

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 9 FEBRUARY 2017

<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>DATE VALID</u>
16/P4366	07/11/2016
<b>Address/Site:</b>	3 Pincott Road, South Wimbledon, London, SW19 2XF.
<b>Ward:</b>	Abbey.
<b>Proposal:</b>	Change of use from a former Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhood unit (B1a Business Use Class) to a Community Centre (D1 Non Residential Institute Use Class).
<b>Drawing No.'s:</b>	Site & Location Plan (received 07.11.2016), Floor Plan - Existing (received 07.11.2016), Floor Plan - Proposed (received 07.11.2016), Elevations (received 07.11.2016).
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Anna Turner (020 8545 3232).

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### RECOMMENDATION

**Grant planning permission subject to 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: No
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 85
- Controlled Parking Zone: No
- Flood zone: No

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is being brought to the Planning Applications Committee for determination due to the level and nature of objections received.

#### **2. SITE, SURROUNDINGS AND BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The application site comprises of a three story building with a vacant ground level and residential flats occupying floors one and two. The site is situated approximately 50m south of Merton High Street in South Wimbledon, located between Pincott Road and Doel Close on the High Path residential estate. The area is characterised as residential and the site is bordered by residential dwellings.

- 2.2 The site is within the Merton Archaeological Priority Area Tier 2 (indicating the presence Tier 2 or likely presence of heritage assets of archaeological interest). The site is currently vacant and was previously occupied by the Metropolitan Policy Safer Neighbourhood facility which closed in 2013.
- 2.3 South Wimbledon is the closest underground station, located approximately 250m to the west of the site, and Morden Road tram stop is less than 1km away from the southern end of Pincott Road. Pincott Road is a public highway with metered parking operating between 8:30am-6:30pm. To the rear of the site, Doel Close is a cul-de-sac with private parking enforcement that restricts parking to residents (permit holders). The site is well serviced by public transport with a PTAL rating of 4 and adjacent to PTAL 6.

### **3. CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the ground floor of the building from use class B1A (Business - as an office other than a use within class A2) to D1 (Non-residential institutions) for use as a community centre providing a meeting room and two function rooms to be used by a range of uses, including fitness, martial arts and faith groups.
- 3.2 The proposal would enable High Path Community Centre, currently located at 63 High Path, to relocate to 3 Pincott Road. The first and second floors of the building are occupied by residential flats and the proposal is not seeking amendments to these floors.
- 3.3 The applicant has advised that the site will primarily be used by non-casual users, with up to eight regular bookings per week. User group sizes will range on average from approximately 10-20 people. The applicant has also advised that any larger group activities requiring greater space will take place in the school hall at the All Saints Primary School which is approximately a 12 minute walk away.
- 3.4 No material external alterations or ground works are proposed and the applicant seeks minor internal non-structural alterations to the ground floor layout to accommodate a meeting room and two function rooms. The existing WC facilities including disabled facilities will remain unaltered. Existing access points and the disabled ramp and handrail providing access from Pincott Road to this floor will remain unchanged. The existing building footprint and 175m<sup>2</sup> ground floor area will not be altered.
- 3.5 The existing soft landscaping at the front of the site will remain unchanged. The applicant proposes hours of operation from 8.00 am until 10.00 pm Monday to Sunday inclusive and have advised that it is anticipated that the majority of user groups will utilise the facility during weekday evenings.

### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 The planning history on this site largely relates to its previous use as the Metropolitan Policy Safer Neighbourhood facility and is summarised below:

06/P2067: INSTALLATION OF TWO SLAB MOUNTED AIR CONDENSING UNITS (0.8M X 0.25M ENCASED IN PROTECTIVE CAGES TO BE LOCATED TO THE

WEST SIDE OF THE BUILDING FRONTING PINCOTT ROAD – Planning permission granted subject to Conditions.

08/P1931: ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT IN RESPECT OF THE DISPLAY OF AN INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA IDENTITY SIGN AND INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED INFORMATION SCREEN IN CONNECTION WITH USE AS A SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD UNIT – Advertisement Consent granted.

08/P1933: INSTALLATION OF A NEW SHOPFRONT AND HAND RAIL TO THE FRONT ELEVATIONS INSTALLATION OF REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TO THE SIDE ELEVATION ALL WITH NEW SECURITY ROLLER SHUTTERS, NEW BRICKWORK AND RELOCATED DOOR TO THE REAR ELEVATION WITH NEW AIR CONDITIONING UNIT AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL TO SIDE ELEVATION – Planning permission granted subject to Conditions.

