

Section '3' - Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT

**Application No :** 12/00535/FULL1

**Ward:**  
Clock House

**Address :** 49 Ravenscroft Road Beckenham BR3  
4TP

**OS Grid Ref:** E: 535808 N: 169636

**Applicant :** Mr Les Hardy

**Objections :YES**

**Description of Development:**

Conversion of existing dwelling into 1 two bedroom and 1 three bedroom self-contained units with two car parking spaces at front. RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
London City Airport Safeguarding Birds

**Proposal**

- The current proposal seeks retrospective planning permission for the conversion of the existing dwelling into 1 two bedroom and 1 three bedroom self-contained units with two car parking spaces at front.
- The ground floor will provide a living / dining room, two bedrooms and a bathroom, with the rear garden being accessed via the rear of the unit.
- The second flat would be split over two levels. The first floor of the host building will provide a kitchen / dining room, a lounge, bedroom 1 and bathroom, with the second floor having two bedrooms and a study, with access to the rear garden via the side alley.
- There will be no external alterations to the existing host building. Pedestrian and vehicle access to the property will remain unaltered.

**Location**

The application site is located on the south-eastern side of Ravenscroft Road, which comprises of mainly 2-storey Victorian terraced and semi-detached dwellings and which is located within a suburban residential area on the borders of Penge and Beckenham. This is a densely built-up locality, and the road consists of

mainly small single family dwellings, although there is evidence that some properties have already been sub-divided.

### **Comments from Local Residents**

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and no representations were received.

### **Comments from Consultees**

Highways Engineer stated that the site is located in an area with a medium PTAL rate of 4. Two car parking spaces are indicated on the front of the development accessed via the existing vehicular crossover from Ravenscroft Road, which is acceptable in principle. The applicant should however be advised to provide cycle storage to accommodate 1 space per unit.

No comments provided by Highways Drainage Engineer.

Environmental Health stated:

1. All partitions leading onto the staircase enclosure and separating occupancies should be half-hour fire resisting to BS 476 where an LD2Type audible fire alarm system is provided in accordance with the requirements of BS 5839.
2. All fire doors should conform to BS 476 Parts 20-23 (half-hour resistance) and fitted with cold smoke seals and self-closers.
3. The bathrooms to both flats do not appear to be provided with natural ventilation. Adequate means of mechanical ventilation should therefore be provided.
4. Bedroom 2 to flat 2 does not appear to meet the minimum standard for the provision of natural lighting and ventilation. All habitable rooms should be provided with a glazed area of at least 1/10th of the available floor area and a ventilation opening of at least 1/20th of the available floor area. The developers should ensure that all habitable rooms meet this standard.

These issues raised by Environmental Health should be addressed at Building Regulations stage.

No response from Thames Water at the time of writing the report.

### **Planning Considerations**

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan

BE1 Design of New Development  
H11 Residential Conversions

T18 Road Safety  
T11 New Accesses  
T3 Parking

Recently, Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance notes were replaced by the adopted National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This is also a material consideration for the determination of the application.

### **Planning History**

06/04368/ELUD - Rear dormer extension CERTIFICATE OF LAWFULNESS FOR AN EXISTING DEVELOPMENT. Permitted Development on 31.01.2007

07/03752/FULL6 - Single storey rear extension RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION. Granted permission 14.12.2007

08/00342/FULL1 Conversion of existing dwelling into 2 two bedroom flats and 1 studio flats with 2 car parking spaces at front. Refused permission 18.03.2008.

08/03640 - Conversion of existing dwelling into 2 two bedroom flats and 1 studio flats with 2 car parking spaces at front.

This case was subsequently dismissed at appeal on 14th May 2009. The Inspector found that the proposal for 3 units at this location would be an overdevelopment of the site that would not only lead to extra demand for parking (which is already at a premium in this area) but would also result in the upper floor units being small, lacking in any amenity space. The Inspector therefore found that the proposal as a whole would result in an overdevelopment of the site.

### **Conclusions**

Members may consider that the main issues relating to the application are the effect that the conversion of the property has upon the character of the area, the impact that it would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties and whether the proposal leads to a loss of a small or medium sized family dwelling.

The proposal seeks retrospective planning permission for the conversion of the host building into 1 two bedroom and 1 three bedroom self-contained units. This does not involve any external alterations, no further extensions to those that have already been built at the site under previous applications, and the scheme will not alter the existing pedestrian or vehicular access, with two car parking spaces being retained to the front of the property.

The most recent application that was refused under reference DC/08/03640/FULL1 was refused on the basis that the scheme would result in an overdevelopment of the site, lacking in adequate amenities for future occupiers and which would, if permitted, set a pattern for similar undesirable conversions in the locality, resulting in an over-development of the area and a retrograde lowering of

the standards to which it is at present developed, contrary to Policies BE1 and H11 of the Unitary Development Plan.

The current proposal has reduced the number of units within the building, which is considered to overcome the previous issues raised with regard to the overdevelopment of the site.

