

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

Application No : 16/03124/FULL1

Ward:
Clock House

Address : County House, 241 Beckenham Road,
Beckenham BR3 4RP

OS Grid Ref: E: 536075 N: 169640

Applicant : Mr M. Schwimmer

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Erection of 6th floor extension to provide 4 two bedroom flats

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
London City Airport Safeguarding
Smoke Control SCA 30

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for an extension to the existing building to provide an additional storey of residential accommodation comprising 4 two bedroom flats.

The proposed extension would be largely inset from the main elevations and would project by approx. 3.1m above the existing flat roof. The extension would be externally clad in grey panels and would incorporate a flat roof with a canopy/roof overhang to the south and west facing elevations above the terrace. Grey aluminium frame windows are proposed.

A separation of 4.5m would be retained between the south western elevation of Flat 1 and the projecting south western elevation of the main building below. 3.2m separation is retained between the south western elevation of flats 2, 3 and 4 and the main building below. At the front, the proposed extension incorporates a long corridor, and the front elevation of the extension would be set back a minimum of 3m from the elevation facing Beckenham Road, with increased separation to the front projection.

The flats would incorporate doors leading onto a private terrace area which would lie between the south western elevation of the extension and the main south western elevation of the building. The terraces would be edged by a 1.5m high obscure glazed balustrade.

No car parking spaces additional to those already provided on site and as part of the previous planning applications.

Location

The site lies on the southwestern side of Beckenham Road, at the junction with Mackenzie Road.

It is bounded to the southeast by the railway line and lies opposite a petrol filling station beyond which is the Barnmead Road Conservation Area. To the south west are residential dwellings fronting Mackenzie Road.

The area is generally characterised by modest Victorian dwelling houses sited within the side roads and more imposing development on the main road frontage, generally not exceeding 3 storeys in height.

The host building is significantly prominent in the street scene and from the residential streets surrounding the site as a consequence of its height and bulk.

The main building is currently in the process of conversion into residential use following the granting of prior approval for the change of use from B1 office to residential flats. A total of 76 flats are being provided over the 6 existing storeys of development, with parking provided behind the site and in an undercroft location.

The site is not within a designated Flood Zone.

The application is accompanied by a Transport Technical Note, a Design and Access Statement and the CIL form has been completed.

Consultations

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and representations were received which can be summarised as follows:

- The new floor would be visible from the conservation area around Barnmead Road
- There will be a loss of light to properties in Mackenzie Road
- At least 4 new car parking spaces would be required for the additional floor and the property lack capacity for 80 dwellings and their vehicles.
- A car parking space has been lost to the installation of a generator
- The opposite property at 243 - 249 Beckenham Road has been converted
- Construction work carries on 7 days a week
- Mackenzie Road has a number of driveways and nowhere for the County House residents to park so it is anticipated that they will park in Blandford Road
- The parking restriction in Blandford Road is only valid Monday to Friday so parking at weekends is already very difficult for residents
- The plans include balconies which will overlook straight into gardens in Blandford Road and would result in noise from the terraces. The terraces should be on the front elevation
- Parking restrictions locally should be increased to 7 days a week.
- Unacceptable visual impact.

- Would appear overdominant and out of
 - scale/character
- Lack of advertisement of application on site.
- Lack of amenity space
- Mobile phone masts will probably be re-erected on the 6th floor
- Poor sightlines.

Network Rail were notified of the application and have provided comments recommending that the developer agrees an Asset Protection Agreement separately with them to enable their approval of detailed works as well as providing standard technical advice regarding encroachment and future maintenance.

Technical comments

Highways

Beckenham Road is a London Distributor Road. The development is in an area with a high PTAL rate of 5 (on a scale of 1 - 6 where 6 is the most accessible). As a result of this proposal the overall development would comprise 80 residential units accompanied by 76 car parking spaces on site. The overall level of parking provision would therefore equate to 0.95 spaces per unit.

The traffic generation from the site would not alter significantly and given the urban nature of the site any increase would not have a significant impact upon highway safety and parking demand within the local road network. A condition relating to the provision of cycle parking is recommended if permission is granted.

