

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**21<sup>st</sup> April 2016**

**Item No:**

**UPRN**

**APPLICATION NO.**

**DATE VALID**

15/P1955

22/07/2015

**Address/Site:**

Land Adjacent to No.1 Bridge Villas, Ashcombe Road, Wimbledon, SW19 8JR

**(Ward)**

Wimbledon Park

**Proposal:**

Erection of two storey block with accommodation in the roofspace comprising four flats (2x 1 bed and 2x 2 bed)

**Drawing Nos:**

L1A (Site Location Plan), 2D(site plan as proposed), 3C (Ground floor Plan), 4D(first and second floor), 5B & 6C (elevations)

**Contact Officer:**

David Gardener (0208 545 3115)

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**RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT Planning Permission Subject to a S106 Legal Agreement and Conditions**

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**CHECKLIST INFORMATION**

- Heads of agreement: Permit free, Affordable housing
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Press notice: No
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 13
- External consultations: None

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The applications have been brought before the Planning Applications Committee due to the number of objections received.

## **2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site comprises a separate parcel of land located between the side garden boundary of a two storey house, No.1 Bridge Villas, Ashcombe Road, to the north and the railway lines to the south. 1, Bridge Villas is the end house in a terrace of 3 two storey houses on the western side of Ashcombe Road.
- 2.2 The site has its own frontage with Ashcombe Road immediately north of the road bridge going over the railway lines. The land to the west and south forms part of the designated Green Corridor and Site Of Importance for Nature Conservation in the Council's adopted Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014) which follows the railway line.
- 2.3 The application site has a PTAL rating of 6a (excellent) and is not located in a conservation area. The site is also located in a controlled parking zone (Zone 3E).

## **3. CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The application is to erect a detached building containing four flats (1 x 2 bedroom (2 person) & 2 x 2 person (3 person)). The proposed flats would be arranged over three floors including roof space accommodation. The one bedroom flats would be located at ground floor level and the two bedroom flats at first and second floor levels.
- 3.2 The building would have a traditional design with two double height front bay windows with small gable roofs over to match the adjoining property and a double gable projecting from the main roof at the rear. It would comprise off-white smooth render to the external walls with cast stone mouldings, slate roof, and timber sash windows.
- 3.3 Private gardens would be provided at the rear of the building for each of the ground floor one bedroom flats. The two bedroom flats would have both first floor balconies as well as a communal garden for both upper flats to the side of the building. Cycle parking and bin storage are also provided.
- 3.4 The application has been amended since it was originally submitted with the first floor reduced in depth by 1.9m, the ground floor reduced in depth by 80cm, and the rear part of the building redesigned so that it now features a two twin pitch roofs with gable ends facing the rear gardens rather than a flat roof over the first floor. The ground floor flats would have a gross internal floor area (GIA) of approx. 52.8 sqm whilst the flats above would have a GIA of approx. 78sqm (floor area with a minimum of 2m internal floor height).

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

The following planning history is relevant:

- 4.1 MER873/81 – Erection of office and storage building. Refused - 14/01/1982
- 4.2 08/P2052 - Erection of 2 x three bedroom houses, (2 storeys in height with accommodation within roofspace. Refused - 18/09/2008, for the following reasons:
- “ The proposed residential development, by reason of its design, scale, location and appearance, would not respond to the locally distinctive pattern of terraced development, would be detrimental to the appearance and character of the surrounding area and would be contrary to policies BE.16 and BE.22 of the Council’s adopted Unitary Development Plan (October 2003).”
- “ The proposed development would fail to provide a suitable standard of environment for future occupiers arising from the absence of suitable amenity/garden space to meet the needs of the two residential dwellings, and would be contrary to policies HS.1 of the Unitary Development Plan (October 2003).”
- “ The proposed development, by reason of its position, would result in the loss of existing tree, being a prevailing natural feature that contributes to the character and appearance of the area and street scene, to the detriment of the character and appearance of Ashcombe Road contrary to policy NE.11 of the Adopted Merton Unitary Development Plan (October 2003).”
- 4.3 14/P0021 - Erection of 2 x 3 bedroom dwelling houses. Withdrawn - 17/02/2014.

