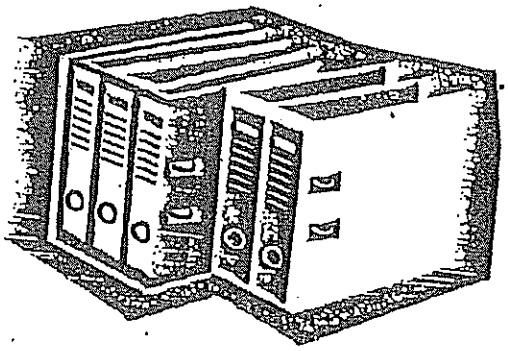
DATE: _____

SCANNING INFORMATION SHEET

OFFICER REPORTS



Application Number: F/2001/5324

SEE REPORT TO DC 3 JULY 2002

WORK SHEET FOR : Emy Circuit

Application Number : F/2001/5324

Applicant : Luff Homes Ltd C/O P D P.

Location : 1, Rectory Close, , Wokingham.
Proposal : Proposed erection of four flats with parking.

Site Notice Displayed ? :

YES	NO	DATE
	✓	4/12/01

Date of Neighbour Notifications : .....

Date of Site Visit : 4 December 2001

Date Registered : 26/11/2001

Earliest Date for Decision : 21/12/2001

Latest Consultation Date/Site Notice Expiry Date : 21/12/2001

This application will have expired on: 21/01/2002. You need to make a decision 1 day prior to this date for this application to count as determined in less than 8 weeks.

Consultation Responses :

PROW - no objection
Ramblers Association - "no comments"
Wokingham TC - "comment - not enough parking"
Highways - conditions.
Env Health - C070/R070 hours.
Landscape - tree protection + landscape details to be subject of condition.
3 Neighbours - as for previous app", additional traffic, out of proportion with site + other houses in close, small amenity/large site coverage/close substandard, on st parking unacceptable, 4 spaces inadequate + no visitors spaces on bend/tree → blind, shared drainage inc no of dwellings → overdevelopment (originally 7, now 6), change character, overlooking, existing devs has changed character, only detached house acceptable.

Planning Issues :

Identified Settlement - character and amenities
highways.

Revised plans - neighbours 1 — comments still apply - how would retention of obscure grazing be guaranteed?

See report to DC 3/7/2002

F/20015324
1 Rectory Close, Wokingham

HISTORY: Planning permission for the existing dwelling was granted in the late 1950's/early '60's and the property has subsequently been subject to extensions and alterations.

In 1990 an application for change of use of to a day nursery/residential use was refused as it would result in loss of a residential unit (97/65107/F). The proposal was the subject of an appeal, which was dismissed as the inspector considered it would result in traffic congestion and disturbance to neighbouring properties, due to vehicle movements and the number of children.

In 1999 an application for the demolition of the existing property and erection of a terrace of three dwellings was refused as it was considered it would result in overdevelopment of the site out of character with the surrounding area and detrimental to the street scene ((99/69692/F). A similar proposal was refused in January 2000 and in November 2000 this decision was upheld at appeal. The Inspector concluded that redevelopment would be desirable in principle and that, with careful planning, the appeal site *"could provide a transitional link between the fairly spacious development in Rectory Close and the more tightly concentrated units in Palmer School Road"*. Two parking spaces were proposed for each of the three two-bedroom dwellings and the Inspector considered a lower level of parking provision may be appropriate in this location.

In 1995 planning permission was granted for the erection of 5 two-bedroom dwellings (one terrace of three and two semi-detached) on the neighbouring 0.09 hectare site (44085 amended by 63241).

PROPOSAL: The proposal is to demolish the existing detached dwelling and erect four flats. Due to concerns regarding the impact on the street scene, revised plans have been received.

APPRAISAL:

The principle of development (BSP H4, H5, H10; SEALP STV1, STV6, SH1; WDLPDD WOS2, WH1) – the site is located within the Identified Settlement of Wokingham, just outside the boundaries of the town centre and conservation area. As such, residential development is acceptable in principle and the proposal, which would result in a density of 67 dwellings per hectare, would comply with national and local guidance regarding the density of development. In addition there is a need for smaller dwellings in the district (WH6).

Impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings (SEALP SBE2, SBE5; WDLPDD WOS3, WBE1) – 2 Rectory Close is a two-storey detached dwelling, situated to the west of the application site. There are no windows in the flank elevation adjacent to the application site. The proposed building (as revised) would be flush with the front elevation of this neighbour (except for the cycle store which would be single-storey and 5.6 metres from the boundary) and project 4.8 metres to the rear. There would be 4 metres between the flanks of the two properties. Due to the distance between the two properties, the projection at the rear would not cause the proposal to be unacceptably overbearing and although there would be some overshadowing (the proposed building would lie to the east of No 2), this would not be so severe as to warrant refusal of the application. There is potential for overlooking of the private rear garden of the neighbouring property from the proposed first-floor side windows in the west side elevation – these would be a bathroom window and the kitchen window, plus a secondary living room window – because the kitchen and living room would have an open layout and these would be secondary windows it would be acceptable to obscure glaze them, to prevent overlooking of the neighbouring garden. This would be an acceptable solution in this instance and this should be ensured by condition.

In relation to 10 Palmer School Road, the front elevations would be flush and the rear elevation would be set back by one metre. Therefore, the proposal would not be overbearing or cause significant overshadowing. There a four side windows at 10 Palmer School Road: two secondary living room windows at ground-floor level and obscure glazed landing windows at first-floor. The secondary living room window, at first-floor level, would be set far enough forward to prevent overlooking of the rear garden of the neighbouring property but it would need to be obscure glazed to prevent overlooking between the first-floor widows in the neighbouring property.

The back-to-back distance between the proposed building and 2 & 4 Palmer School Road would be sufficient to prevent an adverse impact.