In terms of the subsequent Appeal decision, the Inspector considered that Policy H11 of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) allows for residential conversions if 4 criteria are satisfied, including criterion (ii), which requires a satisfactory living environment for the intended occupiers; and criterion (iv), which states that conversion should not lead to a shortage of “medium or small-sized family dwellings” in the area. Policy BE1 sets out 9 separate criteria which should be satisfied by all new development proposals, of which it was considered that criterion (v), concerning the protection of residential amenity, the most relevant in this case.

The Inspector stated in effect that the previous proposal would create 3 separate dwelling units, none with more than 2 bedrooms, in what was originally and formerly a single family dwelling. The appellant did not attempt to justify this number of units on the basis of any particular or known housing need. It was therefore considered that the proposal would diminish the supply of family dwellings in the area, contrary to UDP policy H11 (iv), which is intended to maintain a mix of house types appropriate to the borough’s household structure. This aim was supported by the Inspector, and was considered that if this appeal were allowed there was little doubt that it would be regarded as a precedent that would encourage further applications which could lead to the cumulative loss locally of family accommodation.

Another aspect of this issue is that, on the balance of probability, 3 units might normally be expected to generate more demand for car parking than 1. However it can be seen that parking conditions in Ravenscroft Road are already very congested and at or close to capacity at times. While the proposal would provide 2 usable off-street spaces at the front, the Inspector stated that 3 units might well generate a demand for on-street parking as well. This was another factor in determining that the previous scheme was symptomatic of over-development.

Turning to residential amenity, owing to the previously completed extensions the 3 proposed flats would all have acceptable habitable room-sizes, which, as the Council confirmed at the time of the Appeal, would meet the internal floor space standards. However, the appellant acknowledged the 2 upper floor flats would both be small, and would lack any outdoor amenity space of their own. And there appear to be few places in the immediate locality - parks, open spaces etc. – that are available for outdoor recreation. While the Inspector agreed that this might not be strictly contrary to policy, it was considered that it would nevertheless be another symptom of over-development, which adds weight to the aforementioned planning objections to the scheme.

In terms of the current application therefore, Members may note that one unit has been removed from the proposal and both the ground floor unit and the first and

second floor split-level unit have both been afforded outdoor amenity space by splitting the existing rear garden into two. This appears to overcome the previous concerns relating to lack of amenity space for the future occupiers of the self-contained units.

In terms of car parking provision, this was raised as an issue by the Inspector who felt that two car parking spaces for 3 self-contained units would not be sufficient and could exacerbate problems along Ravenscroft Road where the existing parking already appears to be at a premium. The current application for 2 self-contained units, each with 1 off-street parking space, appears to be more acceptable and in addition the Highways Engineers have agreed that the provision is acceptable.

Turning to the loss of a medium sized family dwellinghouse, the resulting accommodation will provide 1 two bedroom unit and 1 three bedroom unit, with the latter also having a study which could in future be converted into habitable accommodation. Members may therefore consider that the provision of 1 two bedroom unit may provide a small residential family unit, and the three bedroom unit, with the possibility of converting it into a four bedroom unit, would result in a medium-sized family dwelling. As such, members may consider that whilst the proposal will result in the loss of a single-occupancy unit, it would not result in the loss of a small or medium sized dwelling as these are to be created by the conversion of the host building. In addition, by carrying out a brief survey of the immediate vicinity, it appears that the majority of the properties along the road remain in single occupancy with only a few properties having been split into flatted accommodation. Members may therefore consider that granting permission for the current application would not lead to a shortage of medium-sized dwellings.

Having had regard to the above Members may therefore consider that the current proposal has sufficiently overcome the previous concerns raised with regard to applications DC/08/00342/FULL1 and DC/08/03640/FULL1, would not result in a significant loss of amenity to local residents nor impact detrimentally on the character of the area, nor would the application result in the loss of a small or medium sized family dwelling unit.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 08/00342, 08/03640 and 12/00535, excluding exempt information.

## **RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION**

Subject to the following conditions:

- |   |        |                                          |
|---|--------|------------------------------------------|
| 1 | ACA01  | Commencement of development within 3 yrs |
|   | ACA01R | A01 Reason 3 years                       |
| 2 | ACH03  | Satisfactory parking - full application  |
|   | ACH03R | Reason H03                               |
| 3 | ACH22  | Bicycle Parking                          |
|   | ACH22R | Reason H22                               |
| 4 | ACK01  | Compliance with submitted plan           |

**Reason:** In order to accord with the terms of the planning permission hereby granted, to protect the residential amenity of nearby residents and to comply with Policies BE1 and H11 of the Unitary Development Plan.

**Reasons for granting permission:**

In granting permission the Local Planning Authority had regard to the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan:

BE1 Design of New Development  
H11 Residential Conversions  
T3 Parking  
T11 New Accesses  
T18 Road Safety

The development is considered to be satisfactory in relation to the following:

- (a) the relationship of the development to the adjacent properties;
- (b) the character of the development in the surrounding area;
- (c) the impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties;
- (d) the privacy of occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties;
- (e) the impact on highway safety and road conditions;
- (f) the impact on parking conditions;
- (g) and having regard to all other matters raised.

**INFORMATIVE(S)**

1	RDI10	Consult Land Charges/Street Numbering
2	RDI21	Seek Building Control advice

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**RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION**

