

**SECTION '3' – Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT**

**Application No : 11/00532/FULL3**

**Ward:  
Bromley Town**

**Address : Bank Chambers 143 High Street  
Bromley BR1 1EZ**

**OS Grid Ref: E: 540285 N: 169207**

**Applicant : Mr Matthew Samuel-Camps**

**Objections : NO**

**Description of Development:**

Second floor extension, elevational alterations, balconies and roof terrace to side and rear elevations and conversion of first floor second floors into five 1 bedroom flats and one 2 bedroom flat

Key designations:

Conservation Area: Bromley Town Centre

Areas of Archeological Significance

Primary Shopping Frontage

**Proposal**

The application proposes the construction of a second floor rear extension and elevational alterations to include new windows, doors and balconies and roof terraces to the side and rear elevations.

The proposed alterations are to accommodate the conversion of the existing first and second floors from redundant office space into five 1 bedroom flats and one 2 bedroom flat.

**Location**

The application site is a three storey building located within a predominantly commercial area within the pedestrian area of Bromley High Street. Access to the flats is through a ground floor door within the pedestrian area.

The premises are located above a bank and travel agents and may originally have been used as flats when the town centre was originally being developed. The area is predominantly commercial in character and to the rear is existing fire escape accesses and rear yards for the ground floor commercial premises.

## **Comments from Local Residents**

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

## **Comments from Consultees**

With regards to highway planning considerations the site is located within the town centre which is well served by public transport and within the controlled parking zone. As such residents of the development should not be allowed to apply for a parking permit to ensure there is not increase pressure on parking demand as this is a car free development.

With regards to drainage issues, no technical objections are raised.

In terms of environmental health housing issues, the proposal appears to lack any provision for recreational space. The proposed first floor flats two and three look towards a wall and lack a reasonable view.

From a conservation point of view, no objections are raised.

## **Planning Considerations**

The application falls to be determined in accordance with S.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that conservation area. The proposal therefore falls to be considered primarily with regard to the following policies:

- BE1 Design of New Development
- BE11 Conservation Areas
- H1 Housing Supply
- H12 Conversion of non residential buildings to residential use
- T1 Transport Demand
- T3 Parking
- EMP3 Conversion or redevelopment of offices

## **Planning History**

A number of planning applications have been submitted at this address for various alterations particularly to the ground floor commercial premises. Of particular relevance to this application is the following:

Under planning application ref. 09/0218,8 planning permission was granted for the conversion of first and second floors into one 1 bedroom flat, two 2 bedroom flats and one 3 bedroom flat. This permission was subject to the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement restricting occupiers of the flat from obtaining residents parking permits. The application was subsequently withdrawn by the applicants in March 2010 before the legal agreement was completed.

## Conclusions

The main issues relating to the application are the effect that it would have on the character of the area and the impact that it would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties.

The proposal is considered compliant to Policy BE1 and BE11 as the scale and form of the proposed extensions and alterations to the building is considered to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and existing building.

In terms of car parking, the development is within an area of high public transport accessibility in a town centre location. However to ensure that the development does not result in an increase in on street parking demand no resident of the development should be able to obtain a residents parking permit. This matter can be dealt with through an appropriately worded planning condition.

PPS3 and London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) advice suggest that buildings formerly in non residential uses, including accommodation over shops and vacant offices can be a potential important source of extra housing. Policy H12 of the Unitary Development Plan states that the Council will normally permit the conversion of genuinely redundant office buildings to other uses (particularly above shops) subject to achieving a satisfactory quality of accommodation and amenity for future occupiers.

With regards to the vacancy of the existing office space, the proposal does not result in a loss of employment as the offices appear to have been empty for some time. Policy EMP3 states that the conversion of offices for other uses will be permitted only where it can be demonstrated that there is no local shortage of office floor space and there is long term vacancy despite marketing the premises and there is no likely loss of employment resulting from the proposal. Whilst the previous application was formally withdrawn by the agent in March 2010 following a change in circumstances of the applicant, it was resolved to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a legal agreement. This previous application included details of the period of vacancy and the marketing information. The circumstances have not changed since the previous application which was considered acceptable subject to a legal agreement. It is therefore considered that the principle of the loss of this office space to some form of residential accommodation has already been established.

In terms of the standard of the proposed accommodation Members will note that the Council's Environmental Health Team raises concerns about the proposals regarding the lack of a reasonable view from two of the first floor flats and the lack of amenity space. The applicants have provided a detailed response to these concerns through amended floor plans, elevations and a statement. The revised plans provide a larger bedroom window to flat 3 and the statement with annotated plans provides further information on window sizes in relation to the levels of daylight within each room. The flats are of a substantial size and with regards to concerns raised over room layouts and natural light and amenity space, the flats are in a town centre location and it is not possible to provide any significant amenity space. The room layouts have been arranged to attempt to address

concerns over light and the flats are of a larger size than would normally be expected in a town centre location. Within town centre locations there is no requirement contained within the UDP that requires external amenity space for flats.

