

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
13 OCTOBER 2016**

Item No:

APPLICATION NO.

16/P0298

DATE VALID

20/01/2016

Address/Site Belvedere Court, 1A Courthope Road, Wimbledon SW19 7RH

(Ward) Village

Proposal: Demolition of existing four storey building and erection of new four storey building with accommodation arranged over five levels including semi-basement and accommodation within the roof space comprising 9 x two bedroom self-contained flats together with associated car parking and landscaping.

Drawing Nos Site location plan, 525 3D, 4E, 5A, 6C, 7C, 8A, Planning Design and Access Statement, Transport Report, Tree Survey, Arbouricultural Impact Assessment and Arbouricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, Basement Construction Method Statement. Preliminary Ground Investigation Report and Flood Risk Assessment

Contact Officer: Richard Allen (8545 3621)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission subject to completion of a S.106 Agreement and conditions

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- Heads of agreement: No
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental impact statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Press notice-Yes
- Site notice-Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted-No
- Number neighbours consulted - 29
- External consultants: None
- Density: n/a
- Number of jobs created: n/a
- Archaeology Priority Zone:

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application has been brought to the Planning Applications Committee due to the number of objections received.

2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site comprises a detached building containing eight flats situated on the south west side of Courthope Road. The building is set well back from the site frontage and has rear access and off street car parking accessed from High Street Mews. Courthope Road is residential in character with mixed commercial, with some residential above commercial premises in the High Street, which back onto High Street Mews at the rear of the site. The application site is within the Merton (Wimbledon Village) Conservation Area. The Wimbledon North Conservation Area Character Assessment - (Sub Area 4 Belvedere) states that the building is an uncharacteristic block of flats set well back from the road. The application site is also within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ Von).

3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The proposed building would be 14.5 metres in length, 13.5 metres in width and the proposed building would be set back from the Courthope Road frontage by between 20 and 22 metres. The rear elevation of the building would be set back 2.5 metres from the High Street Mews frontage. The building would be set off the boundary with 3 Courthope Road by 2.5 metres and by between 1.5 and 3 metres from the boundary with 1 Courthope Road. The building would have an eaves height of 10 metres and have a hipped roof with an overall height of 13 metres.
- 3.2 Internally, at lower ground floor level 2 x two bedroom flats would be formed, each flat having a combined kitchen/living room. Light would be provided by light wells to front and side elevations of the building. Each flat would have a gross internal floor area of 70m² and 71.4m² respectively. Each flat would have a rear garden of 26m² and 32.7m². At upper ground floor level 2 x two bedroom flats would be formed with a gross internal floor area of 70.m² at first and second floor levels 2 x two bedroom flats would be formed (with an identical foot print), the flats on each floor having a gross internal floor area of 64.8m² and 70.6m² respectively. The flats on the upper ground, first and second floor levels would each have a rear balcony. At third floor level a two bedroom flat would be formed within the roof space. (Gross internal floor area of 92m²). The third floor flat would have a rear roof terrace of 10m².
- 3.3 Off street car parking for five cars would be provided within the front curtilage, A traditional design approach has been adopted for the proposed building which would be constructed in handmade re Flemish brick, cast stone detailing, painted stucco bay windows, painted timber sash windows and a clay tiled roof.

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 In April 1973 planning permission was granted for the erection of an extension at fourth floor level (Ref.WIM213/73).
- 4.2 In November 1963 planning permission was granted for the erection of an additional floor over part of the roof the existing building to form four tenants store rooms, laundry drying room and wc and tank room (Ref.WIM7173).
- 4.3 In July 1962 planning permission was granted for the formation of two self-contained flats on the ground floor in addition to an extension forming two further flats at third floor level to create a total of eight flats within the building and eight off street parking spaces (Ref.WIM6311).
- 4.4 In November 1962 planning permission was granted for alterations to the internal layout of the two additional flats at ground floor level and erection of mansard roof (Ref.WIM6526).

