

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

21<sup>st</sup> April, 2016

### Item No:

### UPRN

### APPLICATION NO.

### DATE VALID

15/P3224

11/12/2015

### **Address/Site:**

16 Leamington Avenue, Morden

### **Ward:**

Cannon Hill

### **Proposal:**

Conversion of existing dwelling house into 2 flats including erection of new side porch

### **Drawing No.'s:**

Site Location Plan, 'P15 Rev B Proposed Block Plan', 'P01 Rev B Proposed Ground Floor', 'P02 Rev F Proposed First Floor Plan', 'P03 Rev D Proposed Loft Plan', 'P04 Rev B Proposed Section B-B', 'P05 Rev A Proposed Side Elevation', 'P06 Rev A Proposed Rear Elevation' & 'P07 Rev A Proposed Front Elevation'.

### **Contact Officer:**

Felicity Cox (020 8545 3119)

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## RECOMMENDATION

**Grant planning permission subject to Section 106 Obligation & Conditions**

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## CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Statement been submitted: No
- Press notice: No
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 9
- External consultations: 0
- Controlled Parking Zone: No

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is being brought to the Planning Applications Committee due to the level of public interest in the proposal.

## **2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling house which is located on the southern side of Leamington Avenue. A shared access drive is located adjacent to the western (side) and southern (rear) boundaries of the site.
- 2.2 At the time of the site visit, construction of a hip to gable and rear roof extension was being completed under permitted development rights (Lawful Development Certificate LBM Reference: 15/P1129) in addition to a single storey rear extension measuring 5 metres in depth, issued under Prior Approval Reference: 15/P0362 (Prior Approval Not Required).
- 2.3 The application site is not in a conservation area nor located in a controlled parking zone and has a PTAL rating of 2 (poor).
- 2.4 The immediately surrounding area predominately features family dwellinghouses, in a combination of semi-detached and terrace housing.

## **3. CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The current proposal is to convert the existing four bedroom, single family dwelling house into 1 x 3 bedroom and 1 x 2 bedroom flats.
- 3.2 The ground floor flat would consist of 2 bedrooms with 4 bed spaces, and would have a Gross Internal Floor Area of 75 square metres. The flat would have direct access via the living room to the private amenity space at the rear of the property, of which 111 square metres of garden space has been allocated to the flat. A new raised patio 250mm high is proposed to extend 3.5m from the rear wall of the flat. Refuse/recycling stores and cycle storage for two bicycles has been shown within the private garden. Access to the flat will be via the existing front door and porch, with a new ramp proposed to facilitate disabled access.
- 3.3 The upper storey flat will be located within the first floor and loft of the dwelling house. The flat will consist of 3 bedrooms on the first floor and will have a Gross Internal Floor Area of 99 square metres. A Living/Kitchen/Dining area is proposed within the recently constructed loft conversion.
- 3.4 The upper storey flat will have direct access from the street via a new side door and porch. A private garden with an area of 111 square metres has been shown on the site plan for the upper storey flat at the rear of the existing garden, and refuse/recycling and bicycle stores are proposed within this garden. The proposal will also retain the existing single garage at the rear of the site for car parking for the upper storey flat.
- 3.6 The original plans submitted proposed that access to the rear garden area from Flat 1 be obtained via the shared access drive. Amended plans were provided to provide a side access passage within the site for residents of the upper flat to have safe access to the allocated garden area.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 The planning history of the site is as follows:

15/P0362 – Prior Approval in relation to the erection of a single storey rear extension 5 metres deep, maximum 4 metres high and 3 metres to eaves – Prior Approval Not Required

15/P1129 – Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed hip to gable and rear roof extension and the installation of 3 x rooflights to the front roofslope – Issue Certificate of Lawfulness

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 9 neighbouring properties were consulted by letters and a site notice was displayed.

5.2 Five representations were received from local residents raising concerns relating to:

- Increased parking pressure in street
- Surrounding character of area is single dwelling houses, not flats
- Conversion to flats would be detrimental to the residential amenity and 'single family dwelling house' character of the area
- Approval of flats would set a precedent for flat conversions and lead to loss of reasonably sized family homes
- Difficulty in ensuring adherence to building regulations
- Additional pressure on existing services
- Noise from additional residents
- Existing floor area is less than 120m<sup>2</sup> and room sizes do not meet minimum standards contrary to requirements of 5.1.3 of the SPG: Residential Extensions, Alterations and Conversions (2001). (Nov 2001)
- Parking in front amenity area would have negative visual impact on streetscene

5.3 Re-consultation following receipt of amended plans. Three further objections were received (all three objectors had also submitted a representation in the original consultation period). The additional reasons raised in these objections related to:

- Erection of an appropriate fence and storage facilities is required to eliminate any future problems with the shared driveway
- Inaccurate description of character of surrounding area in design and access statement, referring to presence of flats
- Rear garage not suitable for parking due to narrow access

5.4 Councillors:

Councillor Tobin Byers – Cllr Byers requested further details of the application, however has stated no views on the application.

