
Report to: [Planning Committee](#) **Date of Meeting:** [08 February 2012](#)

Subject: [S/2011/1476](#)
[Southport Snooker Club 31-33 Princes Street, Southport](#)

Proposal: [Erection of a four storey block containing 10 self-contained apartments after demolition of the existing snooker club](#)

Applicant: [Mrs Christine Cunningham](#) **Agent:** [RAL Architects Limited](#)

Report of: [Head of Planning Services](#) **Wards Affected:** [\(Dukes Ward\)](#)

Is this a Key Decision? [No](#) **Is it included in the Forward Plan?** [No](#)

Exempt/Confidential [No](#)

Summary

The proposal seeks consent for the erection of a four-storey block containing ten self-contained apartments after demolition of the existing snooker club within land designated as Southport Town Centre.

The key issues to consider are the impacts on the vitality and viability of Southport Town Centre and the impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential amenity.

Recommendation(s)

Approval

Reasons for the Recommendation:

When assessed against the Unitary Development Plan and all other material considerations the proposed erection of a four-storey block containing ten self-contained apartments is acceptable as it will add to the vitality and viability of Southport Town Centre will not cause significant detrimental harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties and therefore comply with policy.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting

Contact Officer: [Mrs S Tyldesley](#) Telephone 0151 934 **3569**

Case Officer: [Neil Mackie](#) Telephone 0151 934 **3606**

Email: planning.department@sefton.gov.uk

Background Papers:

The following papers are available for inspection by contacting the above officer(s).

History and Policy referred to in the report

The Site

An existing two-storey snooker hall on Princes Street within an area designated as Southport Town Centre. There are commercial and mixed uses to the east side running towards Eastbank Street with predominantly residential use to the west side with properties in this area varying considerably in scale and appearance.

Proposal

Erection of a four storey block containing 10 self-contained apartments after demolition of the existing snooker club

History

N/1987/0308 – Retention of a satellite dish on the roof of the premises. Approved 10th June 1987.

N/1987/0137 – Erection of a single-storey extension at the front of the snooker club. Approved 10th June 1987.

S/21901 – Alterations to front elevation. Approved 15th February 1984.

S/20973 – Change of use from retail shop to billiard and snooker club. Approved 24th August 1983.

S/20725 – Change of use from furniture showroom to health and fitness centre. Approved 22nd July 1983.

Consultations

Highways Development Control – Informal comments have been received regarding the ceding of land to the front of the property to provide additional highway land. The agent for the application has indicated that they consider this to be unnecessary and onerous and formal comments are therefore awaited from Highways Development Control.

Formal comments and any conditions that may be required will be reported as Late Representations.

Environment Head of Service – No objection in principle to the proposal subject to a condition being attached to any approval relating to any ground compaction/piling works that are required. The Phase 1 Desk Study submitted by the application sufficiently demonstrates that no further works are required in respect of land contamination.

Merseyside Police Architectural Liaison Officer – A Secured By Design application has been submitted by the applicant and the ALO is satisfied that all elements of crime prevention are covered in the SBD application which indicates a full commitment to meeting the required standards.

Neighbour Representations

Last date for replies: 10th January 2012 (expiration of site notice with press notice expiring 4th January 2012).

Representations received: Objections received from Numbers 10, 12 & 14 Talbot Street. Points of objection relate to the scale of the development being out of keeping with the prevailing form of properties and the detrimental impact of the proposed building on the amenity of properties to Talbot Street with regards to overshadowing and overlooking. Points of objection are also made with regards to matters that are governed by the Party Wall Act and as such are not material considerations for this proposal. Furthermore, one representation makes reference to the absence of access to the rear of the proposed site which is incorrect given that drawing sk01 demonstrates that access is available to the rear through the shared alley with Number 35 Princes Street.

One letter of support has been received from Flat 3 of Grace Court at 21 Princes Street stating that new development is welcomed in the area.

Policy

The application site is situated in an area allocated as Southport Town Centre on the Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan.

AD1	Location of Development
AD2	Ensuring Choice of Travel
CS3	Development Principles
DQ1	Design
DQ3	Trees and Development
DQ4	Public Greenspace and Development
EDT13	Southport Central Area - Development Principles
EP3	Development of Contaminated Land
EP6	Noise and Vibration
H10	Development in Primarily Residential Areas
R2	Southport Town Centre

Comments

As this site lies within the Southport Central Area residential development is acceptable in principle subject to the retail/commercial function of the town centre not being undermined, the development being of a high quality design that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and the proposal complying with all other aspects of the Unitary Development Plan.

The key issues to consider in respect of the proposal are the impact on the vitality and viability of Southport Town Centre, the impact on the character of the area and the impact on neighbouring amenity.

Vitality & Viability

As the proposal does not seek to replace an existing retail or employment use the proposal does not undermine the role and function of Southport Town Centre and while a leisure use will be lost this alone is not reason for refusal.

As the proposal will create further residential accommodation within the Town Centre then this will provide for an increase in potential users of town centre based facilities thereby adding to the vitality of this area.

Character of the Area & Streetscene

The form of the existing building does not contribute positively to the wider character of Southport Town Centre, and this proposed building is a better link between the more modern developments to Eastbank Street and surrounding roads and the established two-storey and greater residential properties to Princes Street, Talbot Street and the wider residential area.