5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by Conservation Area site and press notice procedure and letters of notification to occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response, letters of 7 objections have been received. The grounds of objection are set out below:-
- The proposed basement a lower ground floor level may cause structural damage to 1 Courthope Road.
 - Existing car parking is for four cars at the rear of the property, whilst it is proposed to provide 6 spaces with a car turntable on the front forecourt. The Frontage parking would increase noise and disturbance.
 - Six parking spaces for 9 flats would lead to additional on-street parking and will make parking in the area worse.
 - The extra bulk of the building would affect light to 1 Courthope Road.
 - Balconies would affect privacy.
 - The proposed building is more substantial than the current structure. The current building is essentially four storeys with a small structure added on top which covers only a small proportion of the floor area.
 - The proposed foot print of the building is larger than the existing building.
 - The existing Controlled Parking Zone is at capacity and existing residents cannot get parking spaces despite having residents' permits.
 - Balconies in the north-west elevation would overlook the garden of 1 Courthope Road.
 - High Street Mews is already heavily used. What arrangements would be made for construction traffic?
- 5.2 Belvedere Estates Residents Association
- High Street Mews is a narrow road and not suitable for construction traffic and a carefully thought out construction management plan would be required.

- Whilst the proposed building is more attractive than the existing building, car parking spaces within the frontage would result in the loss of greenery.
- Balconies would cause problems of overlooking in particular to 1 Courthope Road and 3 High Street Mews.
- Owners of neighbouring properties would need to be assured as to the structural integrity of their properties during basement excavation.
- the proposal would have an impact on on-street parking.
- Whilst acknowledging that the proposal is a vast improvement of the current building, the positioning of the building, rights of light, loss of greenery. Basement construction, balcony design and parking need to be addressed.

5.3 Tree Officer

The Council's tree officer notes that the site lower ground floor plan has been amended to remove one of the front light wells and form a light well to the side elevation and that the parking space immediately adjacent to the Beech tree has been removed and soft landscaping retained. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable subject to tree protection conditions.

5.4 Future Merton

The Future Merton team consider the development to be appropriate for a site in Flood Zone 1 and there are no objections to the proposed development subject to a Sustainable Drainage condition being imposed on any grant of planning permission.

5.5 Highways

It is noted that the applicant undertook a night-time survey which demonstrated spare (parking) capacity, given the village centre location this has a tendency to understate the reality of finding a parking space during the daytime and evening when spaces are unavailable or residents are forced to compete for limited spaces against visitors to the nearby shops and restaurants. The applicant also suggests that a net loss of 1 parking space overall compared to the existing situation mitigates the permit free requirement. As all the new dwellings would be two bedroom units it is reasonable to assume a slightly high uptake of car ownership might arise, further reinforcing the need for permit free development in order to protect the local amenity of residents. Based on the revised access arrangements on Courthope Road as shown, it should be possible to retain one of the three on-street parking spaces. However, a separate crossover application would be required. Subject to the developer entering into a S.106 agreement making the development permit free and amending the traffic order to modify the on-street parking, there are no objections in principle to the proposal from a transport planning perspective.

5.6 Amended Plans

The design of the rear corner of the proposed building was amended to incorporate a 'step back' to the elevation facing the rear garden of 1 Courthope Road and the parking layout has been amended to provide 5 spaces with the car turntable removed and a larger area of soft landscaping

retained adjacent to the retained tree. In response one further letter of objection has been received from the occupier of 7 Courthope Road. The grounds of objection are set out below:-

- The amended plans have done nothing to address the loss of resident's parking spaces.
- Six spaces proposed for the forecourt have been reduced to five.
- The new dropped curb will result in the loss of three on street parking spaces.
- It would be hazardous to retain one on street space so close the dropped curb between Belvedere Court and 1 Courthope Road.
- At present there are 25 spaces for residents of five streets who are permitted to park there.
- The forecourt would look unattractive with five parking spaces.
- The building is significantly more substantial than the current structure and will have great impact visually. The building should be four storeys and remain within the foot print of the existing building.
- Windows in the side elevation should be opaque.

6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

- 6.1 The relevant planning policy contained within the Adopted Merton Core Strategy (July 2011) are CS8 (Housing Choice), CS9 (Housing Provision), CS.14 (Design) and CS15 (Climate Change).
- 6.2 The Relevant Policies contained within the Merton Site and Policies Plan (July 2014) DM O1 (Nature Conservation, Trees, Hedges and Landscape Features), DM D1 (Urban Design and Public Realm), DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments), DM D3 (Alterations to Existing Buildings) and DM D4 (Managing Heritage Assets).
- 6.3 The relevant policies contained within the London Plan March 2015 (as amended by Housing Standards Minor Alterations March 2016) are 3.3 (Increasing London's Supply of Housing), 3.4 (Optimising Housing Potential), 3.5 (Quality and Design of Housing), 3.8 (Housing Choice), 6.13 (Parking), 7.4 (Local Character) and 7.6 (Architecture).
- 6.4 Mayor of London's London Plan Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2016)