16/P3954: TELECOM LICENCE NOTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF 1 x BT EQUIPMENT CABINET MEASURING 535mm (W) x 330mm (D) x 985mm (H) – This application is currently registered with Council.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 85 neighbouring residents were notified directly by way of post. A petition objecting to the proposal was received with 36 signatures.

5.2 The reasons for objection are summarised as follows:

- Noise (Residents living above the ground floor raise concerns that all noise in the building can be currently heard including doors opening and closing. Concern was raised over the noise effects of the existing extractor fan installed by the Police).
- Hours of operation (Concern over adverse affects on the quality of life experienced by residents).
- Parking (Concern over the affect on parking raising that there is a parking availability problem in Doel Close and Pincott Road)

5.3 Highways – No objection.

- Confirmed the change of use will generate a maximum of 11 vehicles per evening (Calculated from using the existing modal split and existing level of usage).
- Noted that the existing hall has a vast amount of parking on site which can be used by future users of the development and is within close proximity to the proposed development.
- Noted that the applicant proposes a travel plan to create a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport.
- Overall it is noted that the proposal will not generate a significant negative impact on the performance and safety of the surrounding highway network or its users, as such a recommendation for approval is supported.

5.4 Environmental Health – No objection.

5.5 In response to initial concerns expressed by the Environmental Health Officer concerning the likely noise levels generated and the acoustic properties of the

existing construction, the applicant has submitted a noise impact assessment to address these issues.

- 5.6 The submitted acoustic report confirms noise levels experienced between the ground floor and first floor residential flats and an assessment of the predicted noise levels against existing levels. This report recommends that the sound insulation of the existing floor construction should be increased and that a device to control music noise electronically be installed to control noise levels.
- 5.7 The Council's Environmental Health Officer has subsequently confirmed that an appropriately worded condition to ensure the proposed mitigation measures are undertaken will address any noise concerns.

## **6. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 6.1 NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework (2012):  
Policy 8 Promoting healthy communities.
- 6.2 London Plan (2016):  
Policy 3.16 Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure.  
Policy 6.13 Parking.  
Policy 7.2 An inclusive environment.  
Policy 7.15 Reducing and managing noise, improving and enhancing the acoustic environment and promoting appropriate soundscapes.
- 6.3 Merton Sites and Policies Plan July 2014 policies (SPP):  
DM C1 Community facilities.  
DM EP2 Reducing and mitigating noise.  
DM E3 Protection of scattered employment sites.  
DM T1 Support for sustainable transport and active travel.  
DM T2 Transport impacts of development.  
DM T3 Car parking and servicing standards.
- 6.4 Merton Core Strategy 2011 policy (CS):  
CS11 Infrastructure  
CS18 Transport  
CS20 Parking, servicing and delivery

## **7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 The key issues in the assessment of this planning application are:
- Principle of the change of use
  - Neighbour amenity
  - Impact upon transport, parking and road safety.

Principle of development.

- 7.2 The principal of development should be considered in the context of the current use of the building and applicable policies. The proposed change of use is not considered to result in the loss of existing viable B1a office space as the site has remained vacant for three years since 2013.

