



1. BACKGROUND AND PRESENT SITUATION

- 1.1. A Full Planning Approval (ref: H16-0685-17) to Demolition of 45 Bourne Road to create 2 no. one-bedroom flats and 1 no. two bedroom flats was refused 11/09/2017. An email from the planning officer on the 7/09/17 outlined the issue with the application as being, *I have been considering 45 Bourne Road, and am writing to inform you that this is likely to be refused as it represents an overdevelopment of the plot. The width to the rear would create an over dominant feature within the street scene of Horseshoe Road. The previous scheme is visually more acceptable than the one now proposed in terms of scale and massing.*

With only four days between this email and the refuse, including a weekend, my client and I were unable to make a considered response.

The reason for refusal on the decision notice states, *The proposal constitutes a form of overdevelopment that would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene within Horseshoe Road. Future occupiers of the one bedroom flats would have a poor level of amenity due to the lack of windows to the lounge area, and lack of immediate*

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access to the amenity area and car parking spaces provided. The development would also have a material affect upon the amenity of neighbouring residents. This would be by virtue of its close proximity and general overbearing affect.

- 1.2. A Full Planning Approval (ref: H16-0432-16) for alteration and extension to form 3 one bedroomed apartments was granted 30/06/2016

2. SITE ASSESSMENT

- 2.1. The site overall is some 0.0275 hectares in area. It currently supports a small-detached two-bedroomed house, close to the public footpath, of perhaps early nineteenth century origin, and has a long rear garden extending through to Horseshoe Road to the southeast. Existing, surrounding development is of mixed date and in varying external materials and styles. Existing properties also vary significantly in size and site coverage.
- 2.2. The existing house on the application site sits upon a larger site than would currently be considered necessary for an individual, two-bedroomed property, and it also sits within one of the lower socio-economic residential areas of the town. It does appear therefore to be able to support a more recent housing need for small occupancy low-cost accommodation.
- 2.3. The plot boundaries on two sides adjoin other residential plots, the rear or southern boundary adjoins Horseshoe Road and the front, or northern boundary adjoins Bourne Road
- 2.4. The area generally appears largely to have been formed in the early twentieth century, consisting mainly of semi-detached two storey houses of no intrinsic architectural or historic value with common brick walls in English bond, but with many original roof coverings replaced by concrete interlocking tiles in more recent years. There are also odd examples of hip-roofed bungalows from around the 1930s, and several newer buildings from the 1960s and 1970s, one of which sits on the site immediately to the east of the proposed plot.
- 2.5. The grain of the immediate locality is one of street-side development along the line of Bourne Road, with Horseshoe Road running almost parallel to Bourne Road at the rear of the properties.
- 2.6. Boundary treatments along frontages, where the dwellings themselves are set back from the public footpath, appear to comprise low brick walls, fences and privet hedges, enclosing small front garden areas.
- 2.7. Landscaping generally comprises private planting in house-owners' gardens and as a result is very low key. The area is largely urban in character, and the absence of meaningful soft landscaping reflects this.
- 2.8. Site levels are flat and slope down from Bourne Road to Horseshoe Road, and match the surrounding areas. There is no intention to vary site levels significantly from the existing levels and adjoining site and building levels.

3. EVALUATION

3.1. Opportunities

- 3.1.1. There is an opportunity to make better use of available land, and to provide a new dwelling for sale or rent at affordable cost in an appropriate location, in a position close to all local amenities, and the town centre.
- 3.1.2. The site at present is under-used, and contributes nothing to the area generally, nor to the occupants of 45 Bourne Road. There is an opportunity therefore to make better use of available land, for the benefit of the occupants as well as for the town generally.

- 3.1.3. The site is a very sustainable site indeed, being within easy walking distance to the town centre situated not more than one mile away. It is also in easy reach of both the bus and the railway station and thereon to the national transport networks. All the facilities of a market town are within easy reach, without the need for using a private car. It is contended therefore that provision of homes either for sale, or for rent in such a location meets all the requirements of PPS3, and an opportunity exists for the provision of much-needed accommodation within an existing sustainable infrastructure, rather than seeking to build such accommodation in designated new-build development areas where the necessary infrastructure has to be created especially to support the housing.
- 3.1.4. Application H16-0432-16 as already proven the validity of 3 flats on the site.
- 3.1.5. It is felt that the proposed would not constitute and an over-dominant feature with in the street scene and would in fact work as a natural transition between the those dwellings that take up a large portion of their plots and the semi detached houses that use mainly the frontage to Bourne Road. This is can be seen by the artist impression below.



- 3.1.6. From the images above it can be clearly seen that the proposed flats would not be the dominant feature of the street scene nor be over-bearing from either direction along Horseshoe Road.
- 3.1.7. It is also felt that the proposed does not constitute over development of the site. The approved scheme H16-0432-16 has a site coverage of 33% and the proposed is only slight more at 35%. However, the new scheme increases the available amenity space at the rear from 69m² to 78m². From the OS extract, the neighbour to the west has an approximate site coverage of 39%, which clearly show precedence for this level of development.
- 3.1.8. The access to the amenity space at the rear and the car parking for this application has not changed from the approved application H16-0432-16, therefore should not be considered as a reason for refusal.

3.2. Constraints

- 3.2.1. Care must also be taken to avoid either overlooking the neighbouring properties, or presenting an overbearing structure close to their boundaries, as highlighted by previous applications and the recent appeal.
- 3.2.2. Care must also be taken to avoid the creation of living units with less than acceptable levels of amenity, as highlighted by previous applications and the recent appeal.

4. DESIGN

- 4.1. The proposed rear portion is one and a half storey, in order not to create any visual disturbance to neighbours either from overlooking or from reducing daylight or even sunlight or view.
- 4.2. The dwellings have been designed to reflect the nature of the existing dwelling in both scale and character, and habitable rooms have been so arranged as to maximise amenity for the occupants of each apartments.
- 4.3. Although Application H16-0432-16 met the Space standards in accordance with the SHDC Residential Flat Conversions Policy Note of February 2010. The proposed flats significant increase the internal amenity available.
- 4.4. The proposed new flats, being new build properties will ensure that the increase to the local housing stock will be of the highest quality in terms of energy saving. They will be far superior to the flats approved under application H16-0432-16.
- 4.5. The lack of natural light to the living areas to the on bedroom flats, as mentioned in the refusal letter, has been taken on board with the kitchens and living areas now being switched.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. It is considered that the application proposals recognise the existing grain of development, and provides more than suitable accommodation.
- 5.2. The proposed new flats will give an increase to both internal and external amenities compared to those approved under application H16-0432-16 whilst will not reduce amenity to neighbours.
- 5.3. Parking provision is both adequate in numbers and is easily accessible without disruption to neighbouring properties
- 5.4. In summary, it is contended that the proposal is of greater benefit not only to the site, but is also an improvement to that approved under application H16-0432-16.