Impact on the character of the surrounding area (BSP EN1; SEALP STV6, SBE1, SBE2; WDLPDD WOS3, WBE1) – It was originally proposed that there would be a projecting gable on the rectory Road frontage (projecting 1.4 metres forward of No 2) but it was considered that this would cause the building to be prominent in the street scene and the proposal has been revised so the front elevation would be flush with No 2. The cycle store would project 1.2 metres forward of the main elevation but would be single-storey with a mono-pitch roof.

The maximum ridge height would be 8.9 metres (it was originally proposed to be 9.6 metres). This compares to 6.9-7 metres for the existing house (its neighbours in Rectory Close are similar) and 8.6-8.7 metres for 2-10 Palmer School Road. The ridge would not be significantly higher than the neighbour in Palmer School Road and the hipped design would prevent the property appearing unduly prominent.

Compared to the schemes that were refused previously, the proposed building would span the width of the site but its footprint would follow the curvature of the bend so it would relate well to both of the neighbouring properties and avoid appearing cramped or prominent. It would be set further back on the site compared to the appeal scheme, which would allow space for landscaping.

It is proposed that the parking for the flats would be at the front of the site – the neighbouring property has a similar arrangement, although the other properties in Rectory Close have a more traditional drives/garages. There is scope for sufficient planting to soften the appearance of the parking area and the impact on the street scene is considered acceptable.

Highway issues (SEALP ST3; WDLPDD WT7) – The proposed parking provision of one space per unit would be appropriate, given the proximity to the town centre and there are no highway objections, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: conditional approval

See Report to DC 3/7/02

Please amend description - add at end "and demolition of existing dwelling"

Application Number F/2001/5324
Conditions/Reasons for Refusal

To DC 3/7/02

No	Std Con	Std Reas	Non Std Conditions / Reasons for Refusal
	C001	R001	(5 yrs)
	C012	R012	(materials)
	C017	R017	(boundary treatment)
	C044	R044	in the first-floor side elevations or in any
			elevation of the roof
	C045	R045	all first-floor windows in the side elevations and
			the ground- and first-floor bathrooms windows
			in the rear elevation
	C050	R050	(services)
	C100	R100	(slab)
	C150	R150	(landscaping)
	C151	R151	
	C070	R070	(hours of construction)
	C122	R122	(parking before occupation
		R124	No building shall be occupied until secure cycle
			parking has been provided in accordance
			with the approved details.
	C129	R129	(site parking)
	C130	R130	(mud)
	C140	R140	insert "7" - (bonded material)
1	NO2		Drawing Nos 1465-11D, 12D, 13B, 14C, 10 May 2002
2	NO7.		

Informative for approvals

N16

~~ODDON AREA LOCAL PLAN POLICIES:~~ STV1, STV6, SH1, WOS3, WBE1, WT7

SOUTH-EAST AREA LOCAL PLAN POLICIES: STV1, STV6, SH1, SBE1, SBE2, SBE5, ST3

WOKINGHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN POLICIES: WOS2, WOS3, WHH1, WBE1, WT7

~~GREEN BELT LOCAL PLAN POLICIES~~:

BERKSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN POLICIES: H4, H5, H10, EN1

~~MINERALS~~ LOCAL PLAN POLICIES:

RECOMMENDATION AND CONDITIONS/REASONS AGREED: _____
(Development Control Manager)

Date: _____

RECORD OF SITE VISIT

SITE ADDRESS: 1 Rectory Close Wokingham.

APPLICATION NUMBER: F/2001/5324

OFFICER: Emy Circuit

DATE OF SITE VISIT: 4/12/01

1 SITE/STATUTORY NOTICE DISPLAYED ? No. - affected neighbours have been written to

2. DESCRIPTION OF SURROUNDINGS 2 storey detached dwellings in Rectory Close, Waitrose to S + entrance to service yard, Palmer School Close resid, large No are flats.

3. DESCRIPTION OF SITE/BUILDING

2 sr detached dwelling, delapidated condition + appears unoccupied.

4. RELATIONSHIP TO ADJOINING PROPERTIES

2 sr dwellings to either side - see attached

5. SITE CONSTRAINTS

TREES

ACCESS/PARKING

LEVELS

BOUNDARY TREATMENT

OTHERS

Development Control Ref No:	Received	Listed by	Parish
F/2001/5324	26.11.01	Cllr Robertson	Wokingham

Applicant: Luff Homes Ltd

Location: 1 Rectory Close, Wokingham

Proposal: Erection of four flats with parking and demolition of existing dwelling.

REPORT PREPARED FOR: DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

REPORT PREPARED BY: Head of Planning And Transportation And Emy Circuit

SUMMARY:

Planning History –

Planning permission for the existing dwelling was granted in 1959 and the property has subsequently been subject to extensions and alterations.

In 1990 an application for change of use of to a day nursery/residential use was refused as it would result in loss of a residential unit (97/65107/F). The proposal was the subject of an appeal, which was dismissed as the inspector considered it would result in traffic congestion and disturbance to neighbouring properties, due to vehicle movements and the number of children.

In 1995 planning permission was granted for the erection of 5 two-bedroom dwellings (one terrace of three and two semi-detached) on the neighbouring 0.09 hectare site (44085 amended by 63241).

In 1999 an application for the demolition of the existing property and erection of a terrace of three dwellings was refused as it was considered it would result in overdevelopment of the site out of character with the surrounding area and detrimental to the street scene (99/69692/F). A similar proposal was refused in January 2000 and in November 2000 this decision was upheld at appeal. The Inspector concluded that redevelopment would be desirable in principle and that, with careful planning, the appeal site *"could provide a transitional link between the fairly spacious development in Rectory Close and the more tightly concentrated units in Palmer School Road"*. Two parking spaces were proposed for each of the three two-bedroom dwellings and the Inspector considered a lower level of parking provision may be appropriate in this location. A copy of this decision letter is attached.

