

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Item No:	23
Address:	The Lower House, Winchester Road, Wickham, Fareham Hampshire PO17 5EU
Parish/Ward	Wickham
Proposal Description:	Conversion of existing house into 3 no. 3-bedroom dwellings
Applicants Name	TRY homes
Case No:	05/01045/FUL
W No:	W01569/10
Case Officer:	Elaine Patterson
Date Valid:	21 April 2005
Delegated or Committee:	Committee Decision
Reason for Committee:	At the request of a councillor
Site Factors:	Wickham Conservation Area Conservation Area

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Site Description

- The application site comprises the Grade II listed building, Lower House, which is thought to have mid C17 origins although its front elevation has the appearance of a large Georgian house.
- The building has undergone a number of phases of development, which are described in Edward Roberts report and the architect's supporting statement.
- Briefly, the remains of a mid C17 timber framed wall exist to the rear of an early C18 north-south 3-bay linear building with a service wing offset to NW.
- The front elevation was raised to 3-storey in the C19 to give a more impressive appearance and to make the attic more usable. In the C19, rooms were also added to the rear and the 2 ground floor ones are generously proportioned with full height sash windows to bays.
- A C20 addition was added to front of the service wing.
- Alterations over the years have resulted in the loss of principal staircase and other period features such as fireplaces and original ceiling to one of the garden reception rooms in the main house. However, the original floor plan of the principal C18 house is clearly discernable along with the substantial stack to the service wing. The building contains a very fine early 1700s panelled room to the south of the hall and another panelled room to the north with principal bedrooms above these. The position of the offset front entrance is puzzling but Edward Roberts feels that this has most likely been retained from the original timber framed 3 bay house despite the obvious later attempts to gentrify the front façade.
- Altogether the house is much more interesting than one would initially imagine from its somewhat quirky external guise

Relevant Planning History

- W01569/07LB Internal and external alterations to provide 3 No: three bedroom dwelling units. Refused. 23.12.04
- W01569/08 Demolition of existing veterinary and horse hospital, offices and ancillary buildings; construction of residential development of 23 dwellings comprising; 9 no. three bedroom terraced houses; one block of flats comprising 4 no. two bedroom flats; one block of flats comprising 2 no. one bedroom and 5 no. two bedroom flats; division of existing house into 3 no. three bedroom dwellings all with associated parking. Committee minded to approve 10.3.5
- W01569/09LB Conversion of building into 2 No. three bedroom dwellings. Permission. 14.03.05
- W01569/10 Conversion of existing house into 3 no. three bedroom dwellings. To be determined.

Proposal

- It is proposed to split the exiting listed building into three units, as originally proposed, instead of two, as approved on 14.03.05

Consultations

Conservation:

- This proposal was refused in December 2004. Since no new case has been made to justify the proposal then there is no reason to change my recommendation. A scheme allowing a substantial amount of new development on the site has been permitted and this will clearly pay for the repairs and refurbishment of the historic building as well as convert it to two viable units
- Further sub-division of the house will harm its special interest as a listed building and should be resisted.

Highways Engineer:

- 3 units reduces parking on site to 1.43 spaces per unit.

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- Mindful of the local residents concerns it would be beneficial if the applicant provided 1 or preferably 2 additional spaces.
- However given the sites close proximity to the centre of Wickham I do not consider a highways reason for refusal could be successfully sustained at appeal.

Representations:

Wickham Parish Council

- Comment only insufficient car parking for the development. The safety of the access to parking from the entrance road should be confirmed by the highways authority.

Winchester Group for Disabled People:

- Request that the proposed dwellings be made as accessible as possible.

No Letters of representations have been received from neighbours

Relevant Planning Policy:

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review: UB3

Winchester District Local Plan Proposals: HG.19, HG.20, HG.23

WDLP Review Deposit and Revised Deposit: HE.13, HE.14, HE.16, PPG15.

Planning Considerations

The main considerations in respect of this application are:

Impact on the listed building

Parking and Traffic

Impact on the listed building

- The conservation officer appreciates the lengths the architects have gone to in producing this scheme, he feels there is a fundamental difficulty in justifying the 3-way split. The house would quite readily convert into 2 units without a significant loss of historic character or special interest by separating the service wing from the main house. The 3-way split has a more significant impact on floorplan and particularly the historic sequence of spaces or inter-connectness that still exist between principal rooms. This is all the more important given that the C18 panelling on the ground floor front rooms survives and that of the south room is very high quality.
- The creation of an additional front entrance would create a duality on the principal elevation which never existed, making it appear as a pair of semi-detached houses. The original spatial proportion of the hallway would be reduced and the 2 principal ground floor rooms of the middle unit would be reached by a narrow hall and the upstairs would be served by a narrow staircase formed within a corridor and landing. Apart from loss of historic fabric the circulation space would feel mean and claustrophobic, not what one would expect in a C18 house of this status. The generous proportions of the two existing ground floor garden rooms are more ideally suited to a large family house. There are numerous examples of houses of this size in Wickham, so I feel if the principal staircase was reinstated to hallway and other architectural features were restored then it would be highly marketable.
- The proposals will also impact on the floorplan of the service wing, in particular the creation of a small bathroom for the middle unit to the north of the large chimney breast will mask the historic significance of this feature from the existing service wing bedroom.
- There will be some loss of historic fabric by splitting the attic between 2 units and at this stage it is unclear as to whether the creation of doorway between Bed 1 and Ensuite in Unit 1 can be achieved without significant loss of historic fabric.

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- Although not shown on drawings, a 3 way split could result in pressure to subdivide the garden which is likely to detract from the setting of the listed building.

Parking and Traffic

- The scope for providing an additional car parking space is constrained by the need to provide landscaping for the site.
- Given the site's close proximity to the centre of Wickham, whilst would be preferable, a highways reason for refusal, based on car parking could not be successfully sustained at appeal.

Recommendation

REFUSE – subject to the following refusal reason(s):

Conditions/Reasons

The proposals are contrary to relevant structure plans and policies UB3 and E16, and local plan policies HG.19, HG.20, HG.23 and local plan review policies HE.13, HE.14, HE.16 and PPG15. The proposal would cause harm to the special architectural and historic merit of the listed building. In that:

[a] It is unacceptable by reason of the excessive alteration of historic floorplan would cause loss of interconnectedness between principal rooms of architectural and historic interest, new internal arrangement would detract from character of listed building and result in loss of historic fabric which contribute to the architectural/historic interest of the building.

[b] The proposed new entrance to unit 2 would create a duality on the front elevation which would detract from its special architectural and historic interest as a listed building.

[c] There is insufficient justification for the proposal to divide the listed building into 3 units and this would detract from its character as a building of special architectural and historic interest.

Informatives

01. The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following development plan policies and proposals:-

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review: UB3

Winchester District Local Plan Proposals: HG.19, HG.20, HG.23

Emerging Development Plan- WDLP Review Deposit and Revised Deposit: HE.13, HE.14, HE.16
PPG15.