

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE SITE INSPECTION GROUP HELD ON  
MONDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2008**

**(15/2492/07/F) St John Ambulance Association, College Way, Dartmouth,  
TQ6 9NN**

**Present:** Cllr S E Cooper  
Cllr P Coulson  
Cllr G J Fielden (Chairman)  
Cllr P W Hitchins  
Cllr A Ward

**In attendance and participating:**

G Bryant (County Highways Engineer)  
R Gage (Conservation and Design Officer)  
D Kenyon (Area Planning Officer)  
S Munday (Head of Planning and Building Control)  
Representative from Dartmouth Town Council

**Also in attendance but not participating:**

Objectors and supporters

In introducing the application, the Area Planning Officer (APO) made particular reference to:-

- (A) the details of the application. With the aid of plans and elevated drawings of the application, the APO advised that the proposal was for the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a mixed four and three storey building comprising of six flats and six parking spaces. It was noted that the main entrance, a lift shaft, and stairs around the lift shaft formed the central component of the development proposal.
- (B) the planning history of the site. The Group was reminded that planning permission was granted in 1979 for the erection of 16 flats, each comprising two bedrooms, plus garages/parking spaces. This permission had part commenced in that phase one of the development, namely the twelve flats (comprising Vavasour House), had been completed and occupied. Phase two of the development was the current application site and work had yet to commence. However, due to work on phase one of the development having commenced within the five year period, the permission remained "alive" and phase two could therefore still be implemented as originally granted.

An application for the erection of six flats and associated parking for phase two was submitted during March 2007. However, due to concerns from planning and conservation officers, the Highways Authority, the Environment Agency and the Town Council the application was withdrawn. The current proposal was therefore submitted following consultation with planning and conservation officers, the Environment Agency and the Highway Authority, along with incorporating comments from the Council's Design & Conservation Panel;

- (C) the flood risk assessment. The APO noted that a flood risk assessment for the site had been submitted as part of the planning application which identified the minimum level at which finished floor levels of all residential areas would be set. The Environment Agency was recommending no objection;
- (D) the consultation feedback. The APO advised that the County Highways Authority had no objection in principle although concerns were raised in relation to the inadequate number of proposed parking spaces. The Environmental Health section of the Council had raised no objections subject to conditions relating to a contaminated land investigation. In relation to feedback from the Council's Landscape Manager, no objections were raised subject to a Section 106 Agreement being drawn up contributing towards open space, sport and recreation. Moreover, Devon County Council noted that no educational contribution was required as both primary and secondary schools in the area currently had sufficient capacity for the number of pupils a development of this size may produce;
- (E) the site being within the development boundary of Dartmouth and outside of, but within 50metres of, the Conservation Area to the south and in close proximity to Listed Buildings. Members were also reminded that the site was situated within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- (F) representations received from third parties. The APO noted that representation had been received from Dartmouth Town Council and neighbouring residents who objected on the grounds of overdevelopment, adverse impact, inappropriate design, the height of the development being too great/unacceptable dominant feature, inappropriate external materials, insufficient parking, poor access and visibility being detriment to highway safety, detrimental to residential amenities of nearby properties, not affordable for local people and construction difficulties.

The Town Council representative reiterated these concerns ((E) above refers) and highlighted the proposed parking facilities as having poor access and the visibility would be detrimental to highway safety onto College Way and Clarence Street. He also noted how astonished the Town Council was to hear that the Highways Authority had raised no objection to the proposed access to the car parking aspect of the application.

The Site Inspection Group then proceeded to view the application site from Coronation Park, up College Way looking down on the site and then from behind Vavasour House beside its allocated car parking area. During this tour the APO commented that although there would be some loss of view from a public point of view, this would be outweighed by the 'tidying up' of the site.

During discussion on the application, a Group Member commented that the site was in desperate need of being 'tidied' however, he had concern regarding the access to the car parking facilities and the health and safety implications. In response, the County Highways Engineer noted that the proposals fell within the criteria which it was measured under and therefore refusal on these grounds may not be defensible on appeal. In reiterating the concerns over access, a further member also highlighted her concern with the proposal in relation to the Listed Buildings situated to the rear of the application site and the detrimental impact that the three storey element of the design might have on these buildings.

Therefore, it was then agreed (by four votes to one):

**RECOMMENDED**

That in respect of application number 15/2492/07/F, the application be refused due to concerns over the access to the car parking facilities, the three storey design element of the proposed development and its detrimental impact to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties in Clarence Street.