7. **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 The main planning considerations concern design and conservation issues, standard of residential accommodation, neighbour amenity, basement construction, trees, parking, sustainability and developer contribution issues.
- 7.2 Design and Conservation Issues
The existing building is an unattractive building that does not make a positive contribution towards the character of the conservation area. Although the proposed building has accommodation arranged over five levels as opposed

to the existing four levels of accommodation, the proposed replacement building would be slightly lower than the existing building albeit that the proposed building would have a larger roof form due to the provision of a pitched roof, rather than the flat roofs of the existing building. The proposed replacement building is of traditional design and would be constructed of high quality facing materials. Parking for five cars would be provided within the front curtilage rather than at the rear of the site, and the existing Beech tree would be retained and additional planting undertaken to enhance the setting of the building. The proposed building is considered to be acceptable in design terms and would be a positive improvement to both the Courthopre Road and High Street Mews street scene and the proposal accords with policies CS14 and DM D4.

7.3 Standard of Residential Accommodation

The proposed development would comprise 9 x two bedroom flats. The gross internal floor area of each flat is set out below together with the minimum standard requirement as set out in the London Plan.

	Layout	GFI	London Plan Standard
Flat 1	2 bed/three person	71.4m ²	61m ²
Flat 2	2 bed/three person	70m ²	61m ²
Flat 3	2 bed/three person	71.5m ²	61m ²
Flat 4	2 bed/three person	70m ²	61m ²
Flat 5	2 bed/three person	70.6m ²	61m ²
Flat 6	2 bed/three person	64.8m ²	61m ²
Flat 7	2 bed/three person	70.6m ²	61m ²
Flat 8	2 bed/three person	64.8m ²	61m ²
Flat 9	2 bed/three person	92.2m ²	61m ²

The proposed amenity space for each flat is set out below.

	Amenity Space Provision	London Plan Standard
Flat 1	26m ² garden	5m ² = 1m ²
Flat 2	32.7m ² garden	5m ² + 1m ²
Flat 3	6m ² balcony	5m ² + 1m ²
Flat 4	6m ² balcony	5m ² + 1m ²
Flat 5	6m ² balcony	5m ² + 1m ²
Flat 6	6m ² balcony	5m ² + 1m ²
Flat 7	6m ² balcony	5m ² + 1m ²
Flat 8	6m ² balcony	5m ² + 1 m ²
Flat 9	10m ² roof terrace	5m ² + 1m ²

The London Plan requires that 2 bedroom flat developments provide a minimum of 5m² amenity space for each flat with an additional 1m² for a three person unit. Flats 3 to 8 have 6m² amenity space which is the minimum required for a three person unit, it should be noted that the existing flats have no private amenity space albeit that they benefit from a communal front garden. The existing flats are also single bedroom units despite having a floor area of 60m² with an alcove that could accommodate an additional bed. The existing building does not have a lift. The proposed flats are all two bedroom units and the internal layout and gross internal floor area of each flat is considered to be acceptable. In terms of amenity space, each flat would have access to a balcony or in the case of flats 1 and 2 a garden. The amenity space provision is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policies CS8 and DM D2.

7.4 Neighbour Amenity

The concerns of the objectors regarding the proposed redevelopment of 1A Courthope Road are noted. However, the proposed replacement building would not be sited any further forward than the existing building. The front elevation would be constructed in the same position as the existing building. The proposed building would however have a larger foot print due to the rear elevation of the proposed building projecting 3.5 metres rearward than the existing building (occupying the space occupied by the existing external staircase). The proposed building would also be no higher than the existing building. Indeed the proposed building would be slightly lower than the upper section of the existing building albeit with a larger roof form due to the proposed pitched roof. The lower ground floor flats would each have a garden accessed via patio doors, whilst the upper ground, first, second and third floor flats would each have a balcony or terrace. Objections have been received regarding potential overlooking and loss of privacy from the balconies/terrace. However, the balconies and terrace would be on the rear elevation facing the rear elevations of commercial properties in High Street Mews. Balcony screening to a height of 1.7 metres would mitigate any potential problems of overlooking. A planning condition regarding balcony screening would therefore be appropriate in this instance. To the south of the site is an electricity board sub-station building and the side elevation of 3 High Street Mews whilst to the north is the rear part of the garden to 1 Courthope Road. Given the separation distance between properties the position of the balconies and terrace is acceptable with adequate balcony/terrace screening secured through a planning condition. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policy DM D2.

