

BEER & BRANSCOMBE
(Beer)

07/1514/FUL

Target Date: 20.07.2007

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Green

Location: Ingleside (rear of), Fore Street

Proposal: Exhibition building

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority

No objection

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL

The Beer Parish Council objects to the above application on the following grounds:-

1. The roof is too high – as the plans that have been submitted are the original plans, we raised objections previously to the height of the roof.
2. Overdevelopment of the site.
3. Loss of light to neighbouring properties

WARD MEMBER(S)

One of the applicants is the Ward Member for the ward in which the application site is located.

REPRESENTATIONS

No third party representations have been received.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

App.No:	Proposal	Decision	Date
05/1704/FUL	Conversion of outbuilding to exhibition building (Full)	Approved	21.03.06.
04/P2427	Exhibition building (Full)	Withdrawn	03.11.04.

PLANNING POLICIES

Government Guidance

PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment

Devon Country Structure Plan (2001-2016)

Policy CO6 – Quality of New Development

Policy CO7 – Historic Settlements and Buildings

East Devon Local Plan (1995-2011)

Policy S4 – Development within Built-up Area Boundaries

Policy D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness

Policy EN11 – Preservation and Enhancement of Conservation Areas

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Beer Village Design Statement

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

This application relates to a small parcel of land that comprises part of the rear yard of Ingleside, a residential property, and the Jimmy Green Marine retail premises on the western side of Fore Street in the centre of the village.

The site, which is located within the designated Beer Conservation Area, is currently occupied by an outbuilding of lean-to design, the rear (west) and south elevation stone walls of which also form in part the boundary walls of the site.

Access to this rear yard area, which is set back approximately 20 metres from Fore Street, is via a private lane of single vehicle width with no footways which also serves an adjacent area of unmade ground to the south used as an informal private parking area for vehicles, albeit solely with the permission of the landowners, Clinton Devon Estates. The tall and imposing three storey Walrond Medical Centre building also abuts this lane although, in spite of the presence of an entrance to these premises from the lane, its main public entrance is at a higher level from the adjacent public car park accessed from Clapps Lane.

An annotated location plan is attached.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for the construction of an exhibition and studio building on the site in place of the existing lean-to outbuilding but similarly utilising the boundary walls to form two of its sides.

The scheme envisages an irregularly shaped building with an approximate floor area of 45 square metres and a design incorporating a steep 50° pitched roof running north to south with a gable to the south elevation, finished in painted horizontal timber boarding at first floor level, and angled hips to the north elevation. The ridge height of the building would be 6.6 metres.

The proposal involves the use of a mix of stone and render wall finishes, a predominantly natural slate roof and painted timber doors and windows.

The building would serve as a centre for an exhibition of local artefacts and information relating to the history and geology of Beer. More specifically, it is understood that it is intended to house a bomb that fell on the village during the war along with displays of flint, lace, stone and information relating to Beer's history as a fishing community together with its geology as well as that of the wider World Heritage Coast.

The scheme provides for a main exhibition space on the ground floor with additional storage capacity at first floor level.

The proposal is identical to that subject of application 04/P2427 which was withdrawn in the light of officer and parish council concerns regarding the size and height of the building and its dominating impact upon the neighbouring residential property to the north, Haslemere, and the detrimental impact of this upon the character and appearance of the designated conservation area.

A subsequent revised scheme, subject of application 05/1704/FUL, was approved by the Development Control Committee in March 2006. This showed a number of modifications to the roof design in an attempt to address the objections to the original proposal, principally a reduction in the pitch of the roof and the introduction of a sloping ridge allowing a lowering of the main ridge height by 1.1 metres at its highest point on the south elevation of the building and 1.7 metres at its northern end. This proposal also showed a reduction in the span of the roof of approximately 2 metres with the part of the building nearest to the rear of Ingleside/Jimmy Green Marine and Haslemere redesigned to incorporate a flat-roofed element finished in rolled lead.

This permission has yet to be implemented and the present proposal is re-submitted in the strong belief that it is suitable for the site and the 'all-slate' roof is simpler and more appropriate than that approved. Moreover, it is considered that the impact of the taller neighbouring surgery building immediately to the south of the site is already sufficiently greater than that likely to be created by the proposed development such that any additional impact would be minimal. The footprint area of the building would be the same as that of the approved development.

