

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
22 FEBRUARY 2018**

APPLICATION NO. **DATE VALID**
17/P4387 27.11.2017

Address/Site Meeting Hall, 18 Arras Avenue, Morden, SM4 6DF

Ward Ravensbury

Proposal: CONVERSION OF WYVERN YOUTH CENTRE INTO 6 x RESIDENTIAL UNITS (COMPRISING 2 x 1 BED, 1 x 2 BED AND 3 x 3 BED FLATS) INVOLVING RE-ROOFING, INSTALLATION OF SKYLIGHTS, NEW DOOR AND WINDOW OPENINGS, WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING, REFUSE, LANDSCAPING AND CYCLE STORAGE.

Drawing Nos; Site location plan and drawings 100 Rev 01, 101 Rev 01, 102 Rev 01, 200 Rev 00, 201 Rev 00, 202 Rev 01, 203 Rev 01, 300 Rev 01, 400 Rev 04, 0373 SK 80124 and 0373 SK 80125

Contact Officer: Leigh Harrington (020 8545 3836)

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to relevant conditions.

CHECKLIST INFORMATION.

- Heads of agreement: No
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Design Review Panel consulted: No,
- Number of neighbours consulted: 25
- Press notice – No
- Site notice – Yes
- External consultations: Metropolitan Police, GLAAS
- Archaeological Priority Zone – Yes
- Controlled Parking Zone - No
- Number of jobs created: N/A
- Density 50 Dwellings per hectare

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application has been brought before the Committee due to the level of public interest.

2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The existing building is a disused Youth centre located amongst a streetscene predominately comprised of pairs of interwar semi detached single family dwellings with smaller and more densely concentrated housing to the rear in Connaught Gardens. The site is designated as Site Proposal 32 located within the Merton Sites and Policies DPD. The site is not within a Conservation Area or a Controlled Parking Zone but has Public Transport Accessibility Level – 2 with low accessibility to public transport. There are no locally or statutorily listed buildings on site or adjoining. The area is at low risk of flooding.. It is within an Archaeological Priority Zone. There are a number of mature trees situated at the rear of the site which is within 400m of Morden Hall Park. The local Scout group have a right of access through the centre of the site.

3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 This application follows a previously refused scheme for a larger scale redevelopment of the site which involved additional units being constructed at the rear. This smaller scale proposal seeks planning permission for the conversion of the former Wyvern youth centre into 6 x residential units (comprising 2 x 1 bed, 1 x 2 bed and 3 x 3 bed flats) involving re-roofing, installation of skylights, new door and window openings, with associated parking, refuse, landscaping and cycle storage.
- 3.2 The design and layout have undertaken a number of variations in response to consultation comments, predominantly in regards to privacy and security. The area in front of the building will be laid out to provide four off street car parking spaces with refuse stores. The area directly around the building will be laid out in a series of amenity spaces, footpaths and cycle stores. The existing building will be converted internally to provide six flats and there will be alterations to the roof slope to accommodate roof lights for the accommodation on the upper floor.

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 16/P0910 Permission refused and appeal dismissed for the demolition of meeting hall and erection of residential block comprising 1 x 4 bed house, 3 x 3 bed houses and 2 x 1 bed terrace flats Reason for refusal; *The design, scale, mass, bulk and density of the proposed development is considered not to complement the character and appearance of the wider setting nor respect the space between buildings, contrary to London Plan policy 7.6, Core Strategy policy CS 14 and policies DM D2 and DM D3 of the adopted Merton Sites and Policies Plan 2014*

And

The design, scale, mass, bulk and density of the proposed development is considered to be an incongruous, overly dominant, visually intrusive and un-neighbourly form of development that is harmful to the amenity of neighbouring residents through loss of outlook and privacy, contrary to London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6, Core Strategy policy CS 14 and policies DM D2 and DM D3 of the adopted Merton Sites and Policies Plan 2014

- 4.2 14/P2578 Permission refused and appeal dismissed for partial demolition of the existing building and the redevelopment of the site to provide 7x3 bedroom dwellings. Reasons for refusal; *The proposals by reason of design, size, massing, including orientation to the surrounding pattern of development, and bulk would result in an un-neighbourly form of development that would be overly dominant and visually intrusive and be likely to give rise to noise and disturbance, to the detriment of the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The proposals would be contrary to policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2011), policy CS14 of the Merton LDF Core Planning Strategy (2011) and policies DM D2 and DM D3 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014).*

And

The proposed layout would result in an unsatisfactory environment for future occupiers, arising from a failure to provide adequate private garden space for future occupiers, and from creating a secluded space with limited natural surveillance that would form the access to the northernmost dwelling to the detriment of the safety and security of future occupiers. The proposals would be contrary to policy 7.3 of the London Plan (2011), policy CS.14 of the Merton LDF Core Planning Strategy (2011) and policies DM D1 and DM D2 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014).

