

APPLICATION NO. **DATE VALID**

20/P1852

11/06/2020

Address/Site 2 Blenheim Road, Raynes Park, SW20 9BB

(Ward) West Barnes

Proposal: EXTENSION AND CONVERSION OF EXISTING DWELLING TO CREATE 5 x SELF-CONTAINED FLATS & 2 x DWELLINGHOUSES AND THE ERECTION OF 2 x SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES AT THE REAR OF THE SITE TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED WORKS.

Drawing Nos: 00P006 Rev A; 00P120 Rev C; 00P121 Rev A; 00P130 Rev C; 00P110 Rev A; 00P007 Rev C; 00P002 Rev A

Contact Officer: Jourdan Alexander

RECOMMENDATION

Grant Planning Permission subject to conditions.

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Statement been submitted: No
- DRP: No
- Press notice: No
- Site notice: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 37
- External consultations: No
- Conservation area: No
- Listed building: No – However, the building is locally listed.
- Tree protection orders: No
- Controlled Parking Zone: No
- Flood Zone 1 (low risk)
- PTAL: 3

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is being brought to the Planning Applications Committee for determination due to the number of objections received contrary to the officer recommendation.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site is located on the south side of Blenheim Road, Raynes Park. It is occupied by a detached two storey dwellinghouse with a single storey garage to the east and a two storey side extension to the west. The building features gabled roofs to the main dwelling and its two storey side extension, with a hipped roof above the garage. Ornate features include the building's decorative front gable ends and the timber balcony and canopy to the front. The building is set on a spacious plot, with hardstanding to the front and a large garden to the rear, which includes a swimming pool.
- 2.2 The dwelling itself has six bedrooms set over three storeys, consisting of two full storeys and space within the gable roof. It is set back from Blenheim Road and the frontage is given over almost entirely to a driveway and car parking, which is enclosed by a low brick wall with landscaping behind.
- 2.3 The area has a residential character but contains properties which vary considerably in terms of age and style. Large Edwardian villas on the southern side of the road contrast with smaller scale 1930s semi-detached housing at the western end and a Neo-Georgian terrace at the eastern end.
- 2.4 The site is not located within a conservation area; however, the building forms part of a group of 4 Locally Listed buildings, Nos. 2 – 8 Blenheim Road.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for the extension, alteration and conversion of the existing dwelling that fronts Blenheim Road to provide 6 x self-contained flats, with two dwellinghouses to be formed along each side of the main building. Within the site's rear garden a pair of two storey semi-detached houses would be built and would front Blenheim Close.
- 3.2 Starting with changes to existing building (fronting Blenheim Road), the front elevation would be primarily left unchanged albeit new external openings would be formed to provide front entrances for the dwellings. This would be in part facilitated through the removal of the front railing section at ground floor. The garage would also be slightly reconfigured through reducing its width to create a side path leading to the rear garden.
- 3.3 The building would have a greater level of modification at rear than at front. At ground floor level the conservatory would be demolished and a new ground floor extension with similar depth built. On the first floor an extension is proposed to the original part of the rear elevation, which would replicate the bay window seen on the floor below and introduce a new smaller gable roof. At first floor of the western side extension, the annexe would also be marginally extended, this will be set behind the rear elevation of the adjoining property. The loft would benefit from a small floor area increase as a result of the rear roof modifications, whilst a new pitched roof is proposed to the rear of the garage.
- 3.4 The extensions proposed would increase the depth of the garage part of the building by 1.5m, and 3.5m to the two storey side extension element. New rear windows are proposed across all levels at rear, and new rear doors inserted at ground floor.

- 3.5 At the rear part of the site (fronting Blenheim Close), a pair of semi-detached houses are proposed. The houses would be arranged over two storeys and would each have an off-street parking space in the landscaped front courtyard, accessed directly from Blenheim Close. At the rear would be a private garden. The new houses would have a roof profile with two central gable features. The eaves height would be 5.72m with the ridge height of the gable ends being 8.1m
- 3.6 Associated works in the proposals, include the formation of new accesses, provision of off-street car parking spaces and landscaping.
- 3.7 The proposals would result in the following accommodation:

