

Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

Summary	
Committee Meeting Date: 17 May 2016	
Application ID: Z/2014/0657/O	
Proposal: Proposed Apartment Development of 6 Units	Location: 93 Hillhead Crescent Stewartstown Road Belfast BT11
Referral Route: More than 4 residential units	
Recommendation:	Approval
Applicant Name and Address: Mr J Woods 93 Hillhead Crescent Stewartstown Road Belfast	Agent Name and Address: Bryson Architecture 18 Gransha Park Belfast BT11 8AU
<p>Executive Summary: The application seeks outline planning permission for an apartment block consisting of 6 two bedroom units.</p> <p>The main issues to be considered in this case are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The acceptability of apartments at this location; - Impact on character of area; - Impact on provision of future Roads Infrastructure; - Impact on residential amenity <p>The site is located on unzoned land adjacent to an arterial route (Stewartstown Road) and within the settlement limits of Belfast as designated in the Belfast metropolitan Area Plan.</p> <p>The principle of residential development is acceptable at this location.</p> <p>The indicative scale, massing and design are found to be acceptable given the size of the plot compared to adjacent residential plots, the substantial building on site and the mixed character along the Stewartstown Road. There will be no significant impact on neighbouring amenity as a result of the development given what is a generous separation distance of the built form to the nearest neighbouring property.</p> <p>TransportNI has objected to the proposal and has recommended the application be refused as the proposed footprint of the apartment block lies within an area required for the provision of the Belfast Rapid Transit project and if approved would prejudice the delivery of this key public transport project. In order to ensure that the development would not prejudice the delivery of the scheme a condition can be attached to any decision to ensure that no built form is located in the area vested by TransportNI.</p> <p>The proposal has been assessed against the – Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan; and relevant planning Policies contained within the Strategic Planning Policy for Northern Ireland, Planning Policy Statement 3: ‘Access Movement and Parking’, Planning Policy Statement 7: ‘Quality</p>	

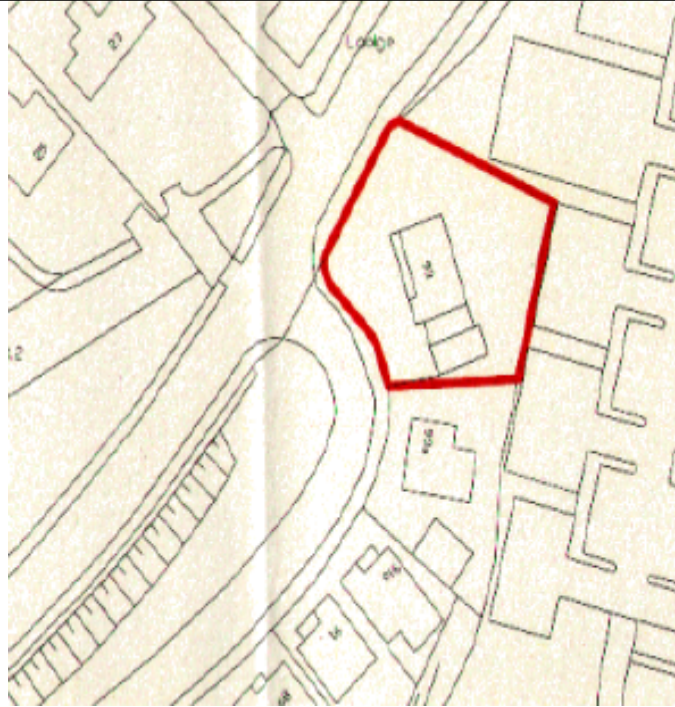
Residential Environments' and Planning Policy Statement 12: 'Housing in Settlements'.

Recommendation: Approval

Approve for reasons set out in case officers report.