## **6. POLICY CONTEXT**

6.1 NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework (2012):  
Part 6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes.  
Part 7 Requiring Good Design.

6.2 London Plan Consolidated (2015).  
3.3 Increasing housing supply;  
3.4 Optimising housing potential;  
3.5 Quality and design of housing developments.  
5.3 Sustainable design and construction.  
6.9 Cycling  
7.4 Local character  
7.6 Architecture

London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance 2012

6.3 Merton Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014).  
DM D2 Design considerations in all developments  
DM D3 Alterations and extensions to existing buildings

6.4 Merton Core Strategy (2011).  
CS 8 Housing choice;  
CS 9 Housing provision;  
CS 14 Design;  
CS 15 Climate change  
CS 18 Active transport  
CS 20 Parking, servicing and delivery

## **7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 The main planning considerations include assessing the principle of development in terms of the loss of the existing accommodation, the need for additional housing and housing mix, design and appearance of the proposed building extensions, the standard of the residential accommodation; the impact on residential amenity and impact on car parking and traffic generation.

### Principle of Development

7.2 Core Planning Strategy policy CS9 encourages the development of additional dwellings within residential areas in order to meet the London Plan target of 42,000 additional homes per year from 2015-2036 (Merton - 411 per year). Policy 3.3 of the London Plan states that Local Development Frameworks should seek to identify new sources of land for new residential development including intensification of housing provision through development at higher densities where this is suitable.

7.3 Merton's LDF Core Strategy policy CS14 requires re-provision of at least one family-sized unit where a proposed development would result in the loss of an existing family sized unit. The current proposal will result in the creation of one three-bedroom family sized unit (5 persons), in addition to one two-bedroom

flat (4 persons). As such, the proposal would not result in the loss of an existing family sized unit and is consistent with Merton's LDF Core Strategy Policy CS14.

- 7.4 The current proposal would help provide a mix of dwelling types within the local area and would make a modest contribution to housing targets whilst retaining the dominant housing type as single family dwellings. Thus, the principle of the use of the property as flats is considered acceptable.

#### Character and Appearance

- 7.5 London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6, Core Strategy policy CS14 and SPP Policies DMD2 and DMD3 require well designed proposals that will respect the appearance, materials, scale, bulk, proportions and character of the original building and their surroundings.

- 7.6 The proposed single storey side porch will be unenclosed and is modest in scale. The porch matches the style of the front porch and is not considered to be overbearing on the host dwelling or detrimental to the streetscene. The addition of the front ramp and rear low-set decking will not make a substantial visual impact on the building. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not harm the character and appearance of the area in accordance with the above policies.

- 7.7 Residents have objected to the paving of the front garden area to allow for car parking. It is noted that a high proportion of dwellings in the street have a paved front garden area for car parking. However, the application proposes to retain the existing landscaped garden space and will therefore not alter the character of the street.

#### Neighbouring Amenity

- 7.8 SPP policy DMD2 states that proposals must be designed to ensure that they would not have an undue negative impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, quality of living conditions, privacy, visual intrusion or noise.

- 7.9 The new flats will be accommodated within the existing dwellinghouse and therefore the proposal is not considered to give rise to issues of loss of light or visual intrusion.

- 7.10 As there is a shared access drive separating the property from 18 Leamington Avenue and the properties to the rear of the site (fronting Woodland Way), the proposal is not considered to compromise the amenity of these properties.

- 7.11 The bedroom within the loft is proposed to be converted to the living area of the new upper storey flat. It is not considered that this change would result in substantially greater overlooking into the adjoining property at 14 Leamington Avenue, and hence the adjoining dwelling will maintain an acceptable degree of privacy.

- 7.12 The use of the dwelling would remain residential and it is not considered the proposal would result in an undue impact upon the living conditions of

neighbouring properties by reason of noise intrusion. Separate legislation (Building Regulations) would ensure appropriate insulation to noise between the new units.

Standard of residential accommodation

- 7.13 Policy DM D2 and DM D3 of the Site and Policies Plan states that all proposals for residential development should safeguard the residential amenities of future occupiers in terms of providing adequate internal space, a safe layout and access for all users; and provision of adequate amenity space to serve the needs of occupants. Policies CS 8, CS9 and CS14 within the Council's Adopted Core Strategy [2011] states that the Council will require proposals for new homes to be well designed.
- 7.14 Policy 3.5 of the London Plan 2015 states that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally and externally and should ensure that new development reflects the minimum internal space standards (specified as Gross Internal Areas) as set out in Table 3.3 of the London Plan (Amended March 2016).
- 7.15 The proposed two bedroom, four person flat on ground level will have a gross internal floor area of 75 square metres. This exceeds the London Plan minimum requirement of 70 square metres. The upper storey 3 bedroom, 5 person flat will have a gross internal floor area of 99 square metres, which will also exceed the London Plan minimum requirements of 93 square metres.
- 7.16 The proposed floor areas for all double bedrooms exceeds the London Plan requirement of 12 square metres, and the proposed single room within the upper flat also meets the London Plan requirement of 8 square metres. The living/kitchen/dining areas of each unit also exceed the London Plan requirements of 27 square metres for a 4 person flat, and 29 square metres for a 5 person flat. It is considered that all rooms will have reasonable outlook and access to daylight.
- 7.17 SPP policy DMD2 and London Plan Housing Standards requires that for all new flats, the Council will seek a minimum of 5 square metres of private outdoor space for 1-2 person flatted dwellings and an extra 1 square metre for each additional occupant. Both flats will be provided with safe and convenient access to a private garden amenity space of 111 square metres.
- 7.18 It is considered that the proposed flats would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation in accordance with the above policy requirements.