Unit	Type	GIA	Outdoor Amenity
House 1 (fronting Blenheim Road – labelled Flat 3 on plan)	1 Bed / 2 Person	53.2 ²	11.2m ²
House 2 (fronting Blenheim Road)	2 Bed / 3 Person	93.3m ²	45.0m ²
Flat 1	1 Bed / 1 Person	40m ²	(communal) 85.0m ²
Flat 2	2 Bed / 3 Person	74m ²	28.0m ²
Flat 4	1 Bed / 2 Person	50.9m ²	5.0m ²
Flat 5	1 Bed / 2 Person	51.3m ²	(communal) 85.0m ²
Flat 6	2 Bed / 3 Person	65.1m ²	(communal) 85.0m ²
Semi-detached pair House 1 (fronting Blenheim Close)	3 Bed / 5 Person	116.3m ²	73.0m ²
Semi-detached pair House 2 (fronting Blenheim Close)	3 Bed / 5 Person	116.3m ²	68.0m ²

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 00/P1568 - Erection of a first floor side extension. Grant Permission - 07/11/2000

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Site notice posted, neighbouring properties notified. The proposal was amended by the applicant through the course of the application process. Within the latest revision the design and scale of the semi-detached pair was altered. These changes were consulted to neighbours on the 17/06/2021. Representations from 17 individuals were received to all consultations, with objections on the following grounds:

- Building two semi-detached homes at the rear of the site would be at odds with the established character of the area.
- The design of the semi-detached houses would appear out of context.
- Development in gardens would have a negative impact on open space – ‘garden grabbing’.
- The resulting increase in density would cause noise disturbance.
- Views from the semi-detached houses would lead to overlooking and loss of privacy.

- The submission does not include an arboricultural report therefore no information on what trees may be lost.
- The proposal constitutes overdevelopment.
- The proposal would result in a significant increase in traffic.
- The proposal would reduce the number of available on-street car parks.
- The alterations to the locally listed buildings would fail to reserve their heritage character and the uniformity of the heritage group of 4 buildings.
- The proposal would not reflect the Council's indicative housing mix.
- No considerations are given towards the impact of the increase in non-permeable surfaces.
- Restricted access for emergency vehicles.
- The size of the flats are too small with no garden space.
- Construction would cause indefinite disturbance.
- The drawings are not on the website, and I do not view the development as 'minor'.
- The proposal does not include a transport statement concerning delivery, nor are electric vehicle charging points provided.
- The bulk of the new houses would be overbearing and enclosing.
- Access paths to the new houses would cause disturbance and security issues.
- The proposal if approved would create a precedent for further back garden developments on the Close.
- The applicant has not provided an ecological appraisal, and the proposal would result in bio-diversity loss.
- The proposal would result in a loss of landscaped soft areas that provide flood and drainage benefits. The proposal would increase flood risk.
- The revised drawings only show slight changes to the designs of the new homes. The houses will still fail to respect the appearance of the street-scene, amenity concerns to neighbours would continue to exist.
- Can there be a guarantee that no trees will be removed during construction including large oak tree at the site's rear.
- The scheme could provide for up to 36 people instead of 4. This clearly is an unworkable burden on the infrastructure and additional use of all services currently provided in terms of sewerage, transportation, roads, hospitals, doctors and schools.
- The new pair of dwellings would be sited too close to neighbouring houses.

A general comment was also provided by the Wimbledon Swift Group concerning measures that could be put in place to improve swift population's health.

Officer's comments – the objections are noted, and discussed with the report. In terms of availability of documents, all submitted material was published on the Council's Website – 'Planning Explorer' and have been available for the public to view since the application was the subject of the first consultation exercise in July 2020.

5.2 LBM Transport Planning:

Raise no objection subject to:

- Car parking as shown maintained.
- Cycle parking provision: 2 spaces per each unit (secure & undercover).
- Waste collection points should be located within 20 metres of collection vehicles.

- Demolition/Construction Logistic Plan (including a Construction Management plan in accordance with TfL guidance) should be submitted to LPA for approval before commencement of work

5.3 LBM Heritage Officer:

- This is one of a group of Local Listed houses which share similar features. We need the original front door and porch to be remain and be incorporated in the internal layout. The front veranda with railings should also remain as it is also an original feature of these houses. It also has a door opening on to it which should also be retained. The ornamental external decoration is very important and we need it to be restored. The extensions on the rear are generally ok.
- I have concerns regarding the new build at the rear. If we are to support the development, they