

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
21 April 2016

Item No:

UPRN

APPLICATION NO.

DATE VALID

15/P4735

11/12/2015

Address/Site Walnut Tree Cottage, 1 St John's Road, Wimbledon SW19 4PH

(Ward) Hillside

Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey extension, excavation of basement with light wells, new boundary wall and associated landscaping

Drawing Nos 0863_PL.101 Rev I, 102 Rev L, 103 Rev H, 104 Rev I, 105 Rev J, 106 Rev I, 107 Rev H, 108 Rev I, 109 Rev G, 110 Rev F, 112 Rev A and Design and Access Statement, Structural Engineers Report and Construction Method Statement and Ground Investigation Report and Arboricultural Assessment and Tree Protection Method Statement

Contact Officer: Richard Allen (8545 3621)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- Heads of agreement: Yes
- 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 – 3
- External consultants: None
- Density: n/a
- Number of jobs created: n/a
- Archaeology Priority Zone: No

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 two storey end of terrace house with accommodation in the roof space situated on the west side of St John's Road and the corner of Thornton Road.
- 2.2 It is situated within the Wimbledon West Conservation Area (Sub-Area 21: St John's Road) and forms part of a row of four large Victorian cottages (1-4 St John's Road) arranged in such a manner that the front gardens facing St John's Road form the main amenity spaces, characterised by high boundary treatments to afford some privacy to the garden spaces.
- 2.3 The application site, 1 St John's Road, has a front entrance on St. John's Road, and exploits its corner position with a large gable on the longer elevation facing Thornton Road, which also contains a further entrance to the house. The vehicular access and off street parking space are also on the Thornton Road frontage.
- 2.4 The application site is within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ V0t). The house is not statutorily or locally listed.

3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The application involves the demolition of the existing conservatory and erection of a single storey extension, formation of a new basement with associated light well, a new boundary wall; revised parking arrangements, a landscaping scheme, internal remodelling and associated external modifications including window alterations and installation of 3 x replacement roof lights.
- 3.2 The proposed single storey extension would be 4 metres in width and 3 metres in length and would have an eaves height of 2.8 metres. The extension would have a part flat roof/part mono-pitched roof with an overall height of 3 metres. It would have broadly the same footprint as the existing conservatory but would be re-located slightly further along the Thornton Road elevation and would form a new entrance hall linking in to the main living space..
- 3.3 It is also proposed to form a new basement principally under the footprint of most of the existing house as well as under the new side extension, with a 3m x4m lower terrace/light well and stairs leading up to the main garden adjacent to the new extension. It would provide a study, utility room and gym.

- 3.4 It is also proposed to replace the existing boundary treatment to both the St John's Road and the Thornton Hill frontages. The boundary wall would vary in height from 1.5/2 metres to 2.2 metres on the Thornton Road frontage due to the sloping nature of the road. Substantial planting would be undertaken behind the wall. On the St John's Road the wall would be 1.5 metres in height with planting behind. The boundary wall would be constructed in stock brickwork and timber gates would be provided to the Thornton Road frontage. The existing vehicular access would be widened to the width of the existing dropped kerb with the parking area altered to provide space for two cars, facilitated by the demolition of the conservatory and the revised siting of the replacement extension..
- 3.5 The proposal also involves internal alterations, installation of replacement windows and 3 x conservation style roof lights

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 In February 2003 planning permission was granted for the retention of a conservatory (LBM Ref.2769).

5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by site notice procedure and letters of notification to occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response 9 representations have been received from local residents. The comments are set out below:-
- There have been significant building works in this road over the last three years and another new planning application has just been submitted opposite this property in Thornton Road. Construction work is noisy and dusty and can restrict the traffic flow during lengthy periods of building.
 - If the application is to proceed, assurances that deliveries, skips and construction traffic and waste are tightly controlled during the week and at weekends.
 - parking is a problem in the area, what will happen if 3 or 4 spaces are removed for the period of the works?
 - It is likely that the ground water levels will be impacted by the proposed works making construction of foundations difficult and works may impact upon neighbours.
 - The proposed works may put other houses in the terrace at risk. These are very old and fragile Victorian houses on shallow foundations and removal of structural walls and the chimney is of concern.
 - There may be an underground stream in the vicinity and subsidence is a concern.
 - Number 3 was refused planning permission for a loft conversion on grounds of over development and would suggest that the proposals for number 1 go well beyond that and would put other properties at risk.

- the occupiers of 35 Thornton Road who's property abuts the application site is concerned that structural movement may occur to 35 due to construction works.
- The submitted ground investigation report states that ground water was found at around 3 metres on two occasions out of 3, and that the basement depth would be 3.3 metres. The proposed basement would therefore affect ground water flow and would make construction difficult and may affect 2 St John's Road
- The development would change the character of the area and may cause structural damage.