Transport and parking

- 7.19 Core Strategy policy CS20 requires that development would not adversely affect pedestrian or cycle movements, safety, the convenience of local residents, on street parking or traffic management.
- 7.20 Sites and Policies Policy DM T3 states that development should only provide the level of car parking required to serve the site taking into account its accessibility by public transport (PTAL) and local circumstances in

accordance with London Plan standards unless a clear need can be demonstrated.

- 7.21 The site is PTAL 2 and outside of a parking control zone.
- 7.22 The upper storey flat will have one off-street car parking space in the form of the existing garage at the rear of the site, which is currently used for car parking. No off-street parking is proposed for the ground level flat.
- 7.23 The current 'maximum' car parking standards are set out within the London Plan Standard 3.3.1 (amended March 2016) at Table 6.2 and require a 'maximum' of 1.5 spaces for three bedroom properties and less than 1 space per two bedroom unit. It is considered that the provision of one space for the larger flat and no off-street parking for the ground level flat would not give rise to additional parking pressure such that neighbour amenity would be harmed or that would warrant withholding permission.

#### Refuse storage and collection

- 7.24 Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy [July 2011] states that the Council will seek to implement effective traffic management by requiring developers to incorporate adequate facilities for servicing to ensure loading and unloading activities do not have an adverse impact on the public highway.
- 7.25 The submitted plans show the provision of refuse stores within the private garden areas of the flats. This is considered to be unobtrusive and will facilitate safe refuse collection from the street in accordance with policy.

#### Cycle storage

- 7.26 Core Strategy Policy CS 18 and London Plan policy 6.9 call for proposals that will provide for cycle parking and storage. A new two or three bedroom flat would be expected to provide a store for at least 2 bicycles.
- 7.27 The proposed plans show each flat will be provided with a secure and accessible cycle store within the private garden areas of each flat, capable of accommodating up to 2 bicycles each. The proposal is therefore considered to be consistent with policy.

#### Developer Contributions and affordable housing

- 7.28 Policy CS.8 of the Merton LDF Core planning Strategy (2011) considers the Council's requirements for schemes of less than 10 units to contribute to the provision of affordable housing within the borough via off site financial contributions.
- 7.26 Based on open market values and using the Council's calculator it is estimated that the scheme could deliver an off-site affordable housing contribution of £27,966. The applicant has confirmed that they are willing to provide this contribution.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The proposed conversion of the existing house to provide two new dwellings would make a modest contribution to housing targets whilst retaining the a family sized dwelling on the site. The design of the flats meets minimum standards required for private amenity space, and Gross Internal Area and kitchen/living room sizes, and is considered to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupiers. The conversion is not considered to result in adverse amenity impacts on neighbours, and is therefore recommended for approval.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Grant permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement covering the following heads of term;

1. Financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing in the borough (£27,966).
2. The developer agreeing to meet the Council's costs of preparing [including legal fees] the Section 106 Obligations [to be agreed].
3. The developer agreeing to meet the Council's costs of monitoring the Section 106 Obligations [to be agreed].

And subject to conditions.

### **Conditions**

- 1) A1 Commencement of works
- 2) A7 Built according to plans; Site Location Plan, 'P15 Rev B Proposed Block Plan', 'P01 Rev B Proposed Ground Floor', 'P02 Rev F Proposed First Floor Plan', 'P03 Rev D Proposed Loft Plan', 'P04 Rev B Proposed Section B-B', 'P05 Rev A Proposed Side Elevation', 'P06 Rev A Proposed Rear Elevation' & 'P07 Rev A Proposed Front Elevation'.
- 3) B3 External materials as specified
- 4) C07 Refuse & Recycling (Implementation)
- 5) H07 Cycle parking to be implemented
- 6) Boundary fences –

No development shall take place until details of all boundary fences are submitted in writing for approval to the Local Planning Authority. No works which are the subject of this condition shall be carried out until the details are approved, and the development shall not be occupied / the use of the development hereby approved shall not commence until the details are approved and works to which this condition relates have been carried out in



accordance with the approved details. The fencing shall be permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the garden is sub-divided to provide adequate amenity space for each unit in accordance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies 7.5 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2015, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D1 and D2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

7) NPPF Informative

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