7.5 Basement Construction

A number of representations have been received concerning the provision of a basement. However, the applicant has submitted a basement construction method statement and undertaken a ground investigation survey. The submitted information has been examined by the Council's Structural Engineer and there are no objections to the proposed development subject to a condition being imposed on any grant of planning permission in respect of Sustainable Urban Drainage in accordance with the requirements of policy DM D2.

7.6 Trees

As originally submitted, the application proposed a car parking space under the canopy of the mature Beech tree. The parking layout has however, been amended to retain soft landscaping beneath the tree canopy. The Council's tree officer has confirmed that excavations for the basement and foundations would be in close proximity to the mature Beech tree within the frontage of the property. Therefore tree protection conditions would be required to be imposed on any grant of planning permission in accordance with policy DM O1.

7.7 Parking

A number of representations have also been received concerning parking provision for the development and problems of parking in the area. The proposal would provide five off-street parking spaces and involve the formation of a new vehicular access onto Courthope Road resulting in the loss of two on-street parking spaces. Although the proposed parking provision is in accordance with London Plan Standards, it should be noted that the Wimbledon Village Controlled Parking Zone is over-subscribed. Transport planning have no objections to the proposal however, given the pressures on on-street parking, particularly in the evenings and the loss of two on-street parking bays, it is recommended that the development be designated 'permit free' secured through a S.106 Agreement and the Traffic Order amended to reflect the revised on-street parking layout.

7.8 Developer Contributions

The development would be subject to the Merton Community Infrastructure Levy and the Mayor of London's CILL would also apply.

9. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

9.1 The proposal does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly there is no requirement for an EIA submission.

10. **CONCLUSION**

The proposal would replace an unattractive building that is in a poor state of repair with a new building providing 9 residential units in an established residential road. The design of the replacement building is considered to be acceptable and the proposed building would not affect neighbour amenity. The proposal would also preserve the character and appearance of the Merton (Wimbledon West) Conservation Area. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION

Subject to a S.106 Agreement covering the following heads of terms:-

1. That the development be designated 'permit free'

2. The Traffic Order be amended (to revise the on-street parking bay layout).
3. That the developer pays the Councils legal and professional costs in drafting and completing the legal agreement.

And subject to the following conditions:-

1. A.1 Commencement of Development
2. A.7 Approved Plans
3. B.1 External Materials to be Approved
4. C.2 No Additional or Enlarged Window or Door Openings
5. C.4 Obscure Glazing (Bottom Sashes to Bathroom and Kitchen Windows As shown on Drawing Numbers 525 06C and 525 07C)
6. C.6 Refuse and Recycling (Details to be Submitted)
7. C.9 Balcony Screening
8. D.10 External Lighting
9. D.11 Hours of Construction
10. F.1 Landscaping Scheme
11. F.2 Landscaping
12. F.5 Tree Protection
13. F.8 Site Supervision (Trees)
14. F.6 Design of Foundations (6 Metres radius of existing Beech tree)
15. F.9 Hardstanding
16. H.1 New Vehicle Access
17. H6P Details of Cycle Parking
18. H9P Construction Vehicles
19. Prior to commencement of development a Basement Construction Method Statement shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The basement shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason for condition: In the interest of neighbour amenity and to comply with policy DMN D2.

20. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of surface water drainage has been implemented in accordance with details that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Before these details are submitted an assessment shall be carried out of the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) to ground, watercourse or sewer in accordance with drainage hierarchy contained within the London Plan Policy 5.13 and the advice contained within the National SuDS Standards. Where a sustainable drainage scheme is to be provided, the submitted details shall:
- i. provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay (attenuation provision of no less than 15m³ of storage) and control the rate of surface water discharged from the site to no greater than 5l/s and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;
 - ii. include a timetable for its implementation;
 - iii. include a CCTV survey of the existing surface water outfall and site wide drainage network to establish its condition is appropriate.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory means of surface water drainage, to reduce the risk of flooding and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 5.13 of the London Plan 2011, policy CS16 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM F2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

INFORMATIVES:

21. It is the responsibility of the developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, watercourses or a suitable sewer. In respect of surface water it is recommended that the applicant should ensure that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off-site storage. When it is proposed to connect to a combined public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. Connections are not permitted for the removal of ground water. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required (contact no. 0845 850 2777).
22. INF1 Party Wall Act
23. INE7 Hardstandings
24. INF8 Construction of Vehicle Access

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