

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons

for

comment:

Comments: Planning Application 18/00248/FUL

Berwick Conservation Advisory Group (CAAG) asks Northumberland County Council to refuse this application.

This is the third application relating to proposed alterations to the scheme for which permission has already been granted (Ref: 17/02774/FUL). The concerns relating to the two previous applications are still relevant.

The Design and Access statement is much too brief and does not address the impact of the proposed development on the Scheduled Ancient Monument (the Walls), the surrounding listed buildings and St. Aidans's itself, an important landmark building within the Conservation Area. There is no reference to the protection of the six large trees (presumably with tree preservation orders) which will be affected by the south facing section of the proposed development. The plans provided are minimal with no plan showing the relationship between the height of the buildings and the Walls. Views from the Walls into the Conservation Area and from Tweedmouth are not considered.

The proposed houses are less obtrusive than those in previous applications but they will still have an impact on this very important part of the Conservation Area with its outstanding heritage assets.

The cavalier way any archaeological assessment is dismissed implies that archaeology is not important. The garages in the original application were acceptable since their foundations were minimal. The Conservation Officer and County Archaeologist dealing with that application had concerns about the construction of any building on the school yard and only agreed to a redesigned garage block of timber construction built on existing concrete. Houses on the other hand must have foundations which penetrate the ground and these together with service trenches pose a threat to archaeological remains. The argument that the builders would know if they came across anything of importance is dangerous and no indication is given as to what would happen if this were to be the case. The developer has not even included a desktop survey. If he had he would know that relatively recently this area had the ovens which produced cannon balls (Fuller 1799).

The design of the houses is uninteresting with no attempt being made to reinforce local distinctiveness through appropriate design and the use of appropriate materials. These houses will not make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. The stone areas are minimal and should be of local Doddington sandstone not Art stone. Art stone is a veneer which is easily damaged.

CAAG objects to the pattern this development would set whereby a Developer gets approval for one plan and then alters it to add additional housing. Building these houses was not considered necessary to the project in the initial application, a clear case of 'Planning Creep'. There is no indication that the Developer has sought advice from the authority, rather surprising when the two previous applications have been refused.

It is the wish of CAAG that this application should also be refused. Margaret Shaw, Chair, on behalf of CAAG members who assisted in compiling this objection.