A copy of the submitted elevation drawing, together with the report presented to the Committee in respect of application 05/1704/FUL (including the approved plans) is attached.

CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

Having regard to the extant planning permission for a building on the site, the principal issues in the determination of this current proposal relate once again to the impact of the development upon the character and appearance of the designated conservation area and the living conditions of the occupiers of Haslemere together with the extent to which there has been any material change in circumstances since the withdrawal of the original application, to which the current submission is identical, which was the subject of officer and parish council objections.

To address the latter of these issues first, it is highlighted to Members that the treatment of the boundary between the rear yard area of Haslemere and the application site has been modified to show a 1.8 metre high wall and panel fence and timber pedestrian gate (Haslemere has a right of access across the rear of Ingleside to the rear of the property) in place of a lower wall that previously existed.

In addition, whilst the original and approved revised schemes prompted the submission of four letters of objection, including letters from the occupiers of Haslemere, no third party objections have been raised to the current application.

However, notwithstanding the absence of such objections to this latest proposal it is maintained that the overall height of the proposed building, taken together with its proximity to the site boundary with Haslemere (within 5 metres) would be such that it would unduly dominate the small rear yard area attached to this property to the detriment of the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers. This is the only outdoor amenity space available to the property and, whilst it is acknowledged that the boundary treatment with the site has been increased in height since the submission of both of the previous applications, it is the case that the proposed development would be in excess of three times the height of the wall and fence and in sufficiently close proximity to the boundary so as to appear intrusive, dominant and overbearing.

Equally, although the medical centre building already has a considerable physical impact upon the rear of the nearby properties and premises, including Haslemere, it is considered that the effect of the height and bulk of the proposed building, on account of its closer proximity, would materially worsen the impact upon the rear of this property to an unacceptable degree.

The site is located to the rear of a tightly developed area where it is not unreasonable to expect buildings to be of subordinate height, scale and impact in relation to buildings on the street frontage. It is considered in this instance that the overall height of the building would unbalance this relationship to the detriment of the character and appearance of the wider conservation area insofar as it would appear over-dominant in what is a very modest yard area. By comparison, it is considered that the height and form of the approved scheme subject of application 05/1704/FUL are sufficiently modest that the building sits more comfortably in relation to the surrounding development.

For these reasons it is considered that the proposal, as per the same original scheme submitted under application 04/P2427, is unacceptable.

CONCLUSIONS

Whilst the need to incorporate additional space for storage purposes within the proposed exhibition building is recognised, as before it is considered that the appreciable height increase necessary to achieve this would result in a building that would be excessively dominant and overbearing in relation to the neighbouring property Haslemere and its small rear amenity space to the detriment of the general level of amenity enjoyed by the occupiers as well as in relation to the small yard area in which it would sit to the detriment of the character and appearance of the designated conservation area.

Although the impact already created by the adjacent medical centre building is significant, it is considered that this building is of a height and scale that is unsympathetic in the context of the neighbouring buildings and that it would be wholly inappropriate to allow a further building close by that is excessively imposing in relating to its surroundings.

For these reasons, it is considered that the application should be refused.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would by reason of its height, bulk, and proximity to the site boundary, have an unduly dominating and overbearing physical impact upon the rear aspect and yard area of Haslemere, the neighbouring property to the north, resulting in an unacceptable loss of amenity to the occupiers. As a consequence, the proposal would be contrary to the provisions of Policy CO6 (Quality of New Development) of the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 and Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the adopted East Devon Local Plan 1995-2011.
2. The proposed development, by reason of its height and bulk and the modest size of the site, have an unduly dominant and intrusive impact upon the surrounding area and relate poorly in visual terms to neighbouring buildings to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area, which forms part of the designated Beer Conservation Area. As a consequence, the proposal would be contrary to the provisions of Policies CO6 (Quality of New Development) and CO7 (Historic Settlements and Buildings) of the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 and Policies S4 (Development Within Built-up Area Boundaries), D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) and EN11 (Preservation and Enhancement of Conservation Areas) of the adopted East Devon Local Plan 1995-2011.

List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report.