Proposal – The proposal is to demolish the existing detached dwelling and erect a two storey building containing four flats. Revised plans have been submitted in response to concerns regarding the impact on the street scene and to incorporate adequate bin and cycle storage.

The proposal has been listed by Cllr Robertson who has concerns regarding the overbearing impact on the rest of the close, narrow width of the road at the entrance to the close and lack of visitors parking.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions.

Background Papers

Held by: Planning Reception
Division: Environmental Services
Dept: Development Control

Contact No: 0118 974 6428/ 6429
E Mail: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

NB: All reports seek to identify environmental, community safety and equal opportunities implications. Consultation with residents and organisations which has or is about to take place, will also be reported.

BACKGROUND

Consultations –

- ***Access and Movement*** – no objection subject to conditions.
- ***Environmental Health Officer*** – no objection subject to conditions
- ***Landscape Officer*** – large Scots Pine to be retained, no objection subject to landscaping and tree protection conditions
- ***Public Rights of Way Officer*** – **no objection**
- ***Environmental Health Officer*** – recommends conditions
- ***Ramblers Association*** – **"no comments"**
- ***Wokingham Town Council*** – "no objection, comment: there is not enough parking"
- ***Local Residents*** – eight letters have been received from three properties in Rectory Close, who object to the original and revised plans. The issues raised are as follows:
  - The proposed building would be out of proportion with others in the close and an overdevelopment of the site. Only a detached house should be allowed on the site. Any increase in the number of dwellings would change the character/be detrimental.
  - The close was originally developed as seven (now six) detached dwellings and has already been affected by the demolition of No 5 and building of Waitrose, sale of part of the land of No 1 and neglect/squatters at No 1.
  - there would be an inadequate amenity area,
  - the close is of substandard width/has a narrow entrance and on street parking is unacceptable,
  - one car parking space per dwelling would be inadequate,
  - the parking would have limited visibility due to its location on a bend and screened by existing/proposed vegetation,
  - addition of cycle shed does not improve the development and would not conform to the building line/would affect the limited space at the front, would occupants use cycles or would the shed be used for other purposes?
  - the existing properties have shared drainage which could be overloaded
  - there would be overlooking of the rear garden of No 2 – how could retention of obscure glazing be guaranteed?
  - the existing hedge, shown for retention, does not continue along the whole of the front boundary.

Appraisal – the main issues are:

A. Principle of development (Berkshire Structure Plan policies H4, H5, H10 South East Area Local Plan policies STV1, SH1, STV6; Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS2, WH1).
B. Density of development and housing mix (South East Area Local Plan policies SH7 and SH8; Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policy WH6 and the Council's density policy).
C. The impact on the character of the area (Berkshire Structure Plan policy EN1, South East Area Local Plan policies SH1, STV6, SBE1, SBE2, SBE8, SBE9 and Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WH1, WOS3, WBE1, WBE10, WBE11)

D. Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties (South East Area Local Plan policies SBE2, SBE5 and Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS3, WBE1)
E. Access and Movement (South East Area Local Plan policy ST3 and Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policy WT7)
G. Flooding ((Policies EN3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan, SPS3 & SPS4 of the South East Area Local Plan WIC16 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft))
H. Comments made by the Town Council
I. Comments made by occupants of neighbouring properties
J. The Local Plan Inspectors Comments on relevant policies

A. Principle of Development

The site is located within the Identified Settlement of Wokingham, just outside the boundaries of the town centre and conservation area. As such, residential development is acceptable in principle.

B. Density of development and housing mix

The site has an area of 0.06 hectares and the proposal would result in a residential density of 67 dwellings per hectare, which would comply with national and local guidance regarding the density of development on the fringes of town centres. The dwelling mix of four two bedroom flats would also be acceptable, given the need for smaller dwellings in the district.

C. The impact on the character of the area

The application site is a wedge shaped piece of land, located on a bend in the road. The proposed building has been designed so that its frontage reflects the curvature of the road and the main front elevation would be flush with the buildings on either side. The cycle store would project 1.2 metres forward of the main elevation, leaving a gap of 4.6 metres between it and the site frontage but it would be single-storey with a mono-pitch roof and would not be unduly prominent.

The maximum ridge height would be 8.9 metres (it was originally proposed to be 9.6 metres). This compares to 6.9 metres for the existing house (its neighbours in Rectory Close are similar) and 8.6 metres for 2-10 Palmer School Road. The ridge would not be significantly higher than the neighbour in Palmer School Road and the hipped design, combined with the angled footprint, would prevent the property appearing unduly prominent.

Compared to the schemes that were refused previously, the proposed building would span the width of the site but its footprint would follow the curvature of the bend so it would relate well to both of the neighbouring properties and avoid appearing cramped or prominent. It would be set further back on the site compared to the appeal scheme, which would allow space for landscaping.

It is proposed that the parking for the flats would be at the front of the site – the neighbouring property has a similar arrangement, although the other properties in Rectory Close have a more traditional drives/garages. There is

scope for sufficient planting to soften the appearance of the parking area and the impact on the street scene is considered acceptable.

D. Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and future residents

2 Rectory Close is a two-storey detached dwelling, situated to the west of the application site. There are no windows in the flank elevation adjacent to the application site. The proposed building (as revised) would be flush with the front elevation of this neighbour (except for the cycle store which would be single-storey and 5.6 metres from the boundary) and project 4.8 metres to the rear. There would be 4 metres between the flanks of the two properties.

