

Urban Design Comments

F/23/95177 – Land South of Nightingale Avenue

From: Urban & Landscape Design Team to Development Management

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Date: 18 May 2023

Proposal: Residential Development to Provide 2 no. Two Bedroom and 2 no. One bedroom Dwellings

Summary:

- Well-achieved balance between built form, parking and landscape.
 - Potential overbearing into the adjacent neighbour (No. 15 Falcon Square) caused by the restrict distances between existing and proposed buildings.
 - The design and appearance of the development is considered to be acceptable and to respect the character of the surrounding area.
 - Recommendations to improve the amount of private amenity space provided for the number of occupants of each flat (see below).
 - There are some discrepancies between the various drawings submitted.
 - Charging points for vehicles and Ebikes are needed
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These comments represent a desk-top study of the plans dated 4 May 2023 and should be read in conjunction with comments from the Landscape and Ecology Officers.

1. Site Context

This is a highly constrained 'backland' site with a number of challenges that need to be taken into consideration, in particular protecting the amenity of neighbouring residential properties, poor access to the site, as well as the potential impact of existing uses upon future occupants of that proposed.

2. Layout and Amenity Considerations

In general, the proposed layout seems to be the most suitable given the site constraints.

However, there is some potential overbearing into the adjacent neighbour (No. 15 Falcon Square) caused by the restricted distances between existing and proposed buildings. The proposed roof form tries to minimise the adverse impact upon the amenity of existing neighbouring properties in terms of light, outlook and privacy.

The internal layout arrangement shows Plot 1 and 2 as two-bedroom flats. It is a shame that when comparing the size of the propose rear gardens, these plots are the ones with the smallest rear gardens. It would be encouraged to rearrange the internal layout in order to provide a reasonable amount of private amenity space for the number of future occupants of each flat, e.g., proposing large rear gardens for 2 bed-apartments.

Assurance is needed that pedestrian access to the site from Nightingale Avenue is safe and well-lit after dark.

Parking & Servicing

The proposed site is within a sustainable location on a walking distance to a number of facilities. The parking approach to provide one space per flat to reduce the dominance of the parking area whilst allowing to expand the soft landscape and private amenity areas is supported.

Charging points for electric vehicles need to be provided and agreed now. To attempt to retrofit vehicle charging infrastructure via planning condition is likely to result in loss of soft landscape.

The cycle storage should be able to accommodate non-standard cycles and include a charging point for Ebikes.

3. Scale and Height

A two-storey building is considered appropriate on this 'backland' site. Also, the proposal is successfully arranged to address the pedestrian access from Nightingale Avenue whilst providing natural surveillance to this link. It is important to ensure that vistas are suitable framed and terminated.

4. External Appearance and Materials

The use of red brick is supported, and it reflects the surrounding development. There are some discrepancies between the Coloured Site Layout and the Coloured Street Scenes regarding the proposed roof colour material. It would be encouraged to propose a red/ brown plain clay tile. Furthermore, the Coloured Site Layout and the Landscape Proposed Plans show different materials for the hard landscaping material on the parking area. Impermeable block paving to the parking area and parking bays is welcomed.

5. Sustainability

To support the Council's commitment to mitigate climate change:

- Provide minimum parking provision
- Provide charging points for electric vehicles, Ebikes and other forms of micro-mobility
- Consider introducing green and blue roofs and walls to reduce hard surfaces and control water at source
- Include additional trees and soft landscape to reduce hard surfaces, slow surface water run-off, provide shade and create habitats / corridors for biodiversity
- Incorporate permeable surfaces and multi-functional SuDS in accordance with advice from Landscape and Ecology Officers
- Consider installation of photovoltaics
- Reduce levels of CO₂ emissions via energy efficiency and choice of materials
- Incorporate efficient mains water consumption measures

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- Orient buildings to maximise solar gain and provide natural surveillance of surrounding streets and spaces to encourage active travel
- Include measures to provide outdoor shade and minimise indoor heating
- Ensure habitable rooms enjoy dual aspect to maximise solar gain, improve ventilation and maximise overlooking of surrounding streets and spaces