5.2 Tree Officer

The Tree Officer states that the submitted arboricultural report is acceptable and should form one of the approved documents. The proposed landscaping scheme will compensate for the trees removed as part of tree works application Ref.15/T2150. The proposed landscaping scheme should be secured through condition.

5.3 Future Merton

The Future Merton team has been consulted on the proposed basement construction and flood risk/ surface water drainage. The Future Merton team has reviewed all the submitted documents relevant to structural and land stability. The submitted Construction Method Statement (CMS) is satisfactory at this stage. A detailed CMS produced by the contractor which is reviewed by the structural engineer along with construction drawings would be required to be submitted and agreed prior to excavation works taking place on site. The Future Merton team also note that a Structural Engineers Report and Geo Technical and Ground Investigation Reports have been submitted as part of the application. A site specific ground investigation was undertaken by drilling of borehole and a stand pipe. Two boreholes encountered Made Ground to about 1m over soils considered to be Black Park Gravels to a maximum of 2m, which in turn overlie London Clay. Groundwater was not encountered during the initial drilling but was subsequently measured in borehole (DTS01) on a return visit dated 04/11/15 at a depth of 3.03m. The water level was measured at 2.87m below ground level during a return visit dated 18/11/15. The report is correct in acknowledging that water levels will vary depending generally on recent weather conditions and only long term monitoring of levels in standpipes will provide a measure of seasonal variations in groundwater levels, therefore we would recommend that this is undertaken prior to construction.

- 5.4 However, there does not appear to be any proposed drainage plans submitted which shows how surface water runoff from the site will be managed appropriately including SuDS. This is required for compliance with the London Plan Policy 5.13 and Merton's policy DM F2. We would seek that rates are restricted prior to leaving the site through provision of attenuation measures and the existing and proposed runoff rates are calculated accordingly. The Sustainable Urban Drainage system (SUDS) condition and informative should be included on any grant of planning permission in accordance with London Plan policy 5.13 and Merton's policy DM F2.

5.5 Conservation Officer

The application has addressed the minor concerns raised by officers at the pre-application meeting. Therefore there are no objections to the current proposals.

6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

6.1 Adopted Merton Core Strategy (July 2011)

CS14 (Design) and CS20 (Parking).

6.2 Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014)

DM 02 (Nature Conservation, Trees, Hedges and Landscape Features), DM F2 (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems), DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments), DM D3 (Alterations and Extensions to Existing Buildings) and DM D4 (Managing Heritage Assets).

6.3 The London Plan (March 2015)

The relevant policies within the London Plan are 5.13 (Sustainable Drainage), 7.4 (Local Character) and 7.6 (Architecture).

7. **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 The main planning considerations concern the design and conservation issues, neighbour amenity, impact of the basement construction, tree and parking issues.

7.2 Design and Conservation Issues

The application property is a small end of terrace Victorian cottage. The conservatory to be removed is a later 21st century addition and the proposed new extension is of a similar massing with a slightly revised siting and is of a discreet and restrained design, using materials sympathetic to the main building. The design and siting of the side extension is considered to be acceptable. The main part of the proposals involves the excavation of a basement beneath the original building and extension. The only visible aspect of these works would be the formation of a lower terrace/light well to the Thornton Road elevation. However, the light well would not be readily visible from the street, being screened by the extension and proposed boundary treatment as well as new landscaping. The widening of the vehicular access is small in scope and the extended parking area largely occupies the footprint of the demolished conservatory behind. There is no encroachment into the main front garden space and a comprehensive new landscaping scheme is also proposed. It is considered that the comprehensive refurbishment of the property together with replacement boundary treatment and planting would result in a positive improvement to the St John's Road/Thornton Road street scene and the Merton (Wimbledon West) Conservation Area. The proposals therefore accord with policies CS14, DM D2, DM D3 and DM D4.

7.4 Neighbour Amenity

The proposed single storey side extension would replace an existing conservatory on the side (Thornton Road) elevation of the building. The position of the extension would not have any impact upon neighbour amenity. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policy DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments). The main concerns from neighbours relate to the construction of the basement and potential impact on structural stability and drainage, as well as minimising the impact of construction disturbance and nuisance. Suitable conditions relating to hours of construction, deliveries, dust suppression etc would be imposed. Basement issues are considered below.

7.5 Basement Impact

A number of representations comment on the provision of basement accommodation in the development and raise concerns over basement construction and the impact of basements upon the water table and potential damage to neighbouring properties.

