

APPLICATION NO.	11/01443/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	Full application
REGISTERED	28 June 2011
PARISH	Abingdon
WARD MEMBER(S)	Jim Halliday Holly Holman
APPLICANT	Greene King Brewing & Retailing Limited
SITE	Land at The Fitzharris Arms Thornhill Walk Abingdon OX14 1JH
PROPOSAL	Erection of 3 x 1 bedroom flats (re-submission of withdrawn application 11/00418/FUL)
AMENDMENTS	-
GRID REFERENCE	449282198052
OFFICER	Stuart Walker

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application seeks planning permission to erect a two storey building comprising 3 x 1 bedroom flats. The site is the former pub garden of the Fitzharris Arms and is located to the south of the recently opened Tesco store in the former pub premises on Thornhill Walk. To the south of the site is The Hawthorns, a contemporary development of 10 flats built in 2007/08, and to the south east lies Fitzharris Industrial Estate.

1.2 The application comes to committee because Abingdon Town Council objects.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 The proposal would reuse land classified as previously developed land as defined in PPS 3 "Housing". The proposed building is of a contemporary design, using modern materials and incorporating flat roofed dormers, timber cladding and rendered panels with a tiled roof.

2.2 The plans showing the location of the proposal, its illustrative layout and design are **attached** at appendix 1.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Abingdon Town Council objects to the proposal stating: "The town council considers that the proposed development represents an overdevelopment of the site contrary to Policy DC1 of the local plan. In the opinion of the council the development will generate a significant amount of extra traffic in the area and the development does not allow for safe and convenient access or adequate car parking and as such is contrary to Policy DC5 of the local plan."

3.2 County Engineer: No objections, subject to conditions.

3.3 County Archaeologist: No objections, subject to conditions.

3.4 Architects Panel: "Approve – from a design point of view this is satisfactory".

3.5 One letter of objection has been received from an adjoining neighbour raising the following issues:

- Lack of parking.
- Overlooking / loss of privacy.
- Loss of light to side window.
- The space would be better used for communal use (play area or garden for the elderly).

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 The majority of the site's planning history relates to the former pub use and the details of converting the main building to a Tesco store. In May 2011, an application to redevelop the site with four flats was withdrawn following officer concerns about the amount of development proposed.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 Policy H10 enables new housing development within the built-up area of Abingdon, provided it makes efficient use of land, the layout, mass and design of the dwellings would not harm the character of the area and it does not involve the loss of facilities important to the local community (i.e. public open space).

- 5.2 Policies DC1, DC5, DC6, and DC9 (quality of new development) are relevant and seek to ensure that all new development is a high standard of design / landscaping, does not cause harm to the amenity of neighbours, and is acceptable in terms of highway safety.

- 5.3 The following Planning Policy Statements are also relevant: PPS1 "Delivering Sustainable Development"; PPS3, "Housing".

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Abingdon is identified in the local plan as an area that can accommodate new housing development provided the layout, mass and design of the proposal would not harm the character of the area. PPS 3 "Housing" also makes it a priority to use previously developed land for new housing. Furthermore, the privately owned site is not considered to be an area of open space available for use by the local community as defined under Policy H10. The principle of providing additional dwellings in this location, therefore, is considered acceptable.

- 6.2 The development in the form proposed is not considered to be harmful to the character of the locality. The design is unashamedly modern, with the use of rendered panels and timber boarding, taking its reference from the adjacent contemporary development at The Hawthorns. Officers consider the contemporary design, massing and articulation of the building to be acceptable in this location.

- 6.3 The scheme is not considered to be an overdevelopment of the site. The proposal provides one parking space for each unit and sufficient communal amenity space to serve the needs of future occupants. Dedicated secure cycle parking and a covered bin store are also proposed. The spatial relationship between the new building and existing buildings is also considered to be acceptable. Given the set back of the site from the Tesco store on Thornhill Walk, the development will not appear visually congested when viewed from the street. The gap between The Hawthorns and the new building is similar to the gap between the other end of The Hawthorns and the building that fronts onto Springfield Drive. As such, officers do not consider the proposal would be harmful to the character or appearance of the locality.

- 6.4 There is considered to be no harmful impact on neighbours in terms of overshadowing or overlooking. The side elevation of The Hawthorns has secondary windows at both first and ground floor levels, serving the open plan living area / kitchen of two flats. As both of these flats also have front and rear facing windows, any loss of light to the side windows is not considered to be sufficiently harmful to warrant refusal of the application, especially as the proposed building is located to the north of The Hawthorns and is set off the common boundary. In addition, the proposed building has been designed so that it does not directly overlook adjacent neighbours.

- 6.5 Your officers are also satisfied that the proposed flats would not be harmed by the existing industrial estate to the south east or by the new Tesco store to the north, both of which already co-exist with existing residential properties.

- 6.6 The proposed parking arrangements show one space for each new unit within the

site, which is considered sufficient in this location. Adequate visibility can be achieved at the new access to ensure pedestrian and highway safety. The additional traffic generated from three units would not be so great to warrant refusal of the application, especially as the County Engineer has raised no objections.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposal to erect a two storey building comprising three flats is considered to be acceptable. It will not harm the character of the area, residential amenity or highway safety. The proposal, therefore, complies with relevant development plan policies.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Time limit**
2. **External materials specified in application**
3. **Boundary treatments**
4. **Car parking provision**
5. **Bicycle storage provision**
6. **Vehicular access and visibility splays**
7. **Scheme of archaeological investigation**
8. **Surface water drainage scheme**

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