

Item No	Application No. and Parish	8 Week Date	Proposal, Location and Applicant
(6)	05/01458/CON Newbury Town Council	22 nd August 2005	Demolition of existing building. Land at Bankside House, Newbury. Thomas and Co.

Recommendation Summary: **The Head of Planning and Transport Strategy be authorised to grant planning permission.**

Ward Member(s): Councillors Hunneman and Rodger

Reason for Committee determination: Prominent building within a sensitive area. New design is contentious.

Committee Site Visit: N/A

Contact Officer Details

Name: Michael Butler
Job Title: Principal Planning Officer
Tel No: (01635) 519111
E-mail Address: mbutler@westberks.gov.uk

Site History

110965 Change of use from light industrial to offices. Approved July 1979.
113721 External alterations. Approved November 1980.
04/03092/CON. Identical application to the current scheme. Refused 23rd March 2005.
(Officer recommendation – approval).

Publicity of Application

Neighbour notification expired – 26th July 2005.
Press Notice expired – 28th July 2005.
Site notice expired – 1st August 2005.

Consultations and Representations

- Town Council:** Objection - similar grounds to the main scheme – see other agenda item. [05/01457/FULMAJ].
- Newbury Society** Strongly object. Existing buildings should be retained since they add character to the area. Similar grounds to the principal scheme noted above.
- Public protection** Conditional permission. Noise and contaminated land.
- Correspondence:** One letter from local resident - West Mills is a designated Conservation Area. Proposed scheme is too big and parking will be a problem.

Policy Considerations

PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment.
Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 to 2016. Policy EN4
West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006. Policy ENV33.

Description of Development

The proposal is to demolish an unlisted building within the Conservation Area of the town centre of Newbury. This is in order to facilitate the erection of 13 flats and one retail unit - see elsewhere on the agenda. [05/01457/FULMAJ].

Consideration of the Proposal

The application will be considered under the following heading.

1. Impact of loss of building on the Conservation Area.

Bankside House is an attractive building within the streetscape of West Mills and also enjoys a canal side frontage. It is a reasonably imposing building which does make a neutral contribution to the local Conservation Area. Its loss, if not juxtaposed with the building of a new scheme on the same site, would however, be detrimental to the area and so contrary to policy. [Since an ugly gap would be left within the street and canal side frontages.] However it is the applicant's intention to replace the building with a scheme

which will make a more positive contribution to the Conservation Area and the surrounding townscape. This should then, in turn, enhance the visual setting of the Conservation Area and the various listed buildings located nearby.

It is considered therefore that the loss of the building, whilst regrettable to an extent, will not be so harmful as to merit refusal, particularly since the new residential uses proposed within the scheme to replace the building will be of considerable benefit to the town centre, that is, it will add to the vitality of the centre during the evenings and weekends when, in normal terms, the office uses would be unoccupied. [PPS6 refers]. Accordingly it is considered that the demolition/loss of the building will comply with both local and strategic policy in regard to the enhancement and protection of the Conservation Area.

Conclusion

Given the above, the application is considered acceptable.

Full Recommendation

The Head of Planning and Transport Strategy be authorised to grant conditional permission.

1 The development shall be started within five years from the date of this permission and implemented strictly in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the desirability of the development against Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 should it not be started within a reasonable time.

2 The building concerned shall not be demolished until a contract has been let for the erection of the 13 flats and one retail unit on the site as permitted under application No. 05/01457/FULMAJ.

Reason: to ensure there is no unsightly gap left in the street frontage for a long period of time, which would be harmful to visual amenity and the Conservation Area in accord with Policy ENV33 in the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006 and Policy EN4 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 to 2016.

3 Before the demolition is commenced, a method statement indicating how the building is to be demolished, in regard to such matters as dust suppression, the removal of materials, working hours and suppression of noise during demolition shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The demolition shall then be carried out in strict accord with the statement.

Reason: to protect local amenity in accord with Policy OVS2 in the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

4 The hours of work of demolition for all contractors (and sub-contractors) for the duration of the site development, shall unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority be limited to; 7.30 am to 6.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays, 7.30 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays, and NO work shall be carried out on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to protect the amenities of surrounding residents in accordance with Policy DP5 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 to 2016 and Policies OVS2 and ENV30 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

5 No development (other than investigative work) approved by this permission shall be commenced prior to a contaminated land assessment and associated remedial strategy, together with a timetable of works, being submitted to the Local Planning authority for approval. Two copies of a contaminated land assessment shall be submitted to the LPA, these must include; a desk study, details of investigative works and sampling, risk assessment and remediation strategy.

(a) The desk study shall detail the history of the site uses and propose a site investigation strategy based on the relevant information discovered by the desk study.

(b) A suitability qualified Consultant shall be appointed to investigate the nature and extent of any contamination, if any, in, on or under all parts of the land to which this permission refers. All investigative works and sampling on site, together with the results of analysis must be submitted to the LPA (and the Environment Agency as appropriate).

(c) If a hazard or hazards are identified from such investigations, a site specific risk assessment shall be undertaken to consider risks to the following: wildlife, livestock and ecosystems, building materials, water resources, the future users of the site, surrounding land and any other persons.

Reason: in order to protect the amenities of existing or proposed occupant/users of the application site or adjacent land.

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