Case Officer Report

Site Location Plan



Characteristics of the Site and Area

1.0	<p>Description of Proposed Development</p> <p>Outline application for a 2 and a half story apartment block. The block will consist of 6 2bedroom units. 8 in-curtilage parking spaces have been provided in the southern portion of the site with the built form in the northern part of the site close to Stewartstown Road.</p>
2.0	<p>Description of Site</p> <p>Site located at junction of Stewartstown Road and Hillhead Crescent. Large dwelling at centre of site. The dwelling is located a short distance from the eastern site boundary and is 20m long with a depth of 9m at its deepest point. A small wall and railings are located along the southern and western boundaries of the site with a hedge set a short distance behind. 3 semi-mature trees are located along the western boundary. A 4 metre high hedge defines the northern boundary with a 2m high close-boarded fence defining the eastern boundary. A substantial area of hard standing is located to the rear of the dwelling.</p>

Planning Assessment of Policy and other Material Considerations

3.0	<p>Planning History</p>
3.1	<p>Z/2010/1550/F - New window and door to garage and internal alterations to existing dwelling to provide granny flat. Approved 3rd Feb 2011</p>
4.0	<p>Policy Framework</p>
4.1	<p>Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015</p>

	Policy TRAN 1 Parking Standards with Areas of Parking Restraint.
4.2	Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland Planning Policy Statement 3 - Access, Movement and Parking Planning Policy Statement 7 – Quality Residential Environments Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7 – Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas. Planning Policy 12 – Housing in Settlements
5.0	Statutory Consultees Transport NI – Refusal Recommended
6.0	Non-Statutory Consultees Environmental Health BCC – No objection
7.0	Representations A total of 7 letters of objection have been received. The following issues have been raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposal would lead to an unacceptable change in character of area. - Inadequate parking arrangement. - 11 apartments blighting surrounding properties.
8.0	Other Material Considerations Programme for Government 2011-15 Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-21 Creating Places
9.0	Assessment The key issues in the assessment of the proposed development include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The acceptability of apartments at this location; - Impact on character of area - Impact on provision of future Roads Infrastructure - Impact on Residential Amenity
9.1	Principle of Redeveloping the Site & Height, Scale and Mass The site is located within the development limits of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan on unzoned (white) land and abuts an arterial route (Stewartstown Road). The presumption is therefore in favour of development subject to the planning considerations detailed below.
9.2	The proposal has been assessed against paragraphs 4.11-4.12 and 4.23-4.29 of the SPPS and PPS7 Policy QD1. The principle of the scale and massing of the building must be considered alongside the existing building on the site. The existing dwelling is located centrally on the site and has a frontage of 20m onto Hillhead Crescent, with a depth of 9m gable onto the Stewartstown Road. The dwelling has a maximum ridge height of 7.5m and represents a considerable structure in terms of the size of the site, and is a more significant mass than any of the dwellings along Hillhead Crescent. The proposed building has a frontage of approximately 12m onto the junction of Stewartstown Road and Hillhead Crescent with a depth of 16m. The floor area covered by the footprint of the proposed building is only marginally greater than that of the existing dwelling (by approximately 12 square metres). The ratio of hard standing to green area is also similar to that on the site at the moment, with substantial levels of hard standing to the front and rear of the property with little or nothing in the way of private amenity space to the rear of the property, which is dominated by a parking area. The proposed car parking, although partially located on the existing footprint of the dwelling is located in this south-east corner of the site.
9.3	The ridge height of the proposed building is however indicated as 9m. Although this represents something of an increase in the overall height and massing on the site the building is located closer to the arterial route of Stewartstown Road where there is a mixed character and will also have a backdrop of high vegetation from the southern approach (a row of mature

