

Follow up Community Involvement for The Empire Sports Club – 20/10/15

Following the Drop in event on Thursday 1st October, and taking account of the feedback from this event, both on the night and on the Consulting You web site service, the professional team reviewed and discussed the comments and suggestions received. This has resulted in a number of changes to the design by the developer and Architects design team. The changes and responses are shown on the table below and on the accompanying PDF. In the first instance the comments deal predominantly with the 10 new build houses as this is the first planning application for submission; there are also responses to comments made regarding the key aspects of the proposals for the Listed building.

Comments regarding the New houses	Response/changes undertaken
<p>Principles of site development: Empire Club should be developed first, then the new houses. Houses should be terraced as the existing style of homes, not hyper modern. Social housing allocation.</p>	<p>The principle of development was accepted, indeed anticipated and constructive use welcomed. The reasoning for the timing of the applications was explained at the event. The ten new homes can be designed and built more quickly; the listed building requires more thought and significantly more investment and time to do it justice.</p> <p>There is a legal covenant in place regarding the use of the Empire Sports Club, this has an impact on the project programme.</p> <p>The viability of the listed building requires the low energy sustainable housing to be completed and sold first.</p> <p>The listed scheme will include a number of starter homes aimed at first time buyers and Help to Buy will be available on the site.</p>
<p>Height of new houses – this was most frequently commented on by residents of Thomas Street, particularly those sharing a common border. Overlooking and distance between houses was a concern as was loss of light all year round.</p>	<p>The PG Group and the Architects have worked on the scheme to lower the heights of the houses following these comments. The proposed ten low energy houses have been reduced in height by 835mm and also moved further away from the houses in Thomas street by between 600-850mm. They now have a lower floor to ceiling height, meaning that windows and roof lines have all moved down.</p> <p>The proposed houses have been moved closer to Newfoundland road to increase the size of the proposed rear gardens by 600-850mm and increase the distance between the existing and proposed rear facades. (Refer to Proposed Landscape Plan 13632_021)</p> <p>The proposed second floor windows have been re-designed, with one second floor window completely omitted and the remaining window now features obscured glazing to stop overlooking of the Thomas Street Gardens, the location of the window in this room means that it is not in a highly trafficked area of the house and won't not have a significant impact on the existing residents.</p>

<p>Rear Elevations of new housing - Residents were unhappy that the elevations were not included on display boards at the event</p>	<p>The Rear were added to the website the day after the consultation event as promised on the night, as well as directly emailed to several of the residents personally.</p>
<p>Site density - Residents suggested there were too many new homes in the available space</p>	<p>It was explained that the density reflects the site viability including the cost of building out the Grade 2 Listed Building. The houses are being built as low embedded energy units. There is a need to get a return on the time and investment required bring the entire scheme up to standard. The original terrace in this area featured 11 houses.</p>
<p>Housing Design –residents comments regarding the style and cladding/chosen materials and window boxes were varied and polarised. Age friendly housing was also mentioned.</p>	<p>The use of cladding in the design was chosen as a durable option for the environment. It is also low maintenance for the prospective house owner. It was felt by the developer and architect that the proposed houses should reflect their time and sustainable features rather than offer a poor pastiche of a past style. It is also worth noting that the proposed materials are very much in keeping with other developments which front onto the M32.</p> <p>There are a number of options for the colouring on the house exteriors and this will be taken this into consideration in discussions with the Case Planning Officer.</p> <p>The ten family houses are well designed 3-bedroomed family homes and have been designed to be lifetime homes for the occupants, hence items such as the generous WC on the ground floor and wider circulation space in general.</p> <p>The Empire Sports Club scheme, may be able to offer more age-friendly housing. The scheme will conform to BCC DDA requirements, within the constraints of the listed building.</p>
<p>Affordability of the new homes: Residents perceived these houses will be outside of the budget of local residents</p>	<p>Whilst a final value cannot be given at this stage, existing family homes in BS2 shown on Rightmove as of 20/10/15, range from £169,000 – £299,950.</p>

<p>Ground/building works – concerns about impact to foundations to existing homes</p>	<p>This has been taken on board and all works will be carried out with the oversight of structural engineer’s reports and will not impact the existing buildings. Party Wall Notices and 3m Notices will be issued prior to construction to any property that may be affected by the proposed development,</p> <p>The proposed works are far enough away from the existing foundations to not cause any concern to the residents.</p>
<p>Comments regarding the Street scape</p>	
<p>Historic street scene: It was commented that the proposed housing line was not in-keeping with historic images.</p>	<p>The proposed designs respond to the need for family housing in the area, which this design does. The architects have researched historic dwellings on the site and the new homes are shown to have a similar internal area as the original dwellings. Indeed the original 11 houses on site had building lines to the rear that extend beyond the existing scheme. The additional sustainable technology and need to provide distance between existing dwellings mean that 10 houses are being proposed. An Historic Massing Plan has been produced to demonstrate this.</p> <p>The proposed houses reflect their time and sustainable features rather than offer a poor pastiche of a past style. It is also worth noting that the proposed materials are very much in keeping with other developments which front onto the M32.</p>
<p>Cycle Route: What will happen to the cycle route along Newfoundland road</p>	<p>It can be confirmed that the dedicated cycle route along Newfoundland Road is being fully retained</p>
<p>Trees: Concerns were raised about the loss of the existing trees that border the Newfoundland Road site. The protection they afford from pollution and contribution to air quality, as well as the protection provided to local wildlife communities. In addition it was mentioned that Japanese Knot weed may exist in the car park.</p>	<p>Whilst it is still the intention to remove the trees along Newfoundland Road to allow the historic terrace line to be re-established. The Developer is fully committed to discussing additional tree planting opposite the houses with the appropriate BCC department, with the aim of boosting the greater green buffer on the bank opposite the proposed new houses. It is intended that this will be resolved as the application progresses.</p> <p>The Knot weed issue is yet to be resolved; one resident is claiming it to be spurious. This will be resolved as the planning application progresses. The developer hopes there is no Knotweed on the site as it is extremely expensive and intrusive to remove. Having potential Knotweed on the site is not an advantage for the developer.</p>