And

The proposed development would fail to contribute to meeting affordable housing targets and in the absence of a legal undertaking securing a financial contribution towards the delivery of affordable housing off-site would be contrary to policy CS.8 of the Merton LDF Core Planning Strategy (2011).

- 4.3 Identified in the SPP 2014 as suitable for housing.
- 4.4 July 2012 LB Merton closed the site as a youth centre as it was considered surplus to requirements.
- 4.5 97/P0450 Planning permission granted for alterations to the front and side elevations on the south western corner of the building and the formation of a ramp with handrail on the front elevation to provide access for persons with disabilities.

4.6 MER751/65 Planning permission granted for erection of brick transformer chamber housing switchgear.

5. **CONSULTATION**

5.1 The application was advertised by means of a site notice and letters to 25 neighbouring occupiers. As a result four letters of objection from 6 neighbours and the local scout group were received which raised concerns relating to;

- Trees will be impacted and applicants made a false statement to say that they won't be. Greenery will be removed
- Overlooking and loss of privacy from the skylights
- Parking and transport statement inaccurate and out of date.
- Vehicle access out onto the street will be problematic.
- 4 parking spaces not enough for six flats, Merton Sustainable transport SPG would require 8 spaces.
- The proposals will blight the amenity of neighbours for years to come.
- The site is not as close and convenient to Morden as the applicant claims
- No reference made to the street trees or trees within the grounds
- Security issues with easier access to neighbour's back gardens
- 6 new flats represents too dense development
- Poor internal layout
- The proposals are trying to address previous reasons for refusal but are still a poor quality conversion.
- Any new lighting should face away from neighbours
- The site is only in poor condition because the applicant has left it to get that way.
- Only consistent theme is to this as cheaply as possible to maximise profit
- Reroofing with slates is positive but use of metal/Crittall windows is not a good idea. The removal of paint is welcome if the brickwork is still good.
- The adjacent scout group objected in relation to the loss of their right of way across the site.

5.2 **Historic England** (GLAAS) were consulted but stated there was no need to consult them

5.3 The **Metropolitan Police** Designing out Crime Officer was consulted on the original drawings and the layout has been amended to bring the security gates forward to improve security.

5.3 The **council's street trees team** were consulted and confirmed that the street tree to be removed was planted in the 2012-13 planting season. Given the young age of the tree no objections were raised for its removal subject to the applicant funding suitable replacement elsewhere in the vicinity based on the tree's CAVAT value. The other street tree outside the site would require protective measures being in place during the construction process by means of a suitable condition being imposed.

5.4 The council's arboricultural officer raised no concerns but recommended a condition detailing method of protection for trees during the building works.

- 5.5 Climate change officers were satisfied the proposals would be able to meet current policy requirements for a 19% reduction in CO2 emissions and this should be secured by condition.
- 5.6 Transport planning officer noted that the submitted transport study confirms that there is adequate spare capacity available in the surrounding roads to accommodate the 2 cars which would not have on-site parking provision. Cycle storage space was satisfactory. Therefore no objections were raised subject to conditions relating to car and cycle parking, the reinstatement of the existing dropped kerb and Construction Logistics Plan