One of the representations received by the Authority makes reference to there being no four-storey properties within the area, and that a property of no more than three-stories would be more in keeping with the prevailing form. However, it is clear that accommodation to the fourth floor is present to the adjoining property at Number 35 Princes Street to properties facing this site and to more modern developments seen on Market Street. As with other properties, the accommodation to the fourth floor will be predominantly served by roof lights assisted by the use of glazing to the gabled apexes to the front elevation. This approach is considered acceptable, particularly as the apexes echo those seen to Number 35.

Furthermore, it is evident from submitted drawing number sk01 that the overall scale of the proposed property is less than that of Number 35 Princes Street, the neighbouring property to the right.

As with neighbouring properties, there is variety and interest to the front elevation through the use of varying materials, facing brick, render, stone and cladding, while the strong central break to the building is welcomed as it reduces the overall bulk and massing of the property to the betterment of its contribution to the street scene.

The use of materials and the design of the property ensures that it maximises the opportunities presented by the site resulting of a positive addition to Southport Town Centre. In this regard the proposal is therefore acceptable.

Neighbouring Amenity

A letter of objection makes reference to the existing dwelling negatively impacting upon the amount of light enjoyed to the rear amenity space of a hotel, and that any increase in scale over this building will cause significant harm. However, given that the existing building lies to the north-west of this property it is not clear how any overshadowing is created by the existing dwelling, and how this would be exacerbated by an increase in height. As a result of the orientation of the application site it is not considered to cause harm to neighbouring amenity in respect of overshadowing.

With regards to the matters of overlooking, the arrangement of habitable room windows has shown clear consideration to this issue. Drawing sk01 demonstrates a distance of 21 metres from the rear elevation of the proposed property to the existing dwelling at Number 12 Talbot Street. While the separation distance between the rear elevation of the proposed apartment block and the rear boundary to this neighbouring property falls short of the separation distance required by Supplementary Planning Guidance 'New Housing Development' it is clear that this matter has been shown great consideration in the arrangement of windows to the rear elevation. As is evident from the submitted drawings, the windows to the rear elevation are to be angled from the rear elevation so as to limit any potential harm for direct overlooking to this neighbouring property.

As habitable room windows to the rear elevation will be angled across the rear garden area to the Hotel at Number 12 Talbot Street and towards Number 16 Talbot Street these will only be oblique views and will not cause significant harm through overlooking. Given the existing overlooking arising from the Juliet balconies to the rear of Number 35 Princes Street any overlooking arising from this proposal will not, by itself, cause significant harm to the existing amenity of these properties.

While the internal configuration of the properties cannot be controlled, it is indicated that the main living areas to flats 3, 5, 6 & 8 will be positioned to the front of the building fronting Princes Street with bedrooms and bathrooms to this rear elevation and this will further assist in reducing any potential overlooking.

Amenity for Future Occupiers

While only three off-street vehicle parking areas are provided, this is an accessible location served by a variety of transport modes and has ready access to services.

The area of private amenity space to the rear of the site falls well short of the 300 square metres that would ordinarily be required for a development of ten units, but given the level of public open space within the Town Centre and adjoining areas this is considered to be acceptable on balance.

Provision of Greenspace

As the proposal provides for a net increase of 10 (ten) residential units then in order to comply with Unitary Development Plan policy DQ4 and Supplementary Planning Document 'Green space, trees and development' the applicant is required, in lieu of the on-site provision of an area of public green space, to enter into a legal agreement to provide for a commuted sum for the provision of a new site of green space or enhancement of an existing space. At 2011/12 rates, the required sum per unit is £1815.00.

In addition, to comply with policy DQ3 and the SPD, 3 (three) trees per unit are required to be planted on site. As is evident, the total sum of 30 (thirty) trees cannot be accommodated within the site, with only 6 (six) trees to be provided within the site, and again the applicant will be required to enter into a legal agreement to provide for a commuted sum for the provision of the remaining 24 (twenty-four) trees to be planted off-site. At 2011/12 rates, the required sum per tree is £481.50.

In total, the applicant will be required to enter into a legal agreement for a commuted sum of £29,706 in order to comply with policy.

The agent for the application has confirmed by email dated 25th January 2012 that the applicant is willing to enter into a legal agreement to provide for this commuted sum and for this to be secured by condition, but reserve the right to challenge the payment should a subsequent viability appraisal establish that the payment makes the scheme unviable.

For the above reasons it is recommended that as the proposal will add to the vitality and viability of Southport Town Centre and will not cause significant detrimental harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties that it be granted consent with conditions as it complies with policy.

When assessed against the Unitary Development Plan and all other material considerations the proposed erection of a four-storey block containing ten self-contained apartments is acceptable as it will add to the vitality and viability of Southport Town Centre will not cause significant detrimental harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties and therefore comply with policy.

Conditions

1. T-1 Full Planning Permission Time Limit
2. S-106 Standard S106
3. M-6 Piling
4. P-5 Plant and machinery
5. X1 Compliance

Reasons

1. RT-1
2. RS-106
3. RM-6
4. RP-5
5. RX1

Drawing Numbers

Ex01, sk01, sk02B, sk03B, sk04B, sk05A.

Existing site plan



Sefton Council Department of the Built Environment Jane Gowing Head of Planning Services	S/2011/1476 Southport Snooker Club Princes Street Southport		Standard Site Plan Scale: 1:1250 Date: 24/1/2012 Drawn By: RO BID on	
	OSGR: 333571, 41694	Sheet(s): 489C	Area: 432 sqm	Ward(s): Duks Postcode Sector(s): PR8 1 Polling District(s): W3 Parishes(s): None Found

Proposed site plan