7.6 The basement is mainly sited under the existing house as well as under the new extension, does not affect any trees of townscape value and the light well is sited to minimise its appearance. The basement therefore complies with policy DMD2 in respect of its site coverage, impact on vegetation and appearance. In terms of impact on structural stability and drainage, the applicant has provided a Ground Investigation Report and a Construction Method Statement. The statement concluded that:

- The structural proposals and construction methodology for the subterranean development at 1 St John's Road have been developed with due regard to the existing site constraints, the site specific and local ground conditions, local amenity and highway conditions.
- The ground and existing foundations have been investigated and understood, and this has informed the structural design and construction methodology.
- No live tree roots or desiccated soil were found during the investigations works. No trees will be affected by the basement development works.
- No buried services are located within the vicinity of the basement footprint, which is largely located below the existing house.
- The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment indicates that the site has not previously been, or is likely to be subject to surface water flooding.
- Groundwater has been monitored, and it is envisaged that any ground water inflows during excavation can be dealt with by local pumping.
- The basement structure has been designed to maintain the stability and integrity of the surrounding land and the existing buildings, structures and below ground services.
- The proposed works have been designed to comply with The London Borough of Merton 'Basement and Subterranean Development policy, section 6 – July 2014.

7.7 Further information was provided in response to the concerns expressed by residents about groundwater flows, ground movement and stability of excavation faces. The information submitted by the applicant in respect of the basement construction has been examined by the Future Merton team who have confirmed that the submitted Construction Method Statement (CMS) is satisfactory for this stage. A detailed CMS produced by the contractor which is reviewed and agreed by the Structural Engineer along with construction drawings would be required to be submitted before any excavation works take place onsite. A planning condition requiring the submission of a detailed Basement Construction Method Statement would therefore be required on any grant of planning permission. In terms management of surface water run-off a Sustainable Urban Drainage System would need to be implemented secured by an appropriate planning condition in accordance with London plan policy 5.13 and Merton's policy DM F2. The provision of basement accommodation is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policy DM D2 and DM F2.

7.8 Trees

The Council's Tree Officer has examined the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment and has no objections to the proposed works subject to conditions regarding tree protection (during construction works) and a landscaping scheme. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of policy DM 02.

7.9 Parking

The proposals involve an expansion of the existing off-street parking area to provide two spaces using the existing vehicular access from Thornton Road. The parking arrangements are considered to be acceptable in terms of policy CS20.

8.0 **CONCLUSION**

8.1 The proposed side extension and alterations to the fenestration of the building and new boundary treatment is considered to be acceptable in design terms and would preserve the character and appearance of the Merton (Wimbledon West) Conservation Area and would not affect neighbour amenity. The concerns of residents regarding basement construction are noted. However, the applicant has employed suitably qualified consultants to design the basement and undertake appropriate site investigations and develop a basement construction method statement. The submitted information concluded that the basement can be constructed in a satisfactory manner without unacceptable impact on stability or groundwater flows. The information has been examined by the Council's Flood Engineer and Structural engineer and is considered to be satisfactory subject to suitable conditions being imposed.. The basement construction works and the side extension and internal alterations would also be subject to approval under the Building Regulations and the requirements of party wall legislation. Appropriate planning conditions can also control hours of construction and

site working in order to protect neighbour amenity. Accordingly it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:-

1. A.1 Commencement of Development
2. A.7 Approved Drawings
3. B.1 (Approval of Facing Materials)
4. B.4 (Site Surface Treatment)
5. B.5 (Boundary Treatment)
6. C.2 (No Permitted Development Doors/Windows)
7. D.11 (Construction Times)
8. F.1 Landscaping Scheme
9. F.8 Site Supervision
10. The details of measures for the protection of the existing retained Silver Birch tree as contained in the approved document 'Arboricultural Assessment and Protection method Statement' dated 10 December 2015 shall be fully complies with. The proposed methods for the protection of the Silver Birch tree shall follow the sequence of events as detailed in the document and shown of the drawing titled 'Tree Protection Plan' and numbered TPP1_SU and shall be maintained until completion of site operations.

Reason for condition: To protect and safeguard the existing retained Silver Birch tree in accordance with the following Development Plan Policies for Merton: policy 7.21 of the London Plan 2015); policy CS13 of Merton's Adopted Core Planning Strategy (2011) and policy DM 02 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014).

11. Prior to commencement of development, a detailed Basement Construction Method Statement shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the basement construction undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

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

12. 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:
- provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay (attenuate) and control the rate of surface water discharged from the site as close to greenfield runoff rates, as reasonably practicable, and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;

Reason for condition: 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.

13. Informative:
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).
14. H.9 (Construction Vehicles)
15. INF.1 (Party Wall Act)
16. INF.7 (Hardstanding)

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