

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
Item: 7

29th June 2021

	<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>DATE VALID</u>
	21/P1108	24/03/2021
Address/Site:	11 Blossom Square 8a The Drive, West Wimbledon London, SW20 8TG	
Ward:	Raynes Park	
Proposal:	PROPOSED USE OF RAISED FLAT ROOF AT REAR OF BUILDING AS A TERRACE, INCLUDING THE INSTALLATION OF OPAQUE GLASS PRIVACY SCREENS	
Drawing No.'s:	16021-PL8001-A; 16021-PL8102-A	
Contact Officer:	Jourdan Alexander (020 8545 3112)	

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to conditions.

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- S106: No
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Statement been submitted: No
- Press notice: Yes (01/04/21)
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 15
- External consultations: 0
- Conservation area: Yes (Wimbledon West)
- Listed building: No
- Tree protection orders: No

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is being brought to the Planning Applications Committee for determination due to the number of objections received. Officers consider that its determination in the event of approval therefore falls outside the Scheme of Delegation to officers

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site forms part of the recently completed development involving the demolition of Blossom House School at 8a the Drive and the construction of 13 houses with private and communal amenity space, car parking, cycle parking and associated landscaping.
- 2.2 The application property is a single family dwelling and located to the north eastern corner of the site. It is a three storey brick and render house underneath a pitched tiled roof. The building forms a pair with No 10 Blossom Square.
- 2.3 The surrounding area outside of the redevelopment is residential in character, and lies within the Wimbledon West Conservation Area.

3. CURRENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission to use the flat roof of the building's rear projection as a terrace. To achieve this the Juliet balcony railings on the rear opening would be removed, in addition 1.7m high opaque glass privacy screen would be installed on the proposed terrace.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 15/P1750 - Demolition of Blossom House School (Use Class D1 2252 square metres) and all associated buildings and structures and redevelopment of the site with the construction of 13 houses (8 four bedroom and 5 five bedroom) with private and communal amenity space, 28 car parking spaces, 52 cycle parking spaces and associated landscaping. Grant Permission.
- 4.2 17/P3042 - APPLICATION FOR VARIATION OF CONDITION 2 (APPROVED PLANS) ATTACHED TO LBM PLANNING PERMISSION 15/P1750, RELATING TO:- The demolition of Blossom House School (Use Class D1 2252 square metres) and all associated buildings and structures and redevelopment of the site with the construction of 13 houses (8 four bedroom and 5 five bedroom) with private and communal amenity space, 28 car parking spaces, 52 cycle parking spaces and associated landscaping. Grant Permission.

- The approved development was subject to the following condition:

Access to the flat roof of the development hereby permitted shall be for maintenance of emergency purposes only, and the flat roof shall not be used as a roof garden, terrace, patio or similar amenity area.

For clarity this includes the flat roof of, 2,3,6,7,9 and 10 but does not include areas specially shown as roof terraces on the approved plans.

Similar approved developments:

- 4.3 6 Blossom Square 8a, The Drive
20/P3006 - USE OF FLAT ROOF AS A TERRACE AND PROVISION OF IRON RAILINGS AROUND PARAPET WALL. Grant Permission subject to Conditions
- 4.4 7 Blossom Square 8a The Drive
20/P3215 - INSTALLATION OF RAILINGS AROUND THE REAR LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOF AND USE AS A TERRACE. Grant Permission subject to Conditions

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Public consultation was undertaken by way of press notice, site notice along with letters sent to 15 neighbouring properties. 4 representations were received, as summarised:
 - Allowing occupants to use the flat roof as a balcony will be very intrusive and detrimental to neighbouring privacy.
 - Due to the height and proximity of the house to our building, the possibility of the owners being allowed to sit on first floor balconies which look directly into our first floor bedrooms, living rooms and gardens.
 - We have needed to plant evergreen trees at the end of the gardens to mitigate overlooking from the houses built, use as a balcony would provide further visual intrusion.
 - There is currently one opaque glass screen between Houses 11 and 10 but no information has been provided as to what is meant by “alongside the installation of glass privacy screens”. Are there more to be installed?
 - The application form section 12 is incorrect. It states that the site cannot be seen from the public road or public footpath. This is incorrect as the balcony can be clearly seen from both the road and the street.

Planning Officer’s comments to the objections:

- 5.2 An additional obscure glass screen is proposed on the other end of the balcony to that currently installed (east end). Officer’s note that the applicant has filled out section 12 stating that the site cannot be seen from public land. Section 12 of the

form relates to site visits for the planning officer's assessing the application. Although part of the site can be seen from public spaces, the proposal does require access onto the site to view the entirety of the site and its surroundings.

6. POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places

6.2 London Plan (2021)

- Relevant policies include:
- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
 - D4 Delivering good design

6.3 Merton Local Development Framework Core Strategy – 2011 (Core Strategy)

- Relevant policies include:
- CS 14 Design

6.4 Merton Sites and Policies Plan – 2014 (SPP)

- Relevant policies include:
- DM D2 Design considerations in all developments
 - DM D3 Alterations and extensions to existing buildings
 - DM D4 Managing heritage assets

6.5 Supplementary planning considerations

- London Housing SPG – 2016
- Merton Design SPG – 2004

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The planning considerations in this case relate to the whether the development would have an acceptable impact on the host dwelling, surrounding character and neighbouring amenity.

Character and Appearance

- 7.2 London Plan Policies D3 and D4, Core Strategy Policy CS14 and SPP Policies DMD2 and DMD3 specify requirements for well-designed proposals that will respect the appearance, scale, bulk, form, proportions, materials and character of the original building and their surroundings. DMD4 requires development within a conservation area to conserve or enhance the significance of the area.
- 7.3 The proposal involves very limited external alterations given that the railings around the roof are already present, and therefore few adaptations are needed to make the roof safe for balcony use. The proposal would involve removal of Juliet railings fronting the existing door openings. However, officers consider that this

change would be virtually unnoticeable from external views towards the building. The applicant proposes to install a 1.7m obscure glass screen to be installed along the eastern end of the flat roof. This would match the privacy screen installed between the subject property and its neighbour (no. 10). The privacy screen would not be of size or position to detract from the building or paired building's appearance.

- 7.4 Overall, officers consider that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, the group of buildings, and this part of the conservation area, and would thereby be compliant with adopted policy objectives.

Impact upon neighbouring amenity

- 7.5 SPP Policy DM D2 states that proposal 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.
- 7.6 The use of the terrace would afford some views north towards a large three, storey redbrick building (Regency Place), which comprises a number of residential dwellings. However, it is considered that the vantages created would not cause material harm to justify refusal of the application. The separation distance from the proposed terrace and the rear facing windows of the dwellings in Regency Place would be approximately 20m at the closest point. This separation distance would be sufficient to ensure that the individuals using the terrace would not gain close or penetrative views into neighbouring habitable rooms. As such, the proposal would not result in a materially harmful loss of privacy. This conclusion is further supported by London Plan housing guidance for development which, while not prescribing a threshold, acknowledges that a separation distance of over 20m has been considered acceptable in terms of avoiding overlooking.
- 7.7 In addition, existing evergreen trees planted between the building and Regency Place provide a good degree of visual screening, and serve to protect privacy. It also needs to be emphasised that the terrace can only be accessed from the property's master bedroom, rather than a living room. Therefore this terrace would unlikely be an external space for entertaining visitors to the property, which would more likely be at the ground floor by using the property's rear garden.
- 7.8 In terms of the paired neighbour to the applicant building, No 10 the Drive, the use of the rear projection as a terrace would provide some views towards the neighbour's rear garden. However, it is noted that there are already some views attained towards No 10's rear garden from other houses within the redevelopment area, including the rear windows of the applicant property. Therefore the majority of views attained from the proposed terrace would not be new. In addition, the existing privacy screen between the two buildings would further act to limit views into the neighbouring site. The proposal would therefore not create an undue

adverse impact on this neighbour's privacy.

- 7.9 In terms of other impacts such as noise and disturbance, the proposed terrace area is relatively small and would not be suitable for a large social gathering. Furthermore, the property has a number of external areas at rear, below the subject terrace, in which people could reasonably generate noise audible to neighbours. The proposed terrace is unlikely to create additional noise that would be above what could already be generated within other external areas to the building, and therefore would not create additional harm in this respect.
- 7.10 Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable level of impact on the amenity of surrounding residential neighbours, compliant with the objectives of Local Policy.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The scale, form, design, positioning and materials of the proposed privacy screen would preserve the character and appearance of the area, and the host building. Impacts to neighbours from the use of the roof as a terrace would not be harmful. Therefore, the proposal complies with the principles of policies DMD2, DMD3 and DMD4 of the Adopted SPP 2014, CS 14 of the LBM Core Strategy 2011 and D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions.

1. Standard A1 3 years - Implementation of planning permission
2. Standard condition A7 [Approved plans]: The development hereby permitted is for the deck, steps and screening as described by the following approved plans: [Refer to the schedule on page 1 of this report].

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Non-standard condition. No part of the terrace shall be used until such time as the privacy screens are installed. The privacy screens shall be retained for so long as the terrace remains in use.