

Dear Councillor

With reference to the above planning application we wish to draw the following issues to your attention prior to the Falmouth Town Council Planning Committee consideration of the application on Monday, 2nd February 2009.

1) We object to the size of the scheme. The council passed a much better scheme in 2004

“2.27 Planning and conservation area consents were granted on the 27th July 2004 for the part demolition of the existing public house and conversion of the retained buildings to 4 units and erection of 12 residential units, car parking and landscaping.

In accordance with the conservation area and planning consent part of the pub building was demolished with a commencement of work on the development having began. This planning consent remains extant at the current time. Work ceased on the development due to the developer’s concerns regarding the scheme’s viability.”

This scheme, although it allowed the demolition of the oldest part of the building, at least kept the Admiral Nelson Public House and Stable block. These buildings date from pre 1880.

*“Historic Assessment, Admiral Nelson, Bar Road, Falmouth
Ref: 061311 November, 2008*

1.6.3 The Admiral Nelson and the former stable are both constructed out of local stone rubble with later brick additions, alterations and repairs. The form of construction of these two buildings suggests that they predate the 1880 Ordnance Survey, but they are not shown on the published map.”

This area of Falmouth dates to the time when the Docks and Railway had just been built and other buildings from this time include Armyn House and Railway Cottages.

The developers knew the plans had been passed and even though the site was valued at £1,600,000 they bought it for £1,200,000. They made the decision to buy it and if they use the rule of thumb that with residential sites the land is a third the value of the final properties, then the finished buildings would be £3,600,000 - £4,800,000. This equates to around £300,000 each which seems that the scheme is still viable.

The demolition of the old building should not have been allowed without contracts signed for the new building, and therefore it should have been built.

The developers knew that the Admiral Nelson should be maintained yet they have not touched it and have let it deteriorate so it would suit their purpose of being demolished.

They state that the proposed development is for 55+ age group

“2.19 The development of the application site is in accordance with regional and local planning policy on housing. The provision of 46 dwellings in Falmouth will have a positive impact with the social need for housing, as well as providing much needed homes for local people.”

Yet they also state that this age group represents the people retiring here from other parts of Britain. These are not locals and they will be putting a strain on the local health facilities. Most of their arguments state that the population growth in Falmouth will mainly be due to Staff and Students at the University.

“Policy 6K states:-

3.39 “The development of high density housing (greater than 32 dwellings per hectare) will be approved subject to all of the following criteria being met:-

(i) the layout and design respects the local area in terms of scale, height, materials and landscaping;”

Our view is that the new scheme fails on scale, height and landscaping Materials may not be too bad.



These are two pictures supplied by the architects which are supposed to show the new building size. This does not seem correct as the plans show the height of the new building as nearly a third higher than the old building, as if they forgot the lower storey. Also this shows the frontage of the new building is much nearer the road. They use the building line of the new buildings which are part of Pendennis. These are not on the same road. If the building line gets moved this far forward then future development will also move nearer the road and over power the entrance to the Docks, which is due for improvement in the future.

“Policy 4F states:-

3.33 “Proposals for development in a Conservation Area should preserve or enhance the special character of the area in terms of scale, height, form and massing, respecting the traditional pattern of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, detailing and materials. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Redevelopment which involves the demolition of an existing building within a Conservation Area will not be allowed unless:-

The alternative development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. And

(i) the building makes no positive contribution towards the character or appearance of the Conservation Area,

or

(ii) that the condition of the building and the cost of its repair and maintenance renders it impracticable to retain when assessed in comparison with its importance and the value derived from its continued use;

and

(iii) that there is clear and convincing evidence that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or to find viable new uses and these efforts have failed.”

As far as we are concerned:

- i) We think the building definitely makes a positive contribution to the character of the area.
- ii) We think that the condition of the building and the cost of its repair and maintenance was the developers responsibility when it bought the site and therefore does not enter into the argument. The developer has not maintained the building but let it deteriorate.
- iii) The plans were passed to utilise the existing building as residential flats.

Policy 4M states:-

3.36 “Proposals which significantly adversely affect the setting of a Conservation Area and/or inward or outward public views which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area will not be approved.”

The size and placement of this building will over power all other buildings in the area, most of which date back to before 1880 and therefore should not be allowed.

“ Provision for housing is supported by the fact that within the emerging RSS policies, it is stated that the SSCT, (comprising of Camborne, Pool, Redruth, Truro, Falmouth and Penryn) should be expected to accommodate 16,500 new jobs over the plan period, implying that the housing targets for Falmouth and Penryn will need to be reached in order to provide homes for the additional population.”

These jobs will probably be in the Redruth - Camborne area not the docks and anyway the scheme is for 55+ age group who probably have money as the properties are in an expensive area and also two cars per apartment.

To sum up the 2004 scheme that was passed was quite suitable for the area and still could be viable.

The developers have let the Admiral Nelson and Stable Block deteriorate and have not maintained it so they can advance their case to demolish it.

The scheme for the demolition of the existing buildings and erection of 46 flats is much too large a development for this site, but could well be leverage for a lesser scheme.

We therefore object most strongly to this current application by Acorn Developments and request the LPA refuse it.

Yours Sincerely