Environmental Health

Comments received refer to the bathrooms and en-suites not being provided with natural ventilation and the potential need for mechanical ventilation. The bedrooms to the flats do not appear to be provided with openable windows. To ventilate the rooms the doors to the terrace would need to be left open which is unsatisfactory in terms of ventilation and security. The bedrooms should be able to be adequately ventilated without compromising security by having to leave the doors open, especially at night. The comments are available on file.

Planning Considerations

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

H1 Housing Supply
 H7 Housing Density and Design
 BE1 Design of New Development
 BE13 Development Adjacent to a conservation area
 T3 Parking
 T7 Access

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents are also a consideration in the determination of planning applications. These are:

SPG No.1 - General Design Principles
SPG No.2 - Residential Design Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Barnmead Road Conservation Area would also be relevant in view of the prominence of the host building and the extent to which it is appreciable from within the Conservation Area.

London Plan Policies:

3.3 Increasing Housing Supply
3.4 Optimising Housing Potential
3.5 Quality and Design of Housing Developments
5.3 Sustainable Design and Construction
5.13 Sustainable Drainage
7.3 Designing out Crime
7.4 Local Character
7.6 Architecture
7.15 Reducing noise and enhancing soundscapes

Planning History

The relevant planning history is summarised as follows:

Under reference 92/02339 planning permission was granted for the installation of plant equipment on the roof. Under reference 97/00780 permission was granted for a generator flue and brick enclosure on the roof.

Under references 92/00506, 95/00278, 99/01407, 99/03162, 00/02411, 00/03632, 00/03873, 01/00734, 05/02308, 06/021998 permission/approval was granted for the installation of telecommunications dishes and antennae on the roof.

Permission was granted under reference 07/02185 for a new generator in the car park and 2 condensers on the roof.

Under reference 07/03136 permission was refused for a ground floor front extension for use as a staff café.

Residential prior approval was refused, but subsequently granted on appeal under reference 14/00449 for the change of use of the ground, first, second, third, fourth and fifth floors from offices to a total of 75 flats.

Under reference 14/04697 permission was refused for external elevational alterations, replacement cladding and the rendering of the building. A subsequent application was granted planning permission under reference 15/00534 with permission also granted for external elevational alterations and replacement of windows and doors under reference 15/02984.

Residential prior approval was granted under reference 16/00514 for the conversion of a small caretakers office to a studio flat, bringing the total number of flats for which residential prior approval was granted to 76.

Conclusions

The main issues relating to the application are the effect that it would have on the character of the area, including the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area and the impact that it would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties. Of further consideration is the extent to which the cumulative residential development on the site would provide adequate parking to serve the needs of the occupants, and the extent to which the proposal would provide residential accommodation of a satisfactory standard.

Principle of development

Housing is a priority use for all London Boroughs. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) provided that it is not of high environmental value. London Plan Policy 3.4 states that development should optimise housing output for different types of location taking into account local context and character, design principles and public transport capacity.

It is therefore considered that subject to the proposal having an acceptable impact on the visual and residential amenities of the area and providing a high standard of accommodation, the principle of the residential development on the roof of the building is acceptable. That the proposal would provide an additional 4 residential units is a strong material planning consideration due to a recent appeal decision which indicates that the Council does not have a five year housing supply.

Impact of the proposal on visual amenities, including the adjacent Barnmead Road Conservation Area

The proposed additional floor of accommodation would be set back from the main elevations of the building and incorporates a reasonably low level flat roof which would limit the extent to which the development would be readily appreciable from the surrounding area. Views of the development would be limited as a result of the perspective associated with the height above street level to wider long range views, from the rise of the hill in Mackenzie Road, from Beckenham Road on the other side of the railway bridge and from the direction of Kent House, including from within the Barnmead Road Conservation Area.

The visual impact of the development in terms of the views from the Barnmead Road Conservation Area falls to be carefully considered in context with Policy BE13 which specifically refers to the need to ensure that development adjacent to conservation areas should not detract from views into or out of the area.