<p>Pollarding/Root Protection Zones: One resident was particularly keen to know if the developer would consider pollarding and root protection zones instead of removal</p>	<p>Having reviewed this aspect of the development, it is still felt there is no feasible scheme that can be built here that will not adversely affect the roots of the trees and effectively kill them. It was felt by the professional team that it was more important to retain the 20 metre boundary from the houses to the rear, which has now also been increased.</p>
<p>Tree Maintenance: Residents questioned what would happen to the maintenance and management of the Rowan trees to rear of the houses on Thomas Street.</p>	<p>It has been confirmed that the Rowan Trees will remain – with the exception of one tree that is currently dying. The proposals show that additional trees will be planted, however one resident doesn't want additional trees as they will create more shade. Maintenance of any new trees will fall down to the property owner as with any garden set up. Professional advice will be sought on the best tree species for the space.</p>
<p>Car Port: response to a comment</p>	<p>A resident suggested the new houses included car ports, it is confirmed this is not the case. Charging ports for electric/hybrid cars may have been misunderstood.</p>
<p>Parking and moving parking: There was a suggestion that parking could be moved to the opposite side of the road, with BCC consultation. The loss of this parking for residents of the apartments would be a disruption for the current RPZ</p>	<p>The developer will be holding talks with the council about parking provisions on Newfoundland Road. The parking attached to the Empire Club has only ever been for club members, it has not been available for residents use, these concerns have been noted and investigation into RPZ use is ongoing. Comments on moving the parking to the opposite side of NF Rd were polarised; one respondent requesting removal of all parking bays and not replacing them. The developer would aim to strike a balance</p>
<p>Comments regarding Conversion of The Grade 11 Listed Building to Apartments</p>	
<p>Principle of Conversion</p>	<p>There was a dichotomy over the prospect of conversion of the listed building. People liked the idea of using the building, and saw this as making a contribution to the regeneration of the area, stopping drug dealers using the grounds as currently happens. It was understood that residential use was probably the best option, however the principle of a scheme and numbers of units without parking caused concerns. This has been recorded further below.</p>
<p>Viability: The issue of Viability issue was questioned</p>	<p>An Economic Viability Statement is being funded by the developer and this is also a conversation that will be held with BCC.</p>
<p>On site build process: Disruption for local residents during the build period for proposed conversion.</p>	<p>This is understood by the developer who will make sure a construction management plan is in place and will be submitted and agreed with BCC before construction commences. A line of communication will be made available to local residents during the build process. Disruption will be minimised by approaching it from Newfoundland Road whenever possible.</p>

<p>Development of the Club: Resident suggestion that the Club be development and the car park to rear of Thomas St used for its residents parking</p>	<p>This is not deemed to a viable option by the developer. It should be added that there have been no other offers for the site. This would also make even low cost housing unviable for the site, one aspect of the scheme that residents have requested.</p>
<p>Concerns about public transport: Residents made it clear that PT links not as good as suggested</p>	<p>To an extent this is out of the developers control, however further exploration is needed on this area. The Metrobus plan shows that it will be going through the area and a conversation could be had with FirstBus about the need for bus stops/lanes in the area</p>
<p>Community Engagement</p>	
<p>Community Engagement: There was some criticism that the web site wasn't live sufficiently in advance of the drop in event.</p> <p>Two local residents said they didn't receive notification.</p> <p>One resident didn't like the web registration process suggesting it made the consultation less transparent.</p> <p>It was suggested that no effort had been made to contact the Church.</p> <p>One resident said consultation period was inadequate</p>	<p>The information was added to the web site as soon as it was available, the resource is still live, being updated and providing an opportunity to review the information presented on the day. Design development will be added as available.</p> <p>200 letters were delivered locally covering the following Streets: Thomas Street, Morgan Street, Fern Street, Tudor Rd, Newfoundland Rd (Part), St Nicholas Rd(Part). Councillors and local organisations were also contacted. The full list will appear in the Formal SCI. 29 people registered their attendance at the event. A further 5 came but chose not to register. Posters were placed on the entrance to the building well in advance of the event.</p> <p>Registration on the independent web site, Consulting You.co.uk is required to leave comments. The purpose of this is to verify the authenticity of the individual respondent. This functionality is control outside of our control as the web site is run as a separate business service.</p> <p>Efforts were made to contact the Church by email and telephone, a visit was made to the building and one of the occupiers was unable to provide any information other the numbers provided on the door notice.</p> <p>The consultation period was 3 not 2 hours as suggested and has been ongoing.</p>

JENNY GEE COMMUNICATIONS | Listen > Think > Communicate > Act

2 Fernbank Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 6PZ | Mobile 07802 362 498 | Tel 0117 944 2051 | Email jenny@jennygee.co.uk | www.jennygee.co.uk

Registered Address: Kestrel Court, Harbour Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7AN. Registration No. 07111031.