	<p>trees along the northern boundary of St. Genevieve's School immediately north of the site. A short distance north-west of the site, across from the entrance to St. Genevieve's School is a substantial two storey sheltered housing scheme, with a long continuous two storey frontage which dominates the streetscape along this stretch of the Stewartstown Road. With the proposal creating a two and a half storey frontage onto the main road this would sit comfortably with this character and when read with St. Genevieve's School and this sheltered housing scheme should not adversely affect the character of this part of the Stewartstown Road.</p>
9.4	<p>In terms of the character of Hillhead Crescent, it is defined by substantial detached two storey dwellings, with limited separation distances, in compact well defined plots. Each plot has minimal or no green areas to the front with hard standing providing in-curtilage parking. The plot size of the application site is much larger than the remainder of Hillhead Crescent and with the substantial dwelling on the site it can be seen as something of an anomaly in the area. The site area is approximately 0.1 hectares, whereas the adjacent site (93a) is approximately 0.05, with the remaining three sites (89-91a) 0.03-0.04Ha. It could be argued that the application site could comfortably accommodate 3 dwellings and be in keeping with the character of the area. With the proposed layout the site is effectively split with the new building located adjacent to Stewartstown Road and an area of hard standing in the southern part of the site adjacent to No. 93a. This will create a built form, albeit higher than the existing dwelling, closer to the mixture of built form on the Stewartstown Road, with a separation distance of 18m from the nearest dwelling on Hillhead Crescent. Given this separation distance, and the proximity to the arterial route (Stewartstown Road) I feel that the built form will effectively stand alone and sit comfortably in the streetscape of the Stewartstown Road with no adverse impact on the character of the area.</p>
9.5	<p>In terms of neighbouring amenity the only adjoining residential property is to the south at No. 93a. This dwelling sits at a lower level than the application site and certainly in terms of the impact of the proposed built form a separation distance of 14m to the boundary will ensure that as far as massing is concerned the existing property, located on the boundary, is a more dominant and imposing form. In terms of potential overlooking there are living room and kitchen windows indicated on the indicative southern elevation at first floor level. Having said this are located 14-16m from the boundary of the property with a high hedge along this boundary. It should also be noted that the area to the rear of No. 93a is dominated by hard standing and would appear to offer little in the way of any usable private amenity area. Given the separation distance (achieved by utilising the full width of the site) and orientation of the proposed building the impact would be minimal and potentially be less of a detriment to the private amenity of No. 93a than the existing dwelling.</p>
9.6	<p>An area of private amenity space, of approximately 175 square metres, has been indicated to the rear of the building. This is a provision of just below 30 square metres per unit, the maximum level per unit as recommended in Creating Places for apartment developments.</p>
9.7	<p>In terms of the addendum to PPS7 Policy LC1 would not apply as part of the site fronts onto an arterial route (Stewartstown Road), and as such would be an area where an increased density could be desirable.</p>
9.8	<p>The indicative site layout plan has shown that the proposed number of units can be adequately achieved on the site without adversely affecting the character of the area or neighbouring amenity.</p>
9.9	<p>Traffic and Parking The Stewartstown Road frontage of the proposed development site will be impacted by the Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme currently being progressed by the Department for Regional Development (DRD).</p>

9.10	<p>To facilitate the BRT scheme, DRD will vest a strip of land on the Stewartstown Road. The corner of the proposed apartment building, as shown on the indicative site layout, will marginally infringe onto the area of lands to be vested. Subsequently TransportNI have recommended that the proposal should be refused. As this is an outline application there is the opportunity to condition that no built form shall be located in the area vested by TransportNI. Such a condition would ensure the proposal will not prejudice the delivery of the Rapid Transit Scheme.</p>
9.11	<p>Contaminated Land Environmental Protection Unit records do not indicate any past industrial uses on site or in close proximity to the application site which may present a risk of potential ground contamination and thus they have offered no objection to the proposal.</p> <p>Consideration of objections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposal would lead to an unacceptable change in character of area. The issue has been discussed in the main body of the report and for reasons outlined, including the size of the site, separation distance from adjoining dwellings and the mixed character along Stewartstown Road - Inadequate parking arrangement. TransportNI have not objected to the level of parking provision or access arrangements - 11 apartments blighting surrounding properties. The number of apartments has been reduced to 6 which considerably reduces the size of the building. For reasons stated it should not lead to an erosion of the character of the area and given separation distance to nearest residential property should not result in any significant detriment to neighbouring amenity.
10.0	<p>Summary of Recommendation: Approval</p>
10.1	<p>Having regard to the policy context and other material considerations above, the proposal is considered acceptable and planning permission should be approved for the following reason.</p>
10.2	<p>The ridge height of the building will be conditioned to ensure it will not appear dominant and will not adversely affect the character of the area. A condition will also be applied to ensure that no built form will be located within an area vested by TransportNI to enable the delivery of the planned Belfast Rapid Transit Scheme.</p>
11.0	<p>Conditions</p>
11.1	<p>As required by Section 62 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Department within 3 years of the date on which this permission is granted and the development, hereby permitted, shall be begun by whichever is the later of the following dates:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission; or ii. the expiration of 2 years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved. <p>Reason: Time Limit</p>
11.2	<p>The under-mentioned reserved matters shall be as may be approved, in writing, by the Department :-</p>