Due to the distance between the two properties, the projection at the rear would not cause the proposal to be unacceptably overbearing and although there would be some overshadowing (the proposed building would lie to the east of No 2), this would not be so severe as to warrant refusal of the application. There is potential for overlooking of the private rear garden of the neighbouring property from the proposed first-floor side windows in the west side elevation – these would be a bathroom window and the kitchen window, plus a secondary living room window – because the kitchen and living room would have an open layout and these would be secondary windows it would be acceptable to obscure glaze them, to prevent overlooking of the neighbouring garden. This would be an acceptable solution in this instance and should be ensured by condition.

In relation to 10 Palmer School Road, the front elevations would be flush and the rear elevation would be set back by one metre. Therefore, the proposal would not be overbearing or cause significant overshadowing. There a four side windows at 10 Palmer School Road: two secondary living room windows at ground-floor level and obscure glazed landing windows at first-floor. The secondary living room window, at first-floor level, would be set far enough forward to prevent overlooking of the rear garden of the neighbouring property but it would need to be obscure glazed to prevent overlooking between the first-floor widows in the neighbouring property.

The main rear elevation of the proposed building would be a minimum of 22 metres from 2 & 4 Palmer School Road and although the north-eastern corner of the proposed building would be 19.2 metres from these neighbours, views from this part of the building would be oblique and, therefore, it is considered that the back-to-back distance would be sufficient to prevent an adverse impact.

E. Access and Movement

The proposed parking provision of one car parking space per unit

would be acceptable, given the proximity to the town centre, and the proposed cycle store would provide space for four bicycles. Hence, there are no highway objections, subject to conditions.

Comment: It is considered that the proposal would comply with these policies.

Recommendation – GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.
2. Before the building operations hereby permitted are commenced, samples and details of the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and no external materials shall be used other than those approved.
3. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the slab levels of the proposed buildings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The constructed development shall not vary from the approved levels.
4. Provision shall be made for services, including cable TV pre-ducting, to be placed underground. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no overhead wire cables or other form of overhead servicing shall be placed over or used in the development of the application site or subsequently.
5. The development shall not commence until details of all boundary treatment(s) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be maintained in perpetuity.
6. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development; the approved landscaping scheme (with the exception of planting, seeding and turfing) shall be implemented prior to the occupation of any of the building(s) hereby approved and retained.
7. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the landscaping die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.
8. Works related to the construction of the development hereby granted, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall not take place other than between the hours of 8 am and 7 pm Monday to Friday and 8 am to 1.30 pm Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.
9. No part of any building(s) hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking and turning space herein approved has been provided. The vehicle parking and turning space shall be permanently maintained and used for no other purposes.

F. Flooding

The application site is not within an area identified by the Environment Agency as liable to flooding.

H. Comments made by the Town Council

The proposed parking provision has been considered in section E above.

I. Comments made by Local Residents

- The impact on the character of the area has been assessed in Section C above. It is considered that the proposal would make effective use of a previously developed urban site and would not result in overdevelopment or have an overbearing impact on the street scene.
- The private amenity space for the flats would be small but it is not considered that this would be unacceptable for a flatted scheme in a town centre location.
- The narrow entrance to the Close is a traffic calming feature, forcing vehicles to slow and visibility is considered acceptable. Therefore, the location of the parking spaces is considered acceptable.
- The visual impact of the cycle store has been assessed in Section C above. The Council seeks the provision of convenient, secure cycle storage in new residential development enable future residents to choose between alternative means of transport and conditions are proposed to ensure that the store remains available for this purpose.
- the Council's Drainage Officer considers that the existing drainage system would be sufficient to accommodate the additional dwellings proposed, but regardless of this, provision of foul drainage is not a planning issue.
- A condition is proposed requiring the first-floor side windows to be obscure glazed.
- It is noted that the front boundary hedge does not extend as far as the western boundary of the site. Conditions are proposed requiring the submission of landscaping and boundary treatments.

J. The Local Plan Inspectors Comments on relevant policies

Policy WOS2: The Inspector recommends that this policy is deleted and replaced.

Comment: The application site would be considered as previously developed land and lies within a proposed category A settlement and, hence, would comply with this recommendation.

Policies WOS3, WBE10, WBE11, WH6, WT7, WIC16: amendment or replacement of these policies is proposed but this would not alter the principles involved or the assessment of this proposal.

Policy WBE1: The Inspector recommends that this policy is deleted and replaced. The principle is supported but the policy should be more specific and greater emphasis should be placed on sustainability.

Comment: The proposal would comply with the recommendations.

Policy WH1: The Inspector recommends alterations to this policy to place greater emphasis on sustainability criteria. A new policy WH6(a) is also proposed, which would require good design.

10. The flats hereby approved shall not be occupied until details of the internal layout of the cycle store, to included at least two Sheffield stands or equivalent stands, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority . The cycle store shall be provided, in accordance with the approved details, prior to occupation of any of the flats and shall be retained thereafter.
11. No building shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been surfaced with a bonded material across the entire width of the access for a distance of seven metres measured from the carriageway edge.
13. Prior to commencing work on site, provision shall be made to accommodate all site operatives' visitors and construction vehicles loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The provision should be maintained and used at all times.
13. Precautions shall be taken for the duration of the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris (including blown litter) on the adjacent public highways, in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.
14. The bathroom windows in the side and rear elevations and the first-floor kitchen and living room windows in the side elevations of the development hereby permitted shall not at any time be glazed other than with obscured glass.