Members will therefore need to consider in light of the further information provided by the applicants and the technical comments of Environmental Health whether the provision of much needed residential accommodation within a town centre location is acceptable in this case.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 09/02188, and 11/00532, excluding exempt information.

as amended by documents received on 25.03.2011

### **RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION**

Subject to the following conditions:

- |   |        |  |
|---|--------|--|
| 1 | ACA01  | Commencement of development within 3 yrs |
|   | ACA01R | A01 Reason 3 years                       |
| 2 | ACH18  | Refuse storage - no details submitted    |
|   | ACH18R | Reason H18                               |
| 3 | ACH22  | Bicycle Parking                          |
|   | ACH22R | Reason H22                               |
| 4 | ACH33  | Car Free Housing                         |
|   | ACH33R | Reason H33                               |

### **Reasons for permission:**

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

- BE1 Design of New Development
- BE11 Conservation Areas
- H1 Housing Supply
- H12 Conversion of non residential buildings to residential use
- T1 Transport Demand
- T3 Parking
- EMP3 Conversion or redevelopment of offices

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

- (a) the relationship of the development to adjacent property
- (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 safety of pedestrians and motorists on the adjacent highway

- (f) accessibility to buildings
- (g) the retail vitality and viability of the shopping area

and having regard to all other matters raised.

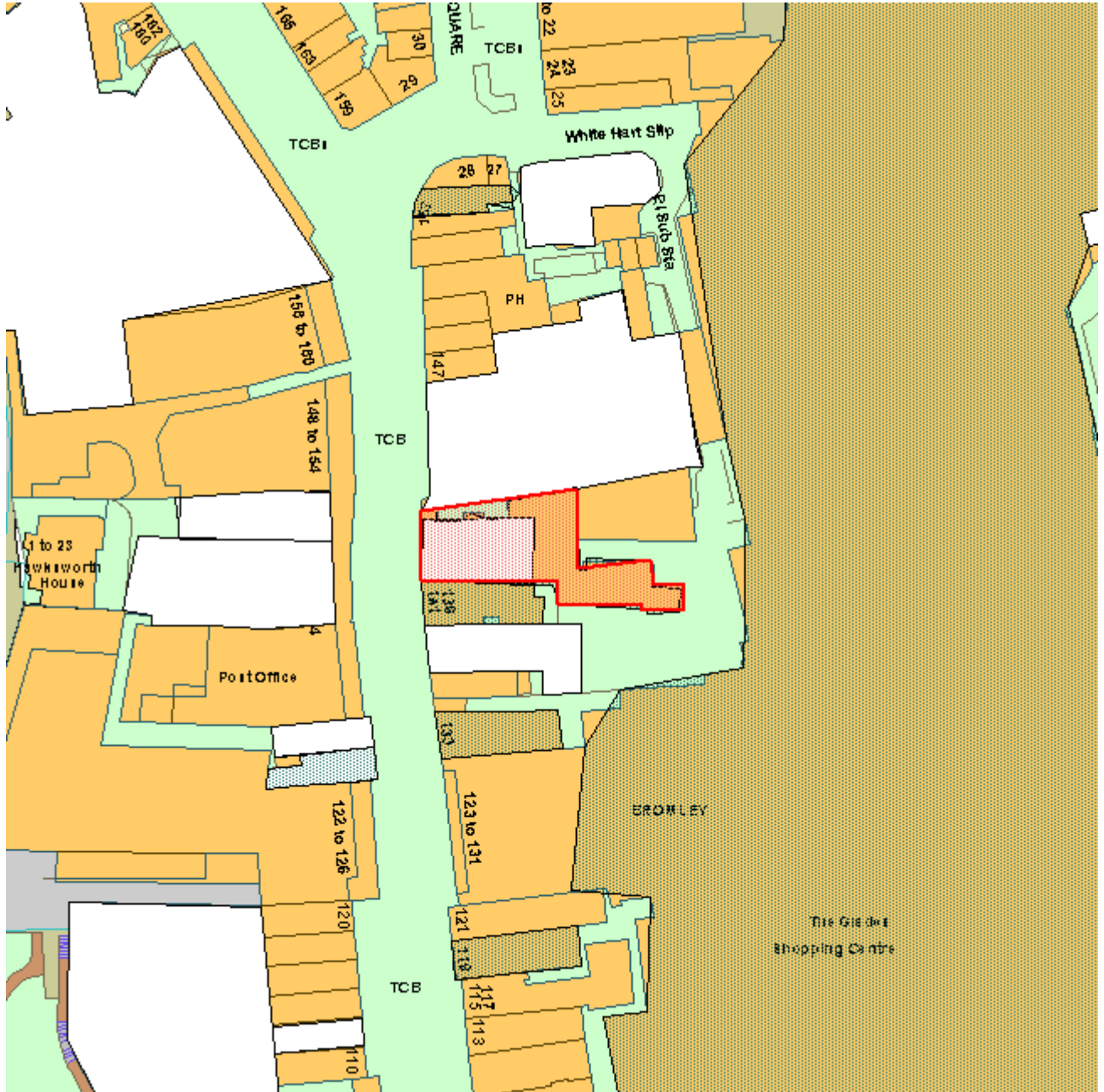
INFORMATIVE(S)

1 RDI10 Consult Land Charges/Street Numbering

Reference: 11/00532/FULL3

Address: First Second and Third Floors Bank Chambers 143 High Street Bromley  
BR1 1EZ

Proposal: Second floor extension, elevational alterations, balconies and roof terrace  
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