	<p>Siting; the two dimensional location of buildings within the site.</p> <p>Design; the two dimensional internal arrangement of buildings and uses and the floor space devoted to such uses, the three dimensional form of the buildings and the relationship with their surroundings including height, massing, number of storeys, general external appearance and suitability for the display of advertisements.</p> <p>External appearance; the colour, texture and type of facing materials to be used for external walls and roofs.</p> <p>Access; the location and two dimensional design of vehicular and pedestrian access to the site from the surroundings and also the circulation, car parking, facilities for the loading and unloading of vehicles and access to individual buildings within the site.</p> <p>Landscaping; the use of the site not covered by building and the treatment thereof including the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs, grass, the laying of hard surface areas, the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks and associated retaining walls, screening by fencing, walls or other means, the laying out of gardens and the provisions of other amenity features.</p> <p>Reason: To enable the Council to consider in detail the proposed development of the site.</p> <p>11.3 The building hereby approved shall have a ridge height no greater than 1.5m higher than the ridge height of existing dwelling No. 93a to the immediate south of the site (ridge height of No. 93a shown at 55.8m on indicative plan received by Council on 10th February 2016).</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the proposal is in keeping with the scale of nearby properties.</p> <p>11.4 No form of development shall be located within the area hashed blue on approved site location plan No. 01 date stamped 22nd may 2014.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the proposal will not prejudice the delivery of the Belfast Rapid Transit Scheme.</p> <p>11.5 The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until adequate car and cycle parking has been provided to the satisfaction of TransportNI at Reserved Matters stage.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure acceptable cycle parking facilities on the site and to encourage alternative modes of transport to the private car.</p> <p>11.6 A landscape management plan shall be submitted at reserved matters stage to include details of all existing vegetation within the site indicating those trees to be retained or removed and methods for their protection during construction works, all proposed hard and soft landscape works, planting plans; written planting specifications; schedules of plants and trees indicating planting methods together with the species, location, spacing and numbers; an implementation and maintenance programme.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design.</p>
12.0	Notification to Department (if relevant) N/A

13.0	Representation from elected member N/A	
Neighbour Notification Checked		Yes
Signature(s)		
Date:		

ANNEX	
Date Valid	19th May 2014
Date First Advertised	6th June 2014
Date Last Advertised	6th June 2014
Details of Neighbour Notification (all addresses) P Elliott 26 Hillhead Drive Ballymoney Belfast N Hughes 33 Hillhead Crescent Ballymoney Belfast D O'Reilly 41 Hillhead Crescent Ballymoney Belfast I Sheridan 9 Hillhead Crescent Ballymoney Belfast 91 Hillhead Crescent, Stewartstown Road, Belfast, Antrim, BT11 9FW, 91A Hillhead Crescent, Stewartstown Road, Belfast, Antrim, BT11 9FW, 93A Hillhead Crescent, Stewartstown Road, Belfast, Antrim, BT11 9FW, St. Genieveves School, Stewartstown Road, Belfast, BT11	
Date of Last Neighbour Notification	3rd June 2014
Date of EIA Determination	N/A
ES Requested	No
Drawing Numbers and Title 01, 03/B	
Notification to Department (if relevant) N/A Date of Notification to Department: Response of Department:	