The existing building is unusually high and imposing in the street scene, juxtaposed with development which is more modest in scale. The topography of

the area affords views of the building in context with its surroundings but results in the visual impact of the existing structure varying depending on the vantage point.

The proposed extension would replace existing somewhat discordant and piecemeal plant and structures on the roof. It would be of a design and materials to complement the host building. As such it is considered that while the proposal would be visible from the conservation area, it would not detract from views out of or into the conservation area when regard is had to the existing appearance of the roof development. The north east facing elevation shows the development front-on, with no adjustment for perspective to take into account the angle of vision. In reality, the impact would be more limited, with the main increase in bulk being related to the infilling between existing roof structures which themselves lend a less streamlined appearance than the development currently proposed. The extension would be set back by approx. 3m from the main front elevation and it is not proposed that the flat roof area in front of the extension would be used for a balcony or terrace which might result in clutter or paraphernalia at high level. Fenestration to the north east elevation would be similar in appearance and position within the elevation to that of the main building below and would not appear cluttered, incongruous or overly conspicuous. On balance it is considered that the proposed extension would not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the area in general and views from the Barnmead Road Conservation Area.

It is noted that concern has been expressed regarding the potential that additional plant/mobile telecommunications structures or antennas may be reinstated on the roof of the additional storey. If members are minded to grant planning permission it may be appropriate to apply a condition restricting such installations without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Impact of the proposal on the residential amenities of the area.

Unitary Development Plan policies BE1 and H7 seek to protect neighbouring residential properties against the loss of amenity.

The additional storey of accommodation would not result in significantly increased overlooking associated with the windows in the external elevation of the development taking into account the existing residential development on the lower floors. The provision of the roof terraces has elicited some concern from local residents with regards to loss of privacy and potential noise and disturbance associated with their use. These concerns are noted. However in view of the position of the terraces some distance from neighbouring residential development at a very elevated level relative to neighbouring property it is not considered that the proposal would result in a loss of privacy to the neighbouring dwellings. The proposal incorporates the provision of screening to the terraces which would be positioned so as to minimise overlooking to the Mackenzie Road properties. The terrace to flat 1 would be set approx. 30m from the back of gardens of dwellings fronting Blandford Road, on the other side of the railway line. The terraces themselves are inset by approx. 1m from the main elevations.

On balance, in the context of the railway line, the noise from the road and the surrounding soundscape of the area it is not considered that the use of the terraces would be significantly harmful in terms of noise and disturbance to neighbouring residents so as to warrant the refusal of planning permission on the grounds of impact on residential amenity. If permission is granted it would be appropriate to require by way of condition greater detail of the screening.

The noise resulting from the construction of the development is not a material planning consideration, being limited to the period of construction.

Residential amenities of prospective occupants

The accommodation proposed would meet the minimum space standards for residential flats of this size. The proposals incorporate private amenity space in the form of balconies and it is considered that the flats would provide accommodation of a satisfactory level of residential amenity. The main existing residential conversion block does not, it is acknowledged, provide amenity space for occupants. The conversion of the main block was established by way of residential prior approval granted on appeal, a process in which (unlike the current application for the additional flats) the issue of prospective residential amenity in respect of garden/balconies and internal configuration/GIA is not a matter for the LPA's consideration.

The comments received regarding the ventilation of the flats are noted and it is considered that if in all other respects the development is considered acceptable, a suitably worded condition requiring the submission of details of the fenestration for approval would adequately address this matter. With regards to the mechanical ventilation of bathrooms/en-suites, this would be dealt with under the Building Regulations.

Parking provision

The concerns raised regarding the parking demand within the locality and the lack of on-site parking to provide 1 space per unit for the total number of flats at County House are acknowledged. However, there are no technical objections from a highways perspective, taking into account the public transport accessibility of the site and the level of parking provision for the development as a whole, where 76 car parking spaces would be provided for the resultant 80 flats. It is not therefore considered that the proposed provision of 4 additional two bedroom flats would have a significantly detrimental impact on parking demand and conditions of highway safety in the locality.