Reasons

1. In pursuance of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.
3. In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding buildings and landscape.
4. To safeguard visual amenities.
5. To safeguard the character of the premises and the residential and visual amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties.
6. In the interests of visual amenity.
7. In the interests of visual amenity.
8. To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period.
9. To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to avoid adverse impact on the public highway in the interests of highway safety.
10. to ensure provision of adequate cycle parking facilities and encourage use of sustainable modes of travel.
11. To avoid spillage of loose material onto the carriageway and in the interests of road safety.
12. To prevent queuing and parking off site, in the interests of highway safety and convenience.
13. In the interests of highway safety and convenience.
14. To safeguard the residential amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Informatives

1. This permission relates to the application as amended with revised drawing numbers 1465-11D, 1465-12D, 1465-13B and 1465-14C submitted to the Local Planing Authority on 10 May 2002 showing the main front elevation flush with the front elevation of 2 Rectory Close, 8.7 metre ridge height and cycle store at the front of the building and does not approve the proposals as originally submitted.
2. The applicant is reminded that a Demolition Notice may be required to be served on the Council in accordance with current Building Regulations and it is recommended that the Building Control Section of the Planning Department be contacted for further advice.
3. The applicant is reminded that this relates to planning permission only and does not constitute approval under any other legislation including Building Regulations. To obtain advice on current Building Regulations the applicant should contact the Building Control Section of the District Council's Planning Department.
4. You are advised, in compliance with *The Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2000,* that the following policies and/or proposals in the development plan are relevant to this decision:

   Berkshire Structure Plan policies EN1, EN3, H4, H5, H10

   South East Area Local Plan policies STV1, STV6, SH1, SH7, SH8, SBE1, SBE2, SBE5, SBE8, SBE9, ST3, SPS3, SPS4

   Deposit Draft Wokingham District Local Plan policies WOS2, WOS3, WBE1, WBE10, WBE11, WH1, WH6, WT7, WIC16 the Council's Density Policy

Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 31 October 2000

by Katie Peerless DipArch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions

The Planning Inspectorate
Room 1404
Tollgate House
Houlton Street
Bristol BS2 9DJ
☎ 0117 987 8927

Date
28 NOV 2000

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/A/00/1046528
Rectory Close, Wokingham.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Luff Homes Ltd against the decision of Wokingham District Council.
- The application (ref: 99/70794/F), dated 3 November 1999, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2000.
- The development proposed is the erection of 3 no. 2 bed houses.

Summary of Decision: The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

1. The appellant has submitted a revised drawing, No 1465/4A showing reduced parking provision for the proposed development. The local planning authority considered drawing No 1465/4 when making its decision on the application and I have therefore determined the case on the same basis.

Main Issues

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding street scene, with particular regard to unduly cramped development.

Planning Policy

3. The Development Plan for the District includes the Berkshire Structure Plan and the South East Area Local Plan 1994. I consider that Structure Plan policies LD1, LD3 and H4 and Local Plan policies STV1, SH1 and SBE2 are relevant to this case. LD1 promotes sustainable development by, amongst other criteria, aiming to maximise the use of vacant or derelict urban land. LD3 aims to protect the character or appearance of an area from unacceptable development and H4 specifies that new residential development should be in locations that have good access to essential facilities. STV1 identifies settlements within which development will normally be allowed and SH1 refers to housing development on unidentified sites within identified settlements. This policy aims to protect the character of the area and SBE2 states that development that is inappropriate in terms of its relationship with adjoining sites and buildings or which adversely affects the character of the area will not normally be permitted.

4. The emerging Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft October 1997) was amended in 1999 and the Public Inquiry ended in September 2000. This document has formed the basis for Development Control decisions since 1997 and I have accorded the relevant policies within it considerable weight when reaching my decision. These policies are

WOS3, WH1 and WBE1. WOS3 sets general development control principles and requires proposals, amongst other things, to be appropriate and respect the local context in terms of siting, layout and massing. WH1 updates policy SH1, and WBE1 also requires designs to respect their local context.

5. National guidance on housing policy is given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 – Housing (PPG3). This was published in March 2000 and requires local planning authorities to make the most efficient use of land when considering new housing developments, particularly on previously developed sites. The need for good layout and design that does not compromise the quality of the environment is also noted.

Reasons

6. 1 Rectory Close is situated within the Wokingham urban settlement amongst mixed development that includes a variety of residential properties and a new supermarket complex. There are good public transport links close to the site, which also has easy access to the facilities of the town's commercial centre. Rectory Close is joined to the south west end of Palmer School Road by a narrow section of carriageway adjacent to the south east corner of the appeal site. The proposed development would involve the demolition of the existing house on the site and its replacement by three smaller dwellings.

7. At the Hearing it was agreed that the local planning authority has no objection in principle to the re-development of this site, and, as the guidance in PPG3 encourages the best use of previously developed sites with higher densities where sustainable, the provision of additional dwellings on the plot would, in my view, be desirable.

8. The constriction in the road forms a division between the detached houses in the Close, and the newer developments of higher density, smaller dwellings in Palmer School Road and Rose Court. I noted at the site visit that there is a distinct difference between the character of the Rectory Close area, bounded by the public footpath from Rectory Road and the wall of the new supermarket development, and the streets that contain these newer properties. The Close has several specimens of mature and semi-mature trees and the houses are set in reasonably large gardens. This contrasts with the closely spaced smaller houses and the supermarket development surrounded by large areas of hard surfaced car park.

9. Although the appellant maintains that the character of the area has undergone some considerable changes in the recent past, I consider that Rectory Close still retains important distinguishing characteristics that serve to enhance the variety of the surrounding neighbourhood. The appeal site is situated at a point that could provide a transitional link between the fairly spacious development in Rectory Close and the more tightly concentrated units in Palmer School Road. The plot has a rather awkward triangular shape and careful planning would be needed to make the best use of the land.

10. I consider that the proposed development does not appear to have been designed with these limitations in mind and the units proposed seem to have been imposed on the site rather than planned specifically for it. Consequently, the three houses appear, in my view, to be cramped on the plot, and their siting, projecting forward from the neighbouring buildings, would give them a prominence in the street scene that would detract from its character and appear at odds with the general pattern of development. Although the proposed dwellings would be similar in appearance to other properties in the neighbourhood, particularly those on the adjacent site at 6 – 10 Palmer School Road, I consider that the three units do not relate well to the other houses in Rectory Close and would constitute over-development of this particular site.

