

CAPITA SYMONDS

21 February 2013

FAO; Jenna Turner
Development Control Services
Planning & Sustainability
Southampton City Council
Civic Centre, Civic Centre Road
Southampton SO14 7LY

Dear Jenna,

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION – BEDFORD HOUSE AMOY STREET SOUTHAMPTON SO15 2DR DESIGN - RESUBMISSION

I write with regard to the above application – submitted on 13 March 2013. As directed by the Planning and Rights of Way Panel on 24 July 2012, I have undertaken further negotiations with objecting residents in relation to access arrangements.

The single point of objection from local residents was the opening –up of the Henry Street access into the Bedford House site, creating a through route between Canton Street and Amoy Street.

Prior to a consultation meeting with residents, a detailed review was undertaken of the submitted design and the site analysis schematic to assess the existing constraints on the site which predicate certain aspects of the design and what options were available.

I have set out below a summary of this review and the salient points of the Site Analysis.

1. Site Analysis:

The site analysis schematic is enclosed – ref AL02.

- **Trees**

The site has a number of healthy trees. The Arboricultural Report dated August 2011 – identified all trees on site were healthy and warranted retention. This approach was supported by the Councils Tree officers. The Root Protection Zone of each tree or group of trees were identified, and defined as a constraint to development

(Reviewing images left to right).

- **Sewers**

There are two active sewers running across the site, shown orange dashed line. The construction over these will be prohibited, with exception of a road surface, relocating both will be expensive. An assumption has been made that a rational developer will relocate one to the boundary – shown dashed blue, in order to maximise the developable area, but minimise abnormal development costs.

CAPITA SYMONDS

- **Access**

A review of existing access arrangements- vehicular access was only being achieved from Amoy Street – blue dots. Pedestrian access was being achieved from Henry Street and Amoy Street – orange dots.

Historically the site had been subject to vehicular and pedestrian access from Henry Street – pre 1970.

The 1933 historical Street Mapping, (enclosed) and aerial photograph below from 1950 sets out how the site was previously arranged prior to slum clearance, providing terrace housing with a through link to Amoy Street.



CAPITA SYMONDS

The New Forest Stag Public House on the junction of Amoy Street and Henry Street, shown overleaf is circa 1953 – This shows the view looking south west from Amoy Street into Henry Street towards Canton Street. Henry Street was an active street linking two residential communities. Henry Street was a through road from 1850 to 1970.

This reference and the existing pedestrian movements indicate desirability for pedestrian access to be maintained and a viability of opening the Henry Street access to form a through link. The reinstating of the previous arrangement would re-create Canton Streets relationship with Amoy Street.

Scale & Massing – surrounding environment

The site is bordered by 2 storey terraced housing on the northern, western and southern boundaries. The site has a slight change in gradient. The ridge height of the neighbouring properties predicates acceptable heights of new buildings. A ridge height of 10.5m (Wilton Road) has been presented.

- **Orientation:**

The orientation of buildings to maximise solar gain and to ensure light ingress into habitable windows, needs to be maximised to create acceptable accommodation standards. This will direct the positioning and orientation of buildings.

2. Design Development:

All the above predicate any design. A review of previous design consideration was also undertaken to identify any issues or opportunities or alternatives, considered during first stage design and Pre Application consultation. In considering design development – please refer to A3 – options, working in reverse order

The design options, 1-10 are set out in chronological order, with No10, being the earliest sketch and No1, being the designed being re-submitted.

Sketches 10-6, all work on the basis of opening up of Henry Street, as being desirable, historically the original street pattern and positive approach to traffic movements, without the need to turn to exit. The design principles being (in no particular order):

- a. Highway Safety – vehicles must leave in a forward gear
- b. Reinstating the original street pattern.
- c. Most efficient land use, maximising net developable area.
- d. Increase access benefits to Canton Street residents
- e. Reduces traffic movements within the new development.

Designs 3, 4 & 5 are as a result of reviewing the design post Planning & Rights of Way Panel – July 2012. Each design identifies the issue of turning vehicles within the development if access direct onto a principle road can not be achieved.

- a. Designs 8 & 10.

Assumption sewers remain insitu and are not moved, identified that No 7 dwellings could be developed on site, with or without a potential 8th Unit (design No10) with a small dwelling in the southern eastern boundary of the site.

CAPITA SYMONDS

These were rejected as they did not maximise the development potential and opportunity of the site. Assumption confirmed a sewer would be diverted to the southern and western boundaries to enable a bigger development envelope.

All subsequent designs produced worked upon the assumption of a diverted sewer.

b. Design 9.

A development of a single apartment block to provide No14 units of varying sizes, with communal amenity space and 1;1 car parking ratio.

Rejected as this would provide an over bearing development which was not in keeping with the strong street scene and pattern of housing in the locality. Traditional housing design would be more in keeping.

c. Design 7.

