

## **REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Reference No:** HGY/2008/1021

**Ward:** Crouch End

**Date received:** 06/05/2008

**Last amended date:** N / A

**Drawing number of plans:** PL01, PL02, PL03, PL04 & PL05.

**Address:** Land rear of 27 - 47 Cecile Park N8

**Proposal:** Conservation Area Consent for demolition of existing 39 garages and erection of 5 x 2/3 storey three bedroom house with associated landscaping and 10no. car parking spaces

**Existing Use:** Garages

**Proposed Use:** Residential

**Applicant:** Mithril Homes

**Ownership:** Private

### **PLANNING DESIGNATIONS**

Conservation Area

Road Network: Borough Road

**Officer Contact:** John Ogenga P'Lakop

### **RECOMMENDATION**

REFUSE PERMISSION

### **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

Approximately 40 lock-up garages currently occupy the site. The garages are situated along the southern boundary of the site. Vehicle access is gained between numbers 37 and 39 Cecile Park. Much of the site is gravelled. The site is within The Crouch End Conservation Area; the southern edge of the site forms the boundary of the Conservation Area.

### **PLANNING HISTORY**

9 applications for the erection of lock up garages were submitted between 1967 and 1984 with the most significant being the granting of permission for 39 garages in 1967.

OLD/1986/0974 - Erection of 17 lock up garages REFUSED 28/07/86

- OLD/2000/0604 - Residential development to provide 7 x 2 storey houses and 1 self-contained flat with car ports / parking for 14 cars, also 26 lockup garages REFUSED 15/12/00
- OLD/2000/0605 - Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of garages REFUSED 15/12/00
- HGY/2000/0935 - Application to erect 7 houses and one flat and garages in basement area REFUSED 05/12/00 subsequent appeal DISMISSED
- HGY/2000/0933 - Conservation Area Consent to erect 7 houses and one flat and garages in basement area REFUSED 05/12/00 subsequent appeal DISMISSED.
- HGY/2001/1696 - Application to erect 6 dwellings and ten garages REFUSED 06/04/04 subsequent appeal DISMISSED.
- HGY/2001/1697 - Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of garages. REFUSED 27/07/04 subsequent appeal DISMISSED.
- HGY/2005/1985 - Demolition of existing 35 garages and erection of 5 x 2 storey three bedroom houses with associated landscaping and 10 No parking spaces. WITHDRAWN 14/12/05
- HGY/2005/1987 - Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of 35 garages. WITHDRAWN 14/12/05

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The application proposes the demolition of 39 existing garages situated on the site and erection of 5 x 2/3 storey three bedroom houses with associated landscaping and the formation of 10 no. parking spaces. Units 1, 3, 4 and 5 would contain a ground floor level with combined kitchen and dining room with a first floor level of three bedrooms one with ensuite. Unit two would contain the same layout at the first floor level but would have a separate dining room and a living room at ground floor level with a kitchen situated at lower ground floor level.

## **CONSULTATION**

31/03/2006

Site Notice  
 Transportation  
 Cleansing

Building Control  
Ward Councillors  
Hornsey CAAC  
Conservation Team  
Council Arboriculturalist  
63a, 1 – 63 (o) Cecile Park, N8  
30 – 52 (e) Cecile Park, N8  
17a, 29a, 29b Cecile Park, N8  
2 – 46 (e) Tregaron Ave, N8  
7 – 29 (o) Elm Grove, N8

## **RESPONSES**

### **Conservation Officer**

I have noted the 2 no. Inspector's decisions on previous proposals for the site and am mindful of their assessments.

The proposals have been amended since my observations in April 2006, and now feature 5 separate detached houses arranged on the site with significant gaps between them. In terms of layout I consider this is a significant improvement as the proposed built form is visually permeable with views through these gaps.

I note how the levels step down across from the south from the houses on Elm Grove to their rear gardens, to the site itself and to the Cecile Park gardens on the north side, and I note the distances between the proposed development and the existing terraces, and that there are no windows proposed at first floor level facing Elm Grove.

The important issue I feel still needs to be resolved is the form of the roof. As proposed it is a mansard form with a roof pitch which is far too steep – essentially it results in internal accommodation which is comparable with a full blown 2 storey house. Visually these 'mansards' appear as a developers diluted 'mock 'Georgian' roof form which visually jars and looks out of place in this backland context in the Conservation Area. They appear visually too obtrusive - as over bloated roofs – essentially the developer is trying to cram too much in. It is important that the architectural form of the late Victorian terraces should remain visually dominant and any replacement development for the garages should clearly be subordinate in scale, size and visual appearance. This may be achieved by a 'neutral' form and style of development.

I would therefore recommend that the 'mansard' roof form be deleted and that the reduced first floor accommodation be within a double pitched roof form, i.e. say 45 degree pitch. This would reduce the overall mass and bulk of development at first floor level, and I consider that the resulting roof form would appear visually harmonious with the existing Victorian terraces and preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

On this basis I consider that in principle the scheme can be acceptable subject to the receipt of satisfactorily amended drawings and to the approval of good quality external facing materials.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY**

PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment

Policy CSV7 – Demolition of buildings in conservation areas – Unitary Development Plan 2006.

## **ANALYSIS/ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION**

Advice in PPG15 states:

*“4.26 In exercising conservation area controls, local planning authorities are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area in question; and, as with listed building controls, this should be the prime consideration in determining a consent application. In the case of conservation area controls, however, account should clearly be taken of the part played in the architectural or historic interest of the area by the building for which demolition is proposed, and in particular of the wider effects of demolition on the building's surroundings and on the conservation area as a whole.*

*“4.27 The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. The Secretary of State expects that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings (paragraphs 3.16-3.19 above). In less clear-cut cases - for instance, where a building makes little or no such contribution - the local planning authority will need to have full information about what is proposed for the site after demolition. Consent for demolition should not be given unless there are acceptable and detailed plans for any redevelopment. It has been held that the decision-maker is entitled to consider the merits of any proposed development in determining whether consent should be given for the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area.”*

It is clear from this advice that Local Planning Authorities should not grant conservation area consent for demolition where an acceptable scheme for the replacement development is not in place. In the light of the fact that the planning application for the redevelopment of this site is recommended for refusal, it is not considered appropriate for this application for conservation area consent to demolish the existing garages should be agreed.

Policy CSV7 of the Unitary Development Plan reflects this advice and seeks

to protect buildings within conservation areas by refusing applications for their demolition where that demolition would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. As no replacement scheme is in place in this case, the demolition would have an adverse impact and therefore it is considered inappropriate to grant conservation area consent.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The application site is located

This application seeks conservation area consent to demolish the existing garages on the site. The demolition is required to allow the redevelopment of the site for a residential scheme.

Policy CSV7 of the Unitary Development Plan reflects the advice in PPG15 and seeks to protect buildings within conservation areas by refusing applications for their demolition where that demolition would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. As no replacement scheme is in place in this case, the demolition would have an adverse impact and therefore it is considered inappropriate to grant conservation area consent.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**REFUSE PERMISSION**

Registered No. HGY/2008/1021

Applicant's drawing No.(s) PL01, PL02, PL03, PL04 & PL05.

For the following reason(s)

1. The proposed demolition of the garages would be premature in that the Local Planning Authority has not received an application and / or granted planning permission for a suitable replacement development. Premature demolition would not be in the interests of preserving the character and appearance of the Scotland Green Conservation Area contrary to Policy CSV7 'Demolition in Conservation Areas' of the Unitary Development Plan 2006.