#### **5. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 5.1 Adopted Merton Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014): DM D1 (Urban design and the public realm), DM D2 (Design considerations in all developments), DM EP2 (Reducing and mitigating noise), DM EP4 (Pollutants), DM T1 (Support for sustainable transport and active travel), DM T3 (Car parking and service standards)
- 5.2 Adopted Merton Core Strategy (July 2011) are: CS.8 (Housing Choice), CS.9 (Housing Provision), CS.14 (Design), CS.20 (Parking, Servicing and Delivery)
- 5.3 London Plan (March 2015) are: 3.3 (Increasing Housing Supply), 3.5 (Quality and Design of Housing Developments), 3.8 (Housing Choice), 5.3 (Sustainable Design and Construction), 6.13 (Parking), 7.15 (Reducing and Managing Noise, Improving and Enhancing the Acoustic Environment and Promoting Appropriate Soundscapes)

5.4 The following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is also relevant:  
New Residential Development (September 1999)

## **6. CONSULTATION**

6.1 The application was publicised by means of a site notice and individual letters to occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response, seven letters of objection have been received, including an objection from the Wimbledon Society. The objections are on the following grounds:

- Gardens too small, overdevelopment of plot, out of character with surrounding area, houses more appropriate than flats
- Impact on parking
- Disturbance/safety implications during construction works
- Visually intrusive/overbearing, loss of daylight/sunlight, loss of privacy/noise from use of rear balconies

6.2 Following amendments to the application, a further re-consultation was carried out. Two further objections were received on the grounds inadequate consultation, traffic and parking impact and overdevelopment.

### **6.3 The Wimbledon Society**

Object on grounds of loss of privacy/potential noise from first floor rear balconies.

### **6.4 Environmental Health**

No objection subject to a condition for the submission of a scheme for protecting future occupiers of the flats from noise and vibration from the adjacent railway line.

### **6.5 Crossrail 2**

Crossrail 2 Safeguarding team have advised that they have no comment and have stated that the application relates to 'land outside the limits of land subject to consultation by the Crossrail 2 Safeguarding Direction.' However, this conflicts with the Crossrail 2 website, which shows the application site falling within the safeguarded area. Planning officers have brought this to the attention of the Crossrail 2 Safeguarding Team but no further response has yet been received.

## **7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

The main planning considerations are the impact that the proposal would have on visual and residential amenity, the standard of accommodation and impact on parking/highways.

### **7.1 Visual Amenity**

7.1.1 Policy DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) states that proposals for development will be required to relate positively and appropriately to the siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions,

height, materials and massing of surrounding buildings, whilst using appropriate architectural forms, language, detailing and materials which complement and enhance the character of the wider setting.

- 7.1.2 It is considered that the proposed development, which would comprise a detached building with a traditional appearance, with double height front bay windows to mirror No.1 Bridge Villas, is acceptable in terms of its design and appearance. The application site is located at the southern end of Ashcombe Road and abuts a railway line, which means that the front and south facing side elevations of the development will be highly prominent when viewed from the street. It is considered that No.1 Bridge Villas, which features a flat roof over the first floor rear element and a large rear dormer which is not set in from the side or rear elevations has been unsympathetically extended in recent years and as such currently has a harmful impact on the Ashcombe Road street scene, when viewed from the south. The flats have been designed to have the appearance of a single property, with an eaves, lines, ridge line, choice of materials, windows and general detailing designed to sit comfortably with neighbouring buildings. It is considered that the proposed building would improve these views with the rear element designed with two twin pitch gable roofs, which would fully integrate with the architectural style of the building.
- 7.1.3 Overall, it is considered that the current proposal would complement the character and appearance of the Ashcombe Road street scene and the wider area in general and as such accords with policy DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014).