- 7.3 The existing surrounding environment is largely characterised as residential with buildings adjacent to 3 Pincott Street and along Pincott Street being residential flats. It is considered that there is little presence of business within the immediate environment.
- 7.4 The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Merton's Core Planning Strategy Policy CS 12 and Sites and Policies Plan Policy DM E3 which states that community uses are supported on scattered employment sites such as the subject site.
- 7.5 Policy CS 12 (Economic Development) (section 20.17) states that; "Together with Chapter 19 'Infrastructure -Policy 11' we recognise the economic potential of healthcare, education and community uses (D1 and C2) by facilitating such development on scattered employment sites and resisting the net loss of viable facilities." This policy recognises that community uses can help the economic health of a local community and supports Policy CS11(f) to ensure community centres are available.
- 7.6 It is considered that the proposed application supports this policy as it will result in the improved use of an unutilised and vacant B1a premise to ensure a community centre is available for the local community which in turn will help contribute to the local economy.
- 7.7 The proposal meets the criteria for the development of community centres in Policy DM C1 (a)(i-vi) of Merton's Core Planning Strategy as it is considered that the proposal will not result in any adverse effects upon parking facilities and the amenity of nearby residents and businesses.
- 7.8 Given the above, it is considered the proposal is acceptable in principle; subject to compliance with the relevant London Plan policies, Merton Local Development Framework Core Strategy, Merton Sites and Policies Plan and supplementary
- Neighbour amenity.
- 7.9 Merton's Sites and Policies Plan Policy DM D2 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 and noise.
- 7.10 The proposed change of use is not considered to have undue adverse effects upon neighbouring properties in regards to loss of light, quality of living conditions, privacy and visual intrusion as no external changes to the building will be undertaken.
- 7.11 The key amenity concerns raised by objectors is the proposed hours of operation and the acoustic impact of the proposed community centre upon residents living above the ground floor within the existing building and adjacent properties.
- 7.12 Local residents have raised objections over the proposed hours of operation from 8.00 am until 10.00 pm seven days a week. The previous Metropolitan Policy Safer Neighbourhood facility hours of operation were from 7am to 11pm seven days a week. As the proposed hours of operation are reduced by two hours from the existing permission it is considered that any nuisance issues experienced by residents will be decreased and that these hours are reasonable opening hours.

- 7.13 Local residents have also raised objections over the potential noise impacts of the proposed community centre upon those living above the ground floor and in adjacent properties.
- 7.14 As has been detailed in section 5.4 of this report Councils Environmental Health officer is satisfied that the noise levels generated by the Community Centre can be mitigated to the required level through an appropriately worded condition. This condition will require the applicant to undertake the noise mitigation measures proposed in the submitted noise impact assessment prior to occupation.
- 7.15 It is considered that the proposal meets policy DM D2 as the use of mitigation measures will ensure no adverse noise effects will impact upon the amenity of residents within the building and the neighbouring properties.

#### Transport, parking and road safety.

- 7.16 The site is well serviced by public transport with a PTAL rating of 4 and is adjacent to streets with a PTAL rating of 6. Councils Highways officer has confirmed that there is adequate levels of on street parking and an additional provision within close proximity to the site.
- 7.17 Local residents have raised objections over the impact the Community Centre will have on the provision of parking and the obstruction of traffic flow. Councils Highway officer has confirmed that existing parking provision is more than sufficient to accommodate the Community Centre.
- 7.18 The Council's highway officer estimates that the Community Centre will generate a maximum of 11 vehicles per evening. This officer confirmed that this additional trip generation can be accommodated by Pincott Road and surrounding streets and will not have a significant adverse effect upon the existing capacity of the street network.
- 7.19 The Council's Highways officer has advised that overall the proposal will not generate a significant negative impact on the performance and safety of the surrounding highway network or its users and has recommended approval of this application.
- 7.20 Overall the proposal is considered to meet Merton's Local Development Framework Core Strategy policy CS20 which requires that development not adversely affect pedestrian or cycle movements, safety, the convenience of local residents and on street parking or traffic management.

#### Archaeology

- 7.21 The site is identified as being within the Merton Archaeological Priority Area Tier 2 (indicating the presence Tier 2 or likely presence of heritage assets of archaeological interest). No ground works are required as part of this development.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The principle of development is considered to be acceptable. It is not considered that the proposed development will not result in undue adverse effects upon the surrounding transport and parking network and the potential presence of archaeological interest. It is considered that with approval of the proposed conditions no undue adverse effects are anticipated to be experienced by existing residents and surrounding properties.

## 9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. A1 Commencement of Development (full application)
2. A7 Approved Plans
3. Acoustic Effects.

Prior to the commencement of the proposed use and occupation of the site the developer shall implement the acoustic mitigation measures undertaken in accordance with the submitted Sounds Insulation Assessment dated 17.01.2017 by Accon UK. Such measures shall thereafter be retained for so long as the use remains.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area and the occupiers of neighbouring properties and to ensure compliance with policies 7.14 and 7.15 of the London Plan (2016), policy DM D2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014).

4. Hours of Operation.

The Community Centre hereby permitted shall operate only between the hours of 8.00am to 10.00pm Monday to Sunday.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and ensure compliance with policy 7.15 of the London Plan (2016), policy CS57 of Merton's Core Strategy 2011 and policy DM EP2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014).

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[Click here](#) for full plans and documents related to this application.

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