, depth, proximity to the site boundaries and lack of external private amenity space, would constitute a cramped overdevelopment of the site that does not relate satisfactorily to the character of the existing development and would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the locality, would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Shakespeare Road Conservation Area, would be harmful to the outlook and residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers and would exacerbate the existing parking problems in the area."

However, Members at the time disagreed with the recommendation and decided that the application represented an exceptional standard of design and was innovative and sustainable. They noted the lack of objection from the Conservation Area Advisory Committee and considered that the proposed new

dwelling would preserve, not detract from, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Members considered Officers' arguments regarding the impact of the proposed dwelling upon adjoining occupiers, but did not consider that this impact would justify the refusal of planning permission. Neither did they consider that the proposal would create unacceptable impacts upon parking congestion or highway safety given the provision of one off-street parking space, despite the concerns raised in the report by Officers.

Impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area

The proposed dwelling would largely appear single storey when viewed from adjoining land and from the street and therefore subordinate to the surrounding two-storey buildings. It would be no taller than the existing garage and narrower by 1 metre to allow for side access. However, it would occupy a large proportion of this very small plot and Officers were previously concerned that it would appear unduly cramped on the site and would therefore be harmful to the conservation area.

It was previously accepted that the applicant has put a great deal of thought and effort into the design of the new dwelling and that the application represented a high level of creativity in terms of an 'efficient' use of this small plot. The contemporary design was said to be of considerable interest in itself and, whilst the area is characterised by Victorian and Edwardian two-storey buildings of a reasonably grand scale, the building is designed to be subservient to them. Additionally important cues have been taken from the existing buildings and have influenced the design. These cues include maintaining the strong horizontal emphasis of the existing buildings' stucco and corbelled brickwork frieze detail above the ground floor windows. This is achieved by introducing a flying canopy which serves as the entrance to the dwelling but is also aligned with the original frieze line. Similarly, the window heads to properties along Shakespeare Road also align visually with the ground floor French door head on the proposals front elevation.

Whilst the building would have a flat roof instead of a pitched roof; and would be constructed from materials which are not generally employed in the area, it is intended to appear subordinate to the original properties whilst having a design quality of its own. The Conservation Area Advisory Committee does not object to the proposal and accepts that a good contemporary infill development has its place in the Conservation Area.

Impact on Neighbours

Members were previously advised that Officers were concerned that the scale of development proposed would result in an overbearing impact on the closest neighbouring properties. Three properties adjoin the site (Nos. 33 and 34 St. Matthew's Road and No. 56 Shakespeare Road), two of which are divided into flats (resulting in a total of 7 dwellings adjoining the site). There are several habitable room windows facing the site on either side (for example, bedroom

and kitchen windows at No. 56 Shakespeare Road and dining-room and kitchen windows at No. 34 St. Matthew's Road). These properties already look onto a sizeable garage structure (6 metres deep and 4 metres high to the roof ridge), however, the proposal would result in a building 11.9 metres deep (almost twice the depth of the existing garage) and the same height as the existing garage ridge (albeit set in slightly from either boundary).

Members took the view that adequate separation between adjoining neighbours' windows and the new building existed and that the development would not be overbearing or visually intrusive. It was also considered that adjoining garden activity was to be expected in an urban setting.

In terms of overlooking, the application indicates only high-level windows on the flanks of the proposed building at the upper-storey level (which will be required by condition to be sited at least 1.65 metres above finished floor level to prevent occupiers being able to look out onto neighbouring properties). Subject to suitable boundary screening (as indicated on the plans), the remaining windows would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers.

It is also considered that adequate light will reach the dwelling itself and that high-level windows for the basement area, other than the front light well, is sufficient as the basement only contains bedrooms and a bathroom.

Impact on the Highway Network

The proposal provides for 1 car parking space off-road. This is below the adopted maximum standard of 2 spaces for a 3-bedroom family house. The site is in a reasonably sustainable location, close to the town centre and close to public transport. The Highway Authority has raised no objection subject to conditions requiring visibility splays at the access and cycle parking. It would be possible to provide cycle storage within the garden in an attempt to encourage a non-car mode of transport to and from the site and this would be sufficient to avoid the resultant pressure for additional on-street parking in an area where on-street parking is clearly inadequate to serve the current demands.

7. CONCLUSION

The principle of this development was previously agreed with the grant of planning permission in March 2007. There have been no material changes in terms of the site, its surroundings or the governing policies since that decision for the report to reach a different conclusion and, on that basis, the application is recommended for approval.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:-

1. C1A Standard full condition 5 YEARS.
2. C4B Erect walls/fences before occupation.
3. Parking space provided before occupation.
4. Details of surfacing material for car park.
5. Provide cycle parking.
6. C6D Visibility to be provided to access.
7. Permitted Development rights restricted.
8. C7G Limitation on hours of construction.
9. C8A Agree/provide landscaping scheme.
10. C9A Agree materials before construction.
11. Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3.
12. C6K Park/unloading area during construction.
13. C6L Materials/plant area during construction.
14. Method statement of excavation.
15. Details of finished ground levels.
16. Cill levels of upper floor windows min 1. 65m high.
17. Details of contamination remediation measures.
18. Clean uncontaminated infill material only.

9. <u>BACKGROUND PAPERS</u>

Observations of the Highway Authority
Observations of the Environment Agency
Observations of the Executive Head of Health, Housing and Community Safety
Observations of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Manager
Observations of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee
Letters of Representation from a Member of the Public

30th March 2010