## **7.2 Standard of Accommodation**

- 7.2.1 The London Plan was published in July 2011 and sets out a minimum gross internal area standard for new homes as part of policy 3.5. It provides the most up to date and appropriate minimum space standards for Merton.
- 7.2.2 In addition, adopted policy CS.14 of the Core Strategy and DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) encourages well designed housing in the borough by ensuring that all residential development complies with the most appropriate minimum space standards and provides functional internal spaces that are fit for purpose. New residential development should safeguard the amenities of occupiers by providing appropriate levels of sunlight & daylight and privacy for occupiers of adjacent properties and for future occupiers of proposed dwellings. The living conditions of existing and future residents should not be diminished by increased noise or disturbance.
- 7.2.3 As the proposed flats would exceed the minimum space standards set out in the London Plan, with each habitable room providing good outlook, light and circulation, it is considered the proposal would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation. In addition, the proposed ground floor flats would provide between 22.3sqm and 27.5sqm of private amenity space whilst the upper floor flats would each feature a rear balcony of 5sqm. Although a two bedroom (3

person) flat would be expected to include a minimum of 6sqm of private amenity space, the 2 upper flats also have access to a south facing communal garden of 62sqm shared between them , and therefore the level of amenity space provision is considered to be acceptable.

- 7.2.4 The application site abuts a rail line and as such the applicant has submitted a noise and vibration report assessing the impact that the rail line would have on future occupants of the development. The proposal would therefore comply with policy 3.5 of the London Plan (July 2011), CS.14 of the Core Planning Strategy (July 2011) and DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014).

### **7.3 Residential Amenity**

- 7.3.1 Policy DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) states that proposals for development will be required to ensure provision of appropriate levels of sunlight and daylight, quality of living conditions, amenity space and privacy, to both proposed and adjoining buildings and gardens. Development should also protect new and existing development from visual intrusion.

- 7.3.2 It is considered that the proposal would not be visually intrusive or overbearing when viewed from the adjoining property, No.1 Bridge Villas. The application has been amended since it was first submitted with the rear elevation at first floor level reduced in depth by 1.9m so that it aligns with the rear elevation of the first floor rear projection at No.1 Bridge Villas. This means that only the ground floor element would project 1.1m from the rear wall of No.1 Bridge Villas which is considered acceptable given there is also a gap of approx. 1m between the proposed building and this property.

- 7.3.3 With regards to privacy the proposed building would not directly face an existing residential property whilst the rear first floor balconies would feature 1.8m high privacy screens. The proposed balconies at 5sqm are also rather small and as such would be subject to limited activity. It should also be noted that Nos. 2 and 3 Bridge Villas feature second floor rear balconies and it is considered that the proposed balconies would not result in any significant increase in overlooking of the rear garden of No.1 Bridge Villas. The proposal also passes the Council's Aspect Value Test which means it would not have an unacceptable impact on daylight/sunlight levels at No.1 Bridge Villas. Overall, it is considered that given the above considerations that the proposal would accord with policy DM D2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014).

### **7.4 Parking and Traffic**

- 7.4.1 The application site has a PTAL rating of 6a, which means it has excellent access to public transport. The scheme proposes no off-street parking provision. Policy DM T3 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) 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. Policy 6.13 Table 6.2 of the London Plan (March 2015) states that development of 1-2 bedrooms should provide less 1 space per unit. The level of parking provision is therefore in accordance with London Plan policy. Given the application site is located in a controlled parking zone (Zone 3E) and has excellent access to public transport it will be required that the development is permit free so that it does not create any additional parking stress in the area.

- 7.4.2 Policy DM T1 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (July 2014) states that development must provide cycle parking in accordance set out in the London Plan. It states that residential cycle parking facilities should be provided in secure and conveniently sited positions with good access to the street. Policy 6.13 of the London Plan states that developments must meet with minimum cycle parking standards set out in Table 6.3 which in this instance requires 1 space per 1 bedroom unit and 2 spaces per 2 bedroom units. Given the proposal would provide 8 secure bicycle spaces in the side garden it is considered the proposal would comply with local and regional planning policy.

## **7.5 Landscaping**

- 7.5.1 The proposed development includes front, rear and side gardens. LBM Ref: 08/P2052 was refused in part because the development would have resulted in the loss of a tree that was considered to make a positive contribution to the Ashcombe Road street scene. It should be noted that this tree has been removed since the determination of LBM Ref: 08/P2052, which means that it is no longer a planning consideration given that it was not protected (the site is not in a conservation area and the tree was not subject to a tree preservation order).