6 POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1 NPPF (2012). Key sections:
6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes.
7. Requiring good design.
- 6.2 Relevant policies in the London Plan 2016 are; 3.3 (Increasing housing supply), 3.4 (Optimising housing potential), 3.5 (Quality and design of housing developments), 5.1 (Climate change mitigation), 5.3 (Sustainable design and construction), 5.7 (Renewable energy), 5.13 (Sustainable drainage), 6.9 (Cycling), 7.5 (Public realm), 7.6(Architecture) & 7.21 (Trees and woodlands).
- 6.3 London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance 2016
- 6.4 DCLG Technical standards 2015
- 6.5 Relevant policies in the Core Strategy 2011 are; CS 9 (Housing targets), CS 13 (Open Space, Nature conservation), CS 14 (Design), CS 15 (Climate change), CS 18 (Transport) & CS 20 (Parking, Servicing & delivery).
- 6.6 The relevant policies in the Sites and Policies Plan 2014 are; DM C1 Community facilities, DM D1 (Urban Design and the public realm), DM D2 (Design considerations in all developments), DM EP 2 (Reducing and mitigating noise), DM EP4 (Pollutants), DM H2 (Housing mix), DM 02 (Trees, hedges and landscape features), DM T2 (Transport impacts of development) & DM T3 (Car parking and servicing standards).

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The main planning considerations in this case relate to the principle of the change of use of the building for the provision of dwellings on the site and the impact on local residents and the wider area.
- 7.2 **Provision of housing and loss of a community facility.**

Currently Policy CS. 9 within the Council's Adopted Core Strategy [July 2011] and policy 3.3 of the London Plan [March 2015] state that the Council will work with housing providers to provide a minimum of 4,107 additional homes [411

new dwellings annually] between 2015 and 2025. This proposal will provide 6 new dwellings including units suitable for family accommodation and is therefore considered to accord with these policies.

7.3 Core Strategy policies CS8 & CS9 seek to encourage proposals for well designed and located new housing that will create socially mixed and sustainable neighbourhoods through physical regeneration and effective use of space. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and London Plan policies 3.3& 3.5 promote sustainable development that encourages the development of additional dwellings locations with good public transport accessibility however this proposal site would not be well provided for in terms of public transport as it has a low ptal rating of 2.

7.4 London Plan policy 3.1, Core strategy Policy CS13 and saved SPP policy DM C1 all address the issue of the loss of community facilities and require the justification of the loss of such facilities. In the Core Strategy the policy relates specifically to viable recreational facilities and refers to facilities for which there is currently a demand. The Council closed the facility in 2012 as it was deemed surplus to requirements and the site has been identified within the Council's Sites and Polices DPD as a site suitable for redevelopment and the document states the Council's preferred use of the site as being Residential within Use Class C3. For these reasons the principle of developing the site for residential use is considered acceptable.

7.5 DESIGN.

Design of new buildings should ensure appropriate scale, density and appearance, respecting, complementing and responding to local characteristics (London Plan policy 7.6, LDF policy CS.14 and SPP policy DM D2).

7.6 Design- Bulk and massing.

London Plan policy 7.4 and SPP policy DM D2 require developments to relate positively and appropriately to the siting, rhythm, scale, density and proportions of surrounding buildings and the pattern and grain of existing streets whilst SPP policy DM D3 requires proposals to respect the form, scale and bulk of the original building. The previous applications were refused and the appeals upheld because of concerns relating to the detrimental impact of the proposed extensions on the host building and wider setting. The proposals now before members involves the conversion of the existing building with no extension works and therefore there would be no increase in bulk or massing.

7.7 Design- Appearance and layout

The proposals will involve the retention of the existing building but with the addition of some new fenestration at ground floor level and on the front and rear elevations and skylights in the side roof slopes for the bedrooms for the

two and three bedroom units. It is considered by officers that the design will offer an attractive and well-conceived transformation of the building's appearance and reinvigorate an attractive and distinctive local building to the betterment of the local area. The internal layout is considered acceptable and to provide a good standard of accommodation both in terms of living space as well as light and outlook with ample outdoor amenity space. Following the advice of the Police, the repositioning of access gates means that security arrangements have been improved for both future occupiers and neighbouring residents in accordance with SPP policy DM D2. In view of these considerations the proposals are considered to comply with relevant design policies.

7.8 Neighbour Amenity.

London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6 and SPP policy DM D2 relate to the possible impacts such as loss of light, privacy, overshadowing and visual intrusion on neighbour amenity and the need for people to feel comfortable with their surroundings.

- 7.9 The previous application were refused in part because of concerns relating to the impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. This application confines the development to the existing building footprint and therefore concerns regarding the overbearing nature of the previous scheme are considered to have been addressed along with issues relating to loss of light. Following the concerns from neighbours the positioning of skylights have been revised such that they are now no less than the standard 1.7m above floor level. There have been neighbour concerns regarding over development but at the previous appeal stages the Inspector did not support the council's position that the development would increase noise and disturbance for neighbours. In view of these factors it is not considered that there would be harm to neighbour amenity that would warrant a refusal of planning permission.