Conclusion

The proposed extension would provide additional residential units of a satisfactory standard of accommodation which would assist in meeting the housing needs of the Borough.

The extension would be visible from the wider locality as a consequence of its elevated position set upon a highly prominent building, taking into account the

topography of the area. However, it would replace existing structures on the roof. While the proposal would infill existing gaps between roof level structures, in view of the design of the development incorporating a streamlined flat roof with the main bulk of the extension set back from the main elevations of the building, it is not considered that the proposed extension would appear unacceptably bulky or visually dominant in context with the host building.

The extension would be partially visible from vantage points within the Barnmead Road Conservation Area. On balance it is not considered that the fact that the extension would be appreciable from the conservation area is inherently unacceptable, taking into account the existing roof structures and the relationship in built form and materials between the proposed extension and the host building.

While the proposal would result in a total of 80 flats with only 76 parking spaces provided within the site, in view of the lack of technical highways objections and the high public transport accessibility of the site it is not considered that the level of parking provision would be unacceptable, resulting in significant on street parking demand or being detrimental to conditions of safety and the free flow of traffic in the locality.

With regards to the impact of the proposal on residential amenity, it is considered as a consequence of the siting and elevated position of the extension and the associated terraces that the proposal would not have a significantly adverse impact on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring residents.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years, beginning with the date of this decision notice.**

Reason: Section 91, Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2 Details of the materials to be used for the external surfaces of the building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the appearance of the building and the visual amenities of the area

- 3 Details of the windows (including rooflights and dormers where appropriate) including their materials, method of opening and drawings showing sections through mullions, transoms and glazing bars and sills, arches, lintels and reveals (including dimension of any recess) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the**

Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced. The windows shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the appearance of the building and the visual amenities of the area.

- 4 Before any part of the development hereby permitted is first occupied, bicycle parking (including covered storage facilities where appropriate) shall be provided at the site in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the bicycle parking/storage facilities shall be permanently retained thereafter.**

Reason: In order to comply with Policy T7 of the Unitary Development Plan and Policy 6.9 of the London Plan and in order to provide adequate bicycle parking facilities at the site in the interest of reducing reliance on private car transport.

- 5 Details of the means of privacy screening for the balcony(ies) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and permanently retained as such.**

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the appearance of the building and the visual amenities of the area.

- 6 The flat roof area between the north east elevation of the extension and the north east elevation of the main building shall not be used as a balcony or sitting out area and there shall be no access to the roof area.**

Reason: In the interest of the visual amenities of the area and to accord with Policies BE1 and BE13 of the Unitary Development Plan.

- 7 No structure, plant, equipment or machinery shall be placed erected or installed on or above the roof or on external walls without the prior approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

REASON: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the appearance of the building and the visual amenities of the area.

You are further informed that :

- 1 You are advised that this application may be liable for the payment of the Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) and the Planning Act 2008.**

The London Borough of Bromley is the Collecting Authority for the Mayor and this Levy is payable on the commencement of development (defined in Part 2, para 7 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010)). It is the responsibility of the owner and /or person(s) who have a material interest in the relevant land to pay the Levy (defined under Part 2, para 4(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010)).

If you fail to follow the payment procedure, the collecting authority may impose surcharges on this liability, take enforcement action, serve a stop notice to prohibit further development on the site and/or take action to recover the debt.

Further information about Community Infrastructure Levy can be found on attached information note and the Bromley website www.bromley.gov.uk/CIL

- 2 You should consult the Land Charges and Street Naming/Numbering Section at the Civic Centre on 020 8313 4742 or e-mail: address.management@bromley.gov.uk regarding Street Naming and Numbering. Fees and application forms are available on the Council's website at www.bromley.gov.uk**
- 3 Please be advised that the site is located adjacent to Network Rail's operational railway infrastructure. You are advised to contact Asset Protection Kent (assetprotectionkent@networkrail.co.uk) prior to any works commencing on site.**