## **8. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- 8.1 The application does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly, there are no requirements in terms of EIA submission.

## **9. LOCAL FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 The proposal would result in a net gain in gross floor space and as such will be liable to pay both the Mayoral and Merton Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL). The funds will be spent on the Crossrail project, with the remainder spent on strategic infrastructure and neighbourhood projects.

## **10. SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENT**

### **10.1 Affordable Housing**

- 10.11 In terms of affordable housing, Policy CS.8 of the Core Planning Strategy (July 2011) requires developments of 1 – 9 units to make an off-site financial

contribution for provision of affordable housing in the borough. The affordable housing contribution is calculated based on a formula using the median open market valuation of the completed development based on three independent valuations. The proposal would result in a net increase of four residential units in this instance. After applying the formula a figure of (£154,477) would be sought as a S106 planning obligation.

## 10.2 Permit Free

10.21 The development is to be 'Permit Free' in line with policy CS.20 of the Core Planning Strategy, which seek to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles in locations with good access to public transport facilities.

10.22 Further information in respect of the above, including details of supplementary research carried out in justification of the S106 requirements, can be viewed here:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/s106-agreements.htm>

## 11. **CONCLUSION**

11.1 It is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of its size and design and would not have an unacceptable impact on the Ashcombe Road street scene. The development is also considered to have an acceptable impact on neighbour amenity, traffic and parking and would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation. Overall it is considered that the proposal would comply with all relevant planning policies and as such planning permission should be granted.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION**

Subject to a S106 legal agreement with the following heads of terms:

1. That the residential units are 'Permit Free';
2. Financial contribution for affordable housing (£154,477)
3. The developer agreeing to meet the Council's costs of preparing, drafting and monitoring the Section 106 Obligations.

### **And the following conditions:**

1. A.1 (Commencement of Development)
2. A.7 (Approved Plans)
3. B.3 (External materials as specified)



4. B.4 (Details of Site/Surface Treatment)
5. B.5 (Details of Walls/Fences)
6. B.6 (Levels)
7. C.2 (No Permitted Development (Windows and Doors))
8. C.9 (Balcony/Terrace (Screening))
9. C.4 (Obscured Glazing (Opening Windows))
10. C.7 (Refuse & Recycling (Implementation))
11. C.10 (Hours of Construction)
12. F.1 (Landscaping/Planting Scheme)
13. F.2 (Landscaping (Implementation))
14. No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until evidence has been submitted to the council confirming that the development has achieved not less than the CO2 reductions (ENE1), internal water usage (WAT1) standards equivalent to Code for Sustainable Homes level 4. Evidence requirements are detailed in the "Schedule of evidence Required for Post Construction Stage from Ene1 & Wat1 of the Code for Sustainable Homes Technical Guide. Evidence to demonstrate a 25% reduction compared to 2010 part L regulations and internal water usage rates of 105l/p/day must be submitted to, and acknowledged in writing by the Local Planning Authority, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 5.2 of the London Plan 2011 and policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011.

15. Prior to the commencement of the development details of the provision to accommodate all site operatives, visitors and construction vehicles and loading / unloading arrangements during the construction process shall be submitted and approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The approved details must be implemented and complied with for the duration of the construction process.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

16. H.7 (Cycle Parking to be implemented)
17. No development shall commence until a scheme for protecting future occupiers of the flats from noise and vibration from the adjacent railway line is

submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme is to include acoustic data for the glazing system, and details of the noise barrier and ventilation system. The development will be required to achieve the internal and external noise standards set out in BS8233:2014. The development shall not be occupied until the details have been approved and carried out in strict accordance with the approved details and those measures shall be thereafter be permanently retained.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of future occupiers of the development and ensure compliance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 7.15 of the London Plan 2015 and policies DM D2, DM EP2 and DM EP4 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

18. Informative – The application site is adjacent to Network railway infrastructure and as such it is advised that the applicant contacts [AssetProtectionsWessex@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:AssetProtectionsWessex@networkrail.co.uk) prior to any works commencing on site.