11. The guidance given in PPG3 encourages densities of between 30 – 50 units per hectare and the proposed development would exceed this requirement; however this is at the expense of the amenity space around the buildings which would be very restricted. To my mind, this would be to the detriment of the local character. I consider therefore that, whilst the site could be successfully re-developed for higher density housing, the scheme before me does not meet the other requirements of PPG3 and Local Plan policies that call for good layout and design and for development that makes a positive contribution to its setting. Neither do the proposals comply with Local Plan policies SH1 (B) and (E) and SBE2 and Deposit Draft policies WOS3 (A) and (F), WH1 (b) and WBE1 (b).

Other Matters

12. Local residents have expressed concern over the intensification of use of the road that the proposed development might cause. There is also a fear of congestion at the point where the access to the supermarket loading bay meets the road at a bend close to the appeal site. However, the small housing units proposed would not, in my view, generate sufficient additional traffic in Rectory Close to present a problem, particularly as off-road parking could be provided.

13. The number of parking spaces proposed for the new dwellings complies with local planning authority requirements but exceeds the guidelines given in PPG3. I note that the appellant has indicated that he would prefer to reduce the provision to the level recommended in that document. A suggested layout is shown on drawing number 1465/4A and this would allow additional landscaping of the area. As new residential environments should aim to reduce reliance on the car in areas where public transport links are good, I consider that fewer spaces would be acceptable in this situation. Although some of the spaces would be provided off site at a distance of some 26m, their location is not, I consider, distant enough to encourage the users to park in the road rather than in these spaces. As the majority of this proposed parking area is already surfaced with tarmac, its use as such would not, in my view, detract from the character of Rectory Close.

Conclusions

14. Although I have found that the parking provision would be acceptable and not cause harm to the character of the locality, this does not outweigh my findings that the propose development would be unduly cramped on the site and detrimental to the street scene. Therefore, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Formal Decision

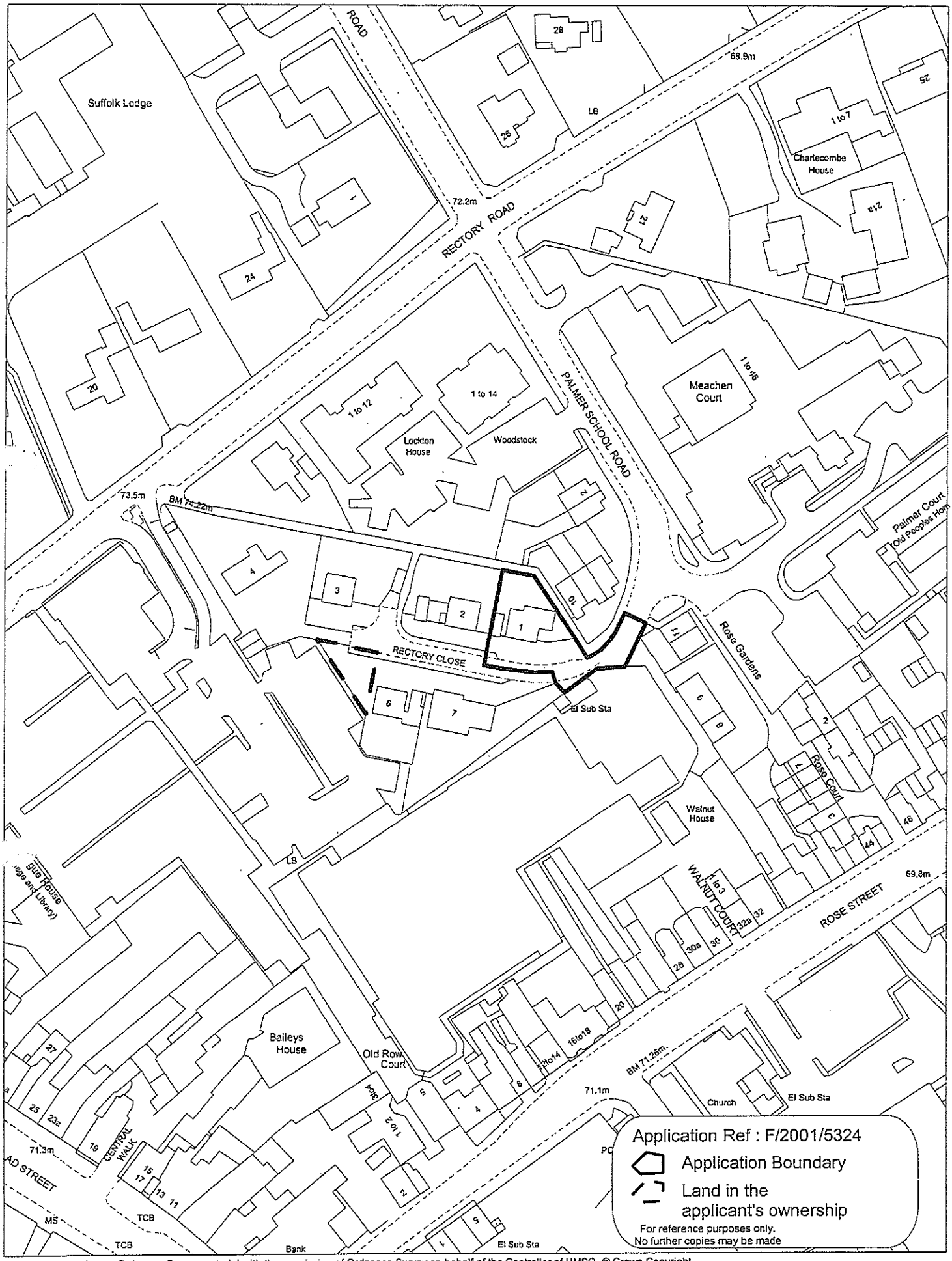
15. In exercise of the powers transferred to me, I dismiss the appeal.