A development of No10 dwelling houses. The arrangement for units 1-5 was acceptable, the positioning of Unit 6, was not acceptable, an 'island' without any connectivity to the development, blighting the view of units 1-2. Units 9 &10 also being isolated from the development.

d. Design 6.

A development of No10 dwelling houses. The arrangement for units 1-5 was acceptable, the positioning of Unit 6, was not acceptable, an 'island' without ant connectivity, the window to window arrangement of units, 7-10 was not desirable.

e. Design 5.

This was the first design revision to address access from Henry Street. Turning within the site, is potentially possible within the site at two locations, this design considered turning in the middle of the site. The design utilises a spur towards Henry Street but was blocked by bollards.

This was rejected as this segregated the units with the turning facility, creating unacceptable environment and setting for the units immediately neighbouring the turning head. Refuse vehicular tracking, indicates Unit No5 would be lost to provide the requisite area for a refuse vehicle to turn, thus providing only No8 units. This design does not maximising the development potential of the site.

f. Design 4.

The design identifies vehicles could be turned within the site on the western boundary with the construction of a turning in those locality. The consequences of this design are:

Loss of No6 healthy trees.

Loss of screening of the development for Devonshire Road residents

Loss of land previously identified for amenity space

Loss of a unit.

Re-alignment of units 8 & 9. The setting of these units has deteriorated in comparison with the submitted design due to the unit's now over-looking Henry Street and Wessex car valeting workshop.

g. Design 3.

This design was presented to the residents group during the consultation; this is a re-working of Design 4. The turning head has been expanded at the western boundary, the spur to be in-filled with an additional unit, bringing the development back to 10 units. This design only replicates the all issues listed above and therefore was attract objections from Tree officers and urban design and architects panel due to the poor quality setting of the development.

h. Design 2.

Barrier control. – Rejected. Barriers can not be installed on public maintained highway. A private development with a barrier on private land will not be managed effectively in the long term, designs must be fit for 60 years. The refuse vehicle will not enter a private development.

i. Design 1.

This is a slightly revised design compared the submission in March 2012. In addressing the Canton Street residents concerns, the vehicle movements on Canton Street have been reduced – by at least 50%. The access into the development is now only one-way, entry via Canton Street or Amoy Street, exit via Amoy Street only. A speed table and raised sett paving have been included to control the traffic and reduce the speed at which traffic enters the development.

This design enables all vehicles to enter the development and exit in forward gear without turning on site. This enables the delivery of No10 units without any loss of trees or compromise on the character and setting of the new development.

The design accords with all Residential Development Guidance and Local and National policies relating to residential development as previously set out in the Design & Access statement.

The opening up of the access from Henry Street reinstates the through route originally designed, when the streets were first laid out in the 1850's. The access does not infringe upon the existing Conservation policies and the proposed changes to the Carlton Crescent Conservation policy. The design accords with the Councils heritage officers' aspiration of retaining Victorian character of the locality with its dominant terrace street pattern.

Residents Consultation

The consultation with residents set out the site analysis, explaining how the development design evolved and also set out how the review of design endeavoured to address their concerns. The key issue residents repeated was the existing speeding traffic travelling down the Canton Street cul-de-sac and that this would increase. The through route will not address the existence of speeding traffic, the link will however address speed, with the inclusion of speed table and raised setts to calm traffic, although a 90 degree turn into Henry Street will be difficult to achieve at speed.

Concerns the through route will create a 'rat run' are unfounded, as the through route will only provide access to the development and Amoy Street which is a two-way directional road with good access from Bedford Place. Amoy Street residents are likely to continue access their properties from Bedford Place, being the shortest route to their properties. . The link will not provide access or a short cut to any location.

CAPITA SYMONDS

Conclusions:

A review of the Site Analysis schematic, and the pre submission designs and subsequent re-design has not provided any alternative which delivers, a turning area within the site that is well designed development. All designs which turn vehicles within the site, presents designs which are flawed in design terms and planning policy terms, requiring loss of healthy trees, removing screening and amenity value, impacting existing privacy, compromising good design, delivering new units in a poor character and setting and disregarding an opportunity of provide good highway safety and improving highway safety on Canton Street.

In light of the above, the City Council as applicant is re-submitting a slightly revised design, from the original. The design in AL03 Rev D sets out the traffic movements will now be one-way with entry from Canton Street only and Amoy Street providing entry and only exit from the site. The inclusion of a speed table and raised setts on the highway surface addresses concerns of speed and highway safety.

All other elements of the design remain unchanged.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further.



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ENC:

- 1 CD AL02 Site Analysis & Design Development – montage.
- 1 – CD Revised design submission AL03 Rev D.
- 1 – Hard copy 1933 Historical Street Map.