7.10 Standard of accommodation and the amenity of future occupiers.

SPP Policy DM D2, Core Strategy 2011 policies CS 9 Housing Provision and CS 14 Design and London Plan policies 3.3 Increasing Housing Supply, 3.4 Optimising Housing Potential, 3.5 Quality and Design of Housing Developments are all policies that seek to provide additional good quality residential accommodation.

7.11 Schedule of accommodation

Unit	Type	Proposed GIA	Minimum reqd GIA	Proposed Amenity	Min Reqd amenity
A	3B/5P	94m ²	93m ²	1492	7m ²
B	1B/2P	50m ²	50m ²	49m ²	5m ²
C	3B/4P	85m ²	84m ²	119m ²	6m ²
D	3B/4P	86m ²	84m ²	78m ²	6m ²
E	1B/2P	50m ²	50m ²	45m ²	5m ²
F	2B/4P	79m ²	79m ²	107m ²	7m ²

The table demonstrates that all the units meet or exceed the minimum internal space GIA requirements and all the flats readily exceed the amenity space requirements.

7.12 The design has been amended to reflect initial concerns regarding the security of the development such that officers are now satisfied that the proposals will provide a good standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

7.13 **Parking, servicing and deliveries.**

Core Strategy Policy CS 20 requires proposals to have regard to pedestrian movement, safety, serving and loading facilities for local businesses and manoeuvring for emergency vehicles as well as refuse storage and collection. The proposals did generate objections regarding parking with only four spaces being provided for the larger units. Cycle storage provision is considered acceptable.

7.14 **Site right of way.**

The adjoining Scout group have a right of access over the land. The applicants have sought to address these concerns by retaining accessway onto the site and the means of using the side security gate if required. They have undertaken number of meeting with the group and have come to a mutual agreement over access rights.

8. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS.

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

8.2 In order to ensure that the development is policy compliant a condition to that effect requiring CO₂ reductions of not less than a 19% improvement on Part L regulations 2013, and internal water usage rates of not more than 105 litres per person per day is recommended in addition to the carbon offset payment that would be included within the s106 agreement.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The site has been identified by the council as being suitable for residential redevelopment of the youth centre site. The proposal no longer includes additional building works which were considered harmful to neighbour amenity and the appearance of the site and instead involves the conversion of the existing building to provide six new flats for which there is an identified need in the borough. The accommodation to be provided all meets the required internal floor area size standards whilst each unit will be provided with a generous individual outdoor amenity space and the four larger units will each have an off street parking space.

Therefore, subject to the imposition of suitable planning conditions, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant planning policy and is therefore recommended for approval.

10. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Conditions

- 1 Commencement of works
- 2 In accordance with plans; Site location plan and drawings 100 Rev 01, 101 Rev 01, 102 Rev 01, 200 Rev 00, 201 Rev 00, 202 Rev 01, 203 Rev 01, 300 Rev 01, 400 Rev 04, 0373 SK 80124 and 0373 SK 80125
- 3 B1 External materials to be approved; No construction shall take place until details of particulars and samples of the materials to be used on all external faces of the development hereby permitted, including window frames and doors, windows and tiles (notwithstanding any materials specified in the application form and/or the approved drawings), have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. No works which are the subject of this condition shall be carried out until the details are approved, and the development shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved details. Reason; To ensure a satisfactory appearance of the development and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 7.6 of the London Plan 2015, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2015 and policies DM D2 and D3 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014
- 4 B5 Boundary treatments to be approved; No development shall take place until details of all boundary walls or fences including methods for the temporary security of the site during construction as well as details of security gates 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 walls and fencing shall be permanently retained thereafter. Reason; To ensure a satisfactory and safe development 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.