Information

16. Particulars of the right of appeal against this decision to the High Court are enclosed for those concerned.

Katie Peakess

Inspector



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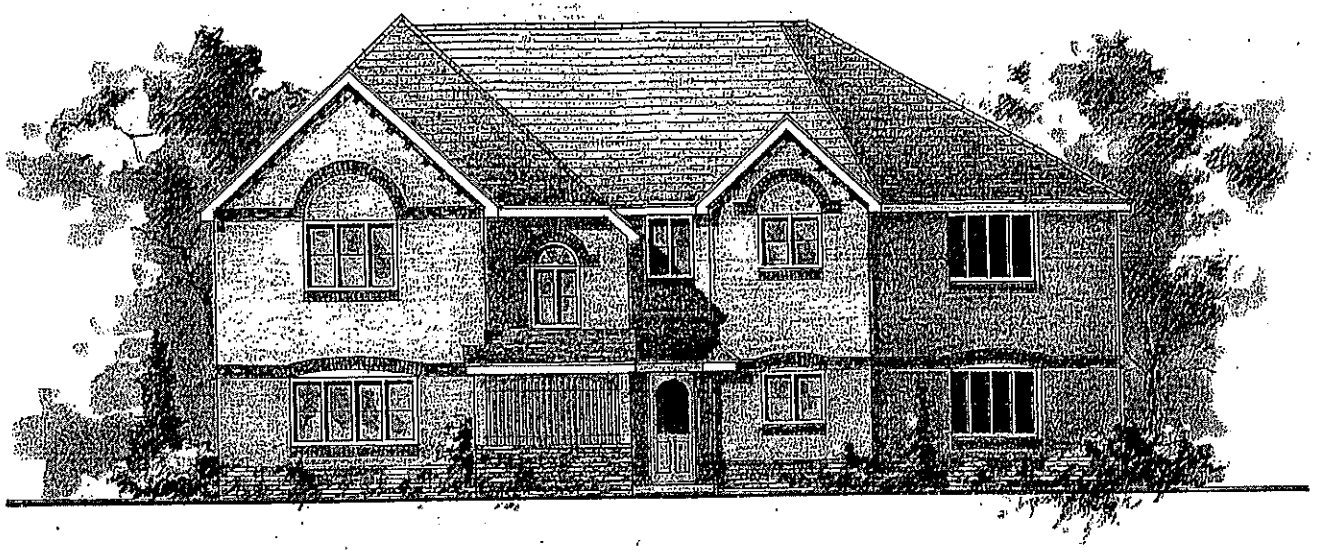
Development Control Section, Environmental Services, Wokingham District Council.

850

Scale: 1 : 1250

N W E S



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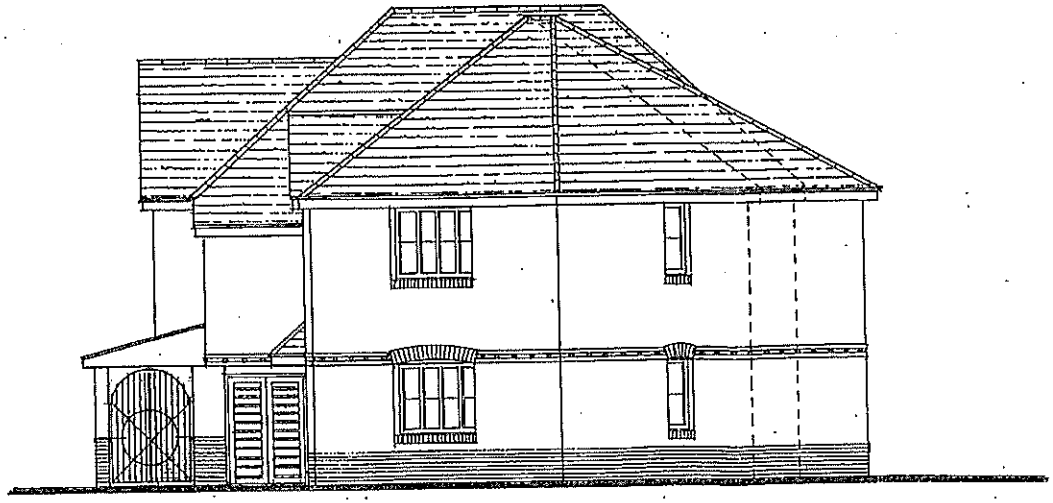

Side Elevation

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10 MAY 2002
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letter	date	revision
B	8.05.02	BIKE STORE ADDED
A	28.01.02	ROOF HIGHT REVISED

job RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
1 RECTORY CLOSE
WOKINGHAM

