FC32:1

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
- 4 JAN 2010
RECEIVED

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
HIGH STREET
EARL SHILTON
LEICESTERSHIRE

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
DEVELOPMENT REPORT

1.0 THE PROPOSED SITE

1.1 This application relates to an area of lands as edged red on the location plan (appendix B) fronting and to the rear of High Street, Earl Shilton. A frontage single storey building, 119 High Street was formerly used as a retail unit and following cessation of trading has been empty since July 2006. This unit is predominantly utilitarian in structure and built of brick and render, and sited in part over a prior site of a row of frontage cottages. These cottages extended into western lands and basements have now been filled with brick and hardcore but the original structure is still visually available to the frontage street scene with the retention of a 2 metre height of dwelling brickwork whose windows have been sealed, and now forms a brick screen wall securing that part of the site. To the east of the shop a gravelled area has been formed which has been used as a car park for the prior retail unit and also contains within the extreme north-eastern corner one of the Town's CCTV units.

1.2 Passing into the site there are two existing properties situated to the south. The exisiting detached property, 117, does not form part of this application and the adjoining dwelling of 115B, which has been vacant since August 2006 is subject in part to the application details. It is within the curtilege of this property that it is intended to re-site the existing property's garage and allow for alteration of accessing and the provision of a new residential plot.

1.3 The total application site as edged red upon the application details is intended to form an outline submission with reserved matters of access and layout additionally sought for approval at this stage. The site extends to 1,200 square metres approx and the proposals allow for the erection of three new detached residential dwellings, the provision of a new garage in replacement of an existing, and alteration of driveways and accessing to incorporate the proposals.

1.4 The site is situated at the extreme eastern edge of the Town's retail core as defined within the Local Plan. Immediately opposite and to the north is a public house and a range of shops whose trading appears to be deficient (refer section 2.0). Along the frontage eastern boundary is a car park and substation site which serves the adjoining premises of 115 High Street, which has a ground floor retail area and an upper storey used as a hall for varying activities. The remainder of the site area to the entire western boundary, southern and part eastern is residential. Frontage and additional photographs of the existing site are available (refer appendix A 1-4).

2.0 EXISTING RETAIL

2.1 The existing frontage retail unit was vacated in July 2006 when the then tenant vacated the premises in breach of the lease and with rent due. Legal difficulties were then identified concerning Rights of Way to the benefit of the existing rear residential properties, such that the owners undertaking re-establishment of their privileges would have prevented continued occupation of the retail premises, even to the extent of being able to legally enforce demolition. The availability of any secure tenancy for a future new tenant/occupant would naturally not be available due to the legal restrictions. The beneficiaries of the Covenants and Rights of Way have confirmed that such Rights would be waived in the event of residential development occurring in lieu of any potential continuation of retail upon the site.

2.2 The existing retail unit provides a gross 49.5 square metres of floor area of which only 38 square metres (400 square feet maximum) is available as display/trading area, providing for a very small unit sited away from the Town centre. Limited marketing of the premises has been undertaken since unoccupation occurred and there has been little interest expressed, even allowing for the above legal problems. The potential need and location of this unit has been considered in terms of availability and function to the retail element of the settlement. A simple survey was conducted earlier this year (appendix C1) to identify the current availability, form of retail and associated facilities sited within the Town's core centre and as defined by the Earl Shilton Inset Plan contained within the Hinckley & Bosworth Local plan. This survey clearly demonstrates that a complete sustainable range of facilities is already available to the community. The survey also demonstrates that 7.5% of existing premises were vacant, and a survey update during December 2009 identified that this vacancy rate had increased to 9.3%.

2.3 Directly opposite the existing High Street property is a range of newer shop units adjoining a public house, one of which was subject to recent sales procedures (appendix C2). That auction did not achieve a purchaser and the property is now on the open market at the low reserve of £110,000, and in addition to the ground floor retail space allows for a self contained first floor flat. Such low values and lack of sale continues to suggest that additional retail facilities may not be justifiable as a requirement for the current Town centre, particularly on the edge of centre in an area which is highway dominated.

2.4 The entire frontage area of the application site would normally suggest the possible location for a larger retail unit which would have the benefit of parking and servicing. Regardless of the legal problems, the site is poorly located to the Town centre and it could be that additional retail may not be viable but more probably against competitive trading, particularly during this current fiscal period.

2.5 The existing frontage shop premises provides an unkempt area of openness and semi dereliction in an otherwise continuous build frontage to High Street, which re-development could improve. The chair of the Earl Shilton Business Forum has already advised the applicants that they would support demolition and re-development of the site for non-retail to improve this area of the Town.

2.6 Currently retail policies 8 and 13 of the Local Plan would normally apply, which seek to protect and maintain a diverse and vibrant local shopping centre. This existing site is already closely related to abutting established residential to the entire southern and western boundaries, and to the east immediately adjoining 115 High Street a continuity of double sided residential to High Street is maintained. The retail survey that has been undertaken demonstrates that adequate sustainable services are already available to the local community with an excess of capacity provision. The continuance of the site for retail purposes would provide additional superfluous floor space for retail purposes which are extremely unlikely to be developed, and the site would remain as a distraction to a principle approach to the Town centre core, and a possible deterrent to its current vibrancy.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The site lies within the boundary of the urban area settlement as defined within the proposals map of the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan and adjoining the eastern extremity of the zoned central retail/commercial core of the Town.

3.2 With the clearance of the frontage disused retail unit as previously referred to, the site provides the opportunity for re-development which would be more appropriate to the surround residential area and improvement to the accessing and amenity of the rear serviced existing dwellings of number 117 and number 115b High Street,

3.3 The site's topography allows for a gradual gradient through the entire proposal area north-south which will assist the form of the development and the provision of amenity and privacy for both new and retained structures. There are few vegetative features on the site, except for cupresses and evergreen species adjacent to number 117 and general shrub planting, and the frontage area is relatively vegetation free.

3.4 The frontage area forms a dramatic opening to an otherwise double frontage corridor approach into the Town centre, and early design considerations suggest that this should be re-established as it had been when prior cottages were available on this frontage site. It is proposed that two x 3/4 bedroomed dwellings of 1,150 square feet approx should provide such frontage detail in terms of massing with a rear opening to serve the existing rear dwellings and a proposed new 1,350 square feet detached dwelling adjacent to 115b (refer FC:3255.B). The placement of these dwellings will allow for five units to be served off a private drive and due to the configuration of this site and it's accessing is seem to be a suitable dwelling number to provide a maximum dwelling yield for the site without impact on amenity or highway problems.

Reference has been made to the SPG Design Guidance for New Residential Development which allows for the incorporation of the new residential setting and form, and which is compatible with the limitations of the site, and is intended to complement the character of the area. The plots have been sited to allow for adequate amenity space and good relationship to adjoining properties both proposed and existing. Parking, garaging and vehicle movements are in accord with highway, general Borough, and SPG guidance.

3.5 The majority of the frontage surround property to High Street of all class use are in the main from the early 1900s build, and it is envisaged that such vernacular theme and design should be incorporated within the frontage plots 1 and 2 to provide continuity and harmony to the frontage area. The dwellings will predominantly be built of orange/red hue facing bricks with simple slate grey colour smooth plain tiled roofs edged and detailed at eaves and gabling with brick coursing and corbelling. Head and cill openings will incorporate re-con stone and facing brick detailing which will allow for a traditional form of dwelling assimilating well with the existing characteristics of the street scene and complementary to the age structure of the buildings in the vicinity (refer FC:3219.A). The frontage detail can also allow for a railing detail and scissor canopies all of which is contemporary to the design detailing within the area and can be finalised with the Authority at reserved matters stage.

3.6 The existing southern buildings of number 117 and 115b are of a more contemporary build, probably of the 1960's, but it is suggested with the overall characteristics of the area a similar design approach should be undertaken to the external elevational treatment of the new building plot 3 which would assimilate with the established structures on site and the surround.

3.7 Within the eastern frontage of the site there is an existing CCTV column whose rights of erection and/or permission to siting seem obscure. Prior liaison has occurred with the Council's Town Centre Manager and it is confirmed that re-siting is not a requirement of this application, and suitable clausing will be written into the new property's conveyance to allow for maintenance and/or replacement by the Authority as required.

3.8 This application allows opportunity for area improvements to be undertaken which due to the lack of demand for retail should be considered as a positive enhancement to the Town without contradiction to policy, which overall seeks to achieve enhancement and continuation of vitality to the Town.

3.9 Considering planning obligations, it is understood that the Borough requires provision for play and open space, which would be imposed upon any consent via conditions, allowing for contributions to be submitted to the Authority as agreed prior to commencement of development. No other planning obligations have been identified by the Borough Council and as the development is below the threshold of requirement as defined by policy, affordable housing provision is not a requirement. The Leicestershire County Council have also confirmed that the proposed form of development as defined within Leicestershire SRDCL threshold is below the County contributions requirement.

4.0 ACCESS AND TRANSPORT OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 The proposal allows for the demolition of the existing frontage retail unit which will allow for a private driveway to be constructed through the centre part of the frontage area having a minimum width of 4.25 metres with attendant 0.5 metre margins which will seek to regularise traffic movements passing through the site.

4.2 The access and internal movements of the site adhere to the Leicestershire County Council Transportation and Development Part 3 Design Guidance and "Manual for Streets." The revised accessing to the site and the frontage 30 mph High Street provides minimum sights splays in accordance with the Design Guidance, but vision in excess is also available. Preliminary details of the accessing arrangements have been supplied to the Developments Control Department of the Highway Authority during September 2009 without negative comment being raised.

4.3 Car parking has been arranged in open and garage form in compliance with the guidance. The garaging to the proposed plot 2 has been offset from the boundary to allow for a side internal storage area and ease of movement within the approach and turning movements to the garage and parking areas.

4.4 The existing garaging to be removed from the property of 115b is to be provided in a new detached double garage sited and included within the application details.

4.5 The site is located on the edge of the zoned Town core and within 330 metres of the Town centre, where a range of general shops, supermarket and service provision is available. Community facilities, education, churches, dental and doctors surgeries and Parish facilities are also readily available within the immediate central zone.

4.6 Frequent interval bus services pass and are adjacent to the site and are served by a number of Local and National operators. Direct connections to the adjoining Town centres of Hinckley, Burbage and Barwell are available and links further afield to the surrounding County area and Leicester city, where links to National bus and rail services are available. The frequency and availability of transport provides ample opportunity to justify the sustainability of this site in transport terms and suggests the availability of low car usage. All of the transport links are well used, frequent, and provide a better transit alternative for residents in the area undertaking employment, shopping or recreational visits to the adjoining settlements and centres. Links are also available to the regional airports.

4.7 Access to and around the buildings has been fully considered within the design implications of the site and seek to fully comply with Part M of the Building Regulations in respect of viability, movement and access into the premises. Formalised steps, ramps and levels from the surround area have been rationalised in the vicinity of all doorways providing for ease of access and internal layout, which complies with the design requirements of access facilities not only for the occupants but also their visitors.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The attached details demonstrate that there can be little justification for the continuance of retail on this site, as there is already an adequate and varied supply of premises which are more centrally located to the Town core. There are legal problems which do not readily allow for continued retail use and/or an enlargement of premises on the site in an attempt to achieve any form of financial viability.

5.2 The existing over-supply of retail facilities without interest situated within the existing Town core area demonstrates that there is not a shortage of retail floor space. Any further excess of superfluous properties within the Town core will be restrictive, as visually detracting or alternatively imposing an imbalance to the viability and competitiveness of existing businesses, which would be to the detriment of the currently sustainable centre.

5.3 The frontage single storey utilitarian shop unit provides an alien form, which through development will allow for its removal from the street scene and replacement with residential structures built to have regard to traditional materials and form, and allowing for an early assimilation to the area and street scene. Such new development would obscure signage and other detrimental existing features, and provide a character and appearance improvement to this site which currently imposes an incongruous element to this established area of the Town and one of its principal approaches.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION

PLAN & DOCUMENT DETAILS

FC:3219:A SITE DETAILS

FC:3255:B SITE PROPOSALS

FC32:1 DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

FC32:2 LOCATION PLAN (O.S. 1:1,250)

APPENDIX

A. PHOTOGRAPHS – EXISTING SITE

B. LOCATION PLAN O.S. 1:1,250

C. SURVEY – EXISTING RETAIL

D. PROPOSAL – DWELLING PRINCIPLES


162
160
152
150
1.
2.
3.
4.
115
113
119
121a
127b
115b
117
Ashleigh
8
A.


GYM
FACTORY DIRECT PRICES
CERAMIS
Ceramis

1.


CERAMIS
CERAMIS

2.



3.

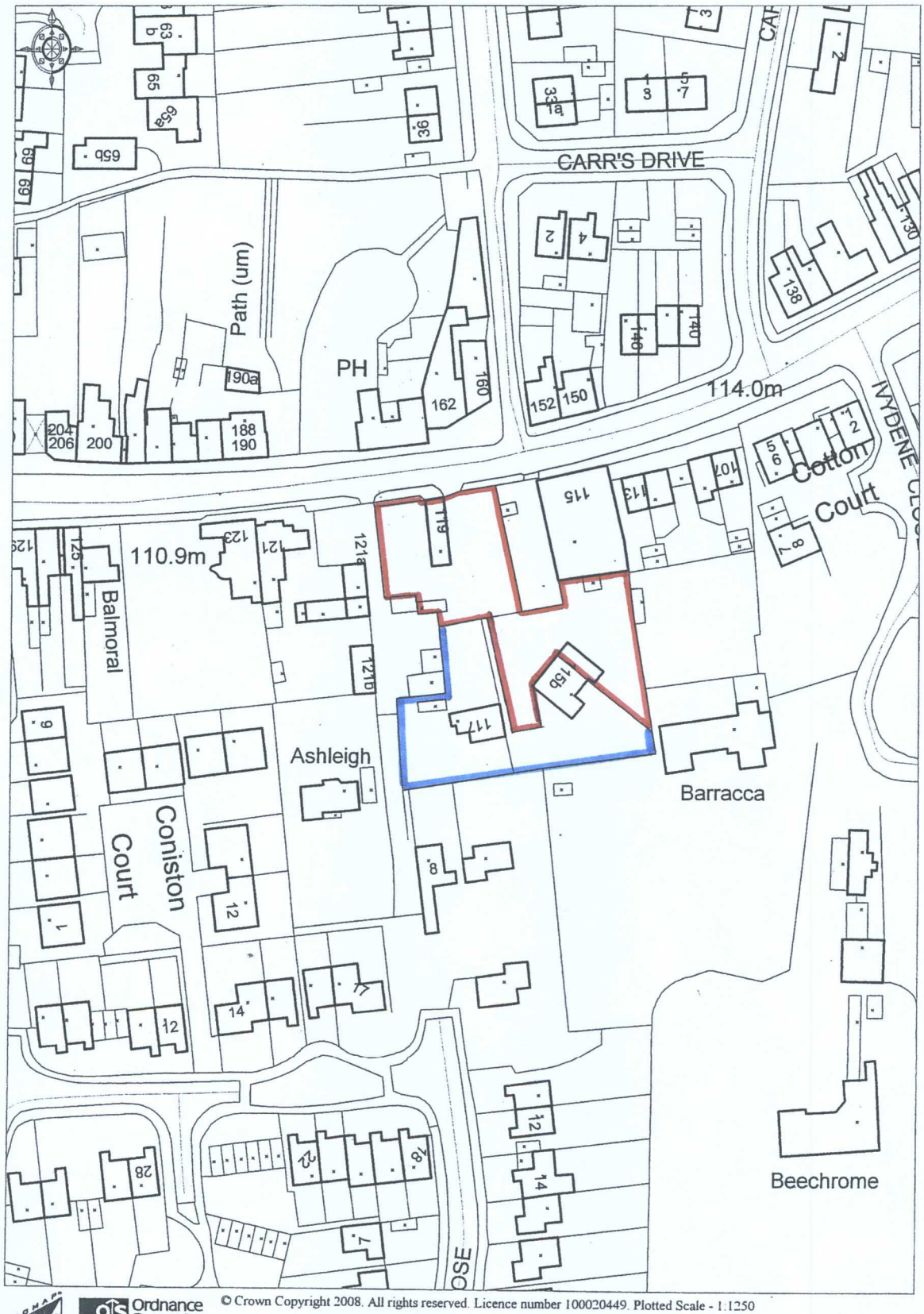


4.

LOCATION PLAN

b.

Lands, 119 High Street
Earl Shilton, Leicestershire



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Location Plan 1:1250

EXISTING LOCAL SHOPPING CENTRE – EARL SHILTON

SURVEY OF FACILITIES (EX RESIDENTIAL) 18/08/09

A1 – RETAIL INCLUDING POST OFFICE & LAUDERETTE		35
	FOOD RETAIL	6
	SUPERMARKET	1
A2	BANKING/BUILDING SOCIETY	3
	OTHER FINANCIAL/PROFESSIONAL	9
A3	RESTAURANT/CAFE	2
	PUBLIC HOUSES	4
	TAKEAWAY FOOD	8
D1	SURGERIES & CLINICS	3
B1	OFFICES	11
HAIR/BEAUTY/OPTICIANS		17
CLOSED SHOPS/PREMISES		8

C1.

Property Auction Wednesday 9th December 2009

Auction Starts at 5pm prompt.

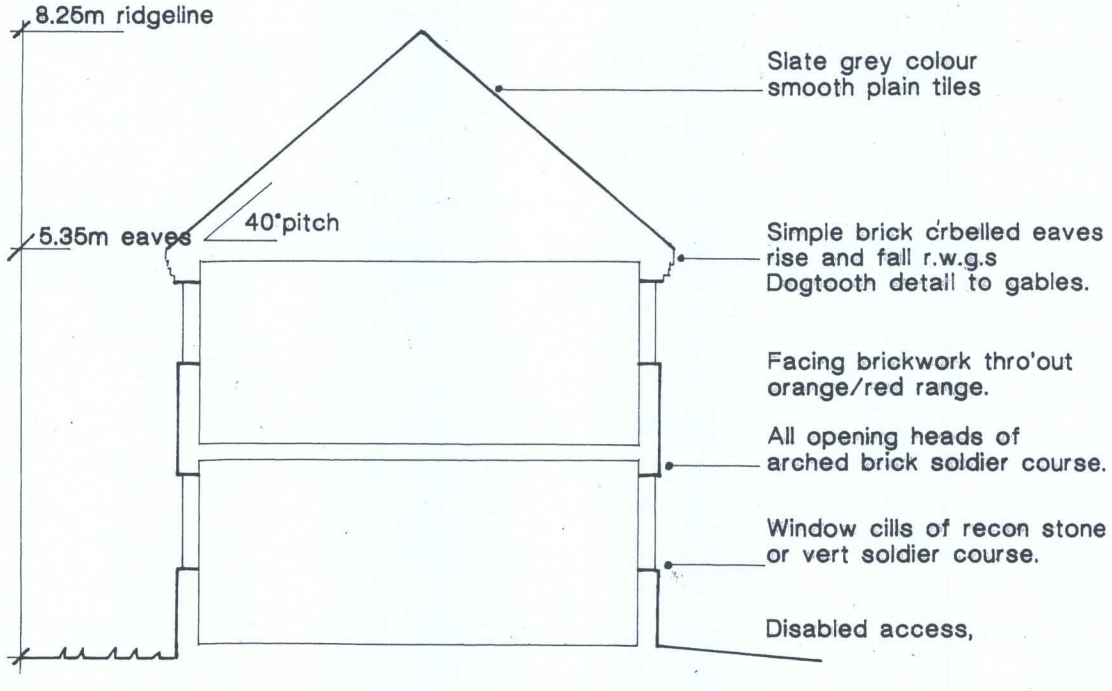
At: Leicester City Football Club, The Walkers Stadium, Banks Lounge, Filbert Way, Leicester

High Street, Earl Shilton

- Commercial Property With First Floor Flat
- Internal Area 1,192 Sq Ft
- Total Rental Income £12,240 Per Annum

£115,000 - £125,000

C2.



FUTURE DWELLING PRINCIPLES 1:100

D.