5. D11 Construction Times No demolition or construction work or ancillary activities such as deliveries shall take place before 8am or after 6pm Mondays - Fridays inclusive, before 8am or after 1pm on Saturdays or at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Reason; To safeguard the amenities of the area and the occupiers of neighbouring properties and ensure compliance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 7.15 of the London Plan 2015 and policy DM EP2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.
6. H9 Construction Vehicles The development shall not commence until details of the provision to accommodate all site workers', visitors' and construction vehicles, loading /unloading and storage arrangements of construction plant and materials during the construction process have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details must be implemented and complied with for the duration of the construction process. Reason; To ensure the safety of pedestrians and vehicles and the amenities of the surrounding area and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies 6.3 and 6.14 of the London Plan 2015, policy CS20 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.
7. F1 Landscaping
8. Tree protection
9. Non-standard condition [Replacement of street tree]: The applicant shall enter into a highways agreement with London Borough of Merton to either relocate the existing street tree from in front of the access to the site, or to provide a suitable replacement specimen, to a suitable location in the immediate area. No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until evidence has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority confirming that the street tree has been relocated to the satisfaction of London Borough of Merton.

Reason: To protect and safeguard the visual amenity of the area in accordance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 7.21 of the London Plan 2015, policy CS13 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DMD2 and DMO2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.
10. External lighting Any external lighting shall be positioned and angled to prevent any light spillage or glare beyond the site boundary. Reason; To safeguard the amenities of the area and the occupiers of neighbouring properties and ensure compliance with the following Development Plan

policies for Merton: policies DM D2 and DM EP4 of Merton's Sites and Polices Plan 2014.

11. H4 Provision of vehicle parking The vehicle parking area shown on the approved plans shall be provided before the commencement of the buildings or use hereby permitted and shall be retained for parking purposes for occupiers and users of the development and for no other purpose. Reason; To ensure the provision of a satisfactory level of parking and comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 6.13 of the London Plan 2015, policy CS20 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T3 of Merton's Sites and Polices Plan 2014.
12. H6 Cycle storage and space provision
13. H3 Redundant crossover; The development shall not be occupied until the existing redundant crossover/s have been removed by raising the kerb and reinstating the footway in accordance with the requirements of the Highway Authority.
14. Non standard condition; Prior to occupation of the site, the applicant shall have completed a s278 Highways agreement relating to the provision of a new vehicle access to the site. Reason; To ensure the provision of a satisfactory access for parking and comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 6.13 of the London Plan 2015, policy CS20 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T3 of Merton's Sites and Polices Plan 2014.
15. 'No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until evidence has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority confirming that the development has achieved CO2 reductions of not less than a 19% improvement on Part L regulations 2013, and internal water usage rates of not more than 105 litres per person per day.'

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 2015 and Policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011

Informatives:

Carbon emissions evidence requirements for Post Construction stage assessments must provide:

- Detailed documentary evidence confirming the Target Emission Rate (TER), Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) and percentage improvement of DER over TER based on 'As Built' SAP outputs (i.e. dated outputs with accredited energy assessor name and registration number, assessment status, plot number and development address); **OR**, where applicable:
- A copy of revised/final calculations as detailed in the assessment methodology based on 'As Built' SAP outputs; **AND**

- Confirmation of Fabric Energy Efficiency (FEE) performance where SAP section 16 allowances (i.e. CO2 emissions associated with appliances and cooking, and site-wide electricity generation technologies) have been included in the calculation

Water efficiency evidence requirements for post construction stage assessments must provide:

- Documentary evidence representing the dwellings 'As Built'; detailing:
 - the type of appliances/ fittings that use water in the dwelling (including any specific water reduction equipment with the capacity / flow rate of equipment);
 - the size and details of any rainwater and grey-water collection systems provided for use in the dwelling; AND:
 - Water Efficiency Calculator for New Dwellings; OR
 - Where different from design stage, provide revised Water Efficiency Calculator for New Dwellings and detailed documentary evidence (as listed above) representing the dwellings 'As Built'

Informative:

No surface water runoff should discharge onto the public highway including the public footway or highway. When it is proposed to connect to a public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. 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).

Hardstandings informative

Advice regarding permeable and porous hardstandings can be found in the document 'Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens' available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pavingfrontgardens>

Construction of access informative

It is Council policy for the Council's contractor to construct new vehicular accesses. The applicant should contact the Council's Highways Team on 020 8545 3829 prior to any work starting to arrange for this work to be done. If the applicant wishes to undertake this work the Council will require a deposit and the applicant will need to cover all the Council's costs (including supervision of the works). If the works are of a significant nature, a Section 278 Agreement (Highways Act 1980) will be required and the works must be carried out to the Council's specification.

NPPF informative.

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

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