client LUFF HOMES LTD

drawing FRONT AND SIDE ELEVATIONS

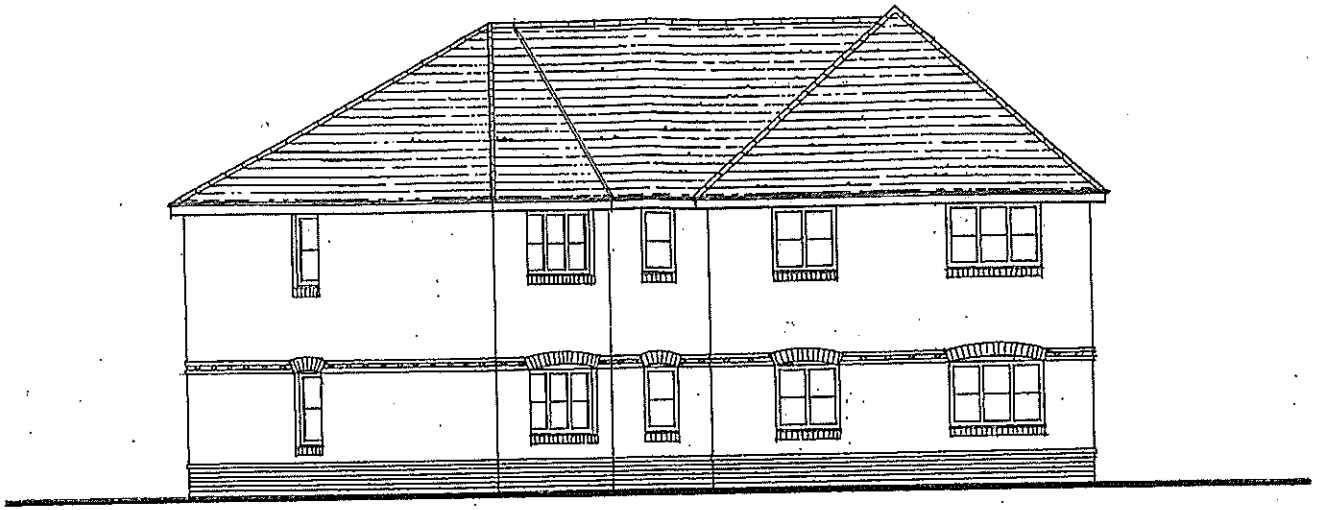
scale 1:100
date OCT 2001
drawn by PB

1465-13B

(0118) 9507700
101 LONDON ROAD
READING
BERKSHIRE
CHARTERED ARCHITECTS
ANDREWS KALIK ASSOCIATES

5324

REVISED PLAN



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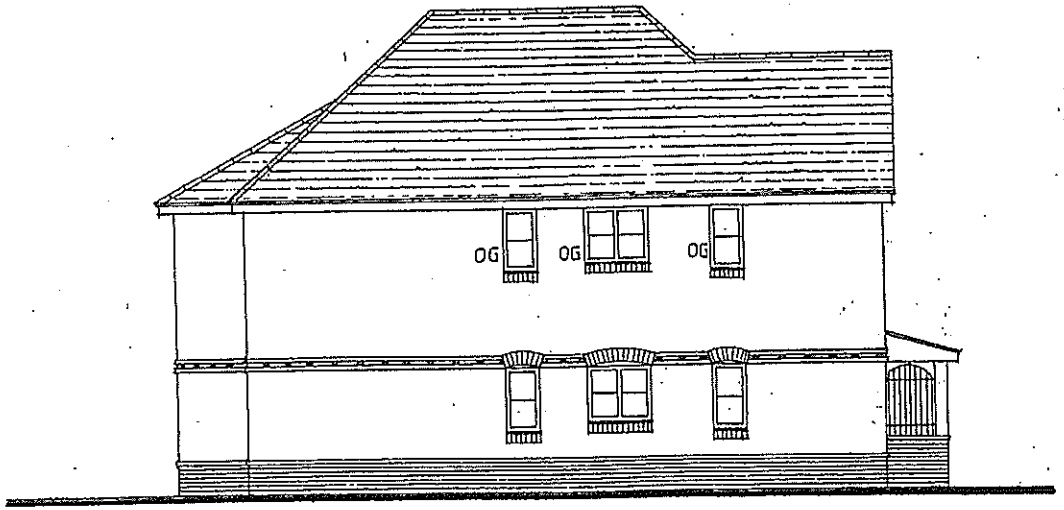

Side Elevation

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10 MAY 2002
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letter	date	revision
C	8.05.02	BIKE STORE ADDED
B	28.01.02	ROOF HIGHT REVISED
A	22.11.01	BEDROOM WINDOW OMITTED

job RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
1 RECTORY CLOSE
WOKINGHAM

client LUFF HOMES LTD

drawing REAR AND SIDE ELEVETIONS

scale 1:100

date OCT 2001 | drawn by PB

1465-14C

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15324

ADDRESS 1 Rectory Close PARISH WOK.

PLOT No. ORD. SHEET No. 75B

BUILDER

Plan No.	Applicant	Description of Development	Date of Decision	Decision
0/17/58	Telling & Sons	Erect private hses	10/7/58	REF
0/26/59	do	Erect 4 det hses	9/10/59	C/A
BR 3217 B18/63	Mr D.J & Mrs S.J. Cann	S/storey extension	7.8.75	App N/A
03233	"	" "	2.10.75	N/A C/A
11263	Mr D.J. Cann	extension	2.8.79	NA C/A
28887	CONSORTIUM	ACCESS TO P3A	18.2.88	C/A LA
BRA5624	WOK. CENTRAL DEV.	DOMESTIC DRAINAGE	10.5.88	REF
35375		REVISED ACCESS TO P3A	10.5.90	C/A
97/65107/F	MR. N. EDWARDS APPEAL	RES. TO DAY NURSERY WITH FLAT OVER/S/ST. LGS.	24.4.97	REF

DATE OF COMPLETION

MINISTRY DECISION 651071 — APPEAL DISMISSED — 17.9.97

99/69392/F	M. Smith	Erect 3 Dwellings & demolish existing	17.6.99	REF
DN99/0160	Andesign	Demolish Det. House & garage	1.4.99	

1933
2

ADDRESS 1 RECTORY CLOSE PARISH WOKINGHAM

PLOT No. ORD. SHEET No. 75B

BUILDER

Plan No.	Applicant	Description of Development	Date of Decision	Decision
FP99/8634	M. SMITH	TERRACE OF 3 2 Bed Houses	12.4.99	C/A
99/70794/F	Luff Homes	Erection of 3 dwellings	17.01.00	REF

MINISTRY DECISION

SPECIAL ORDERS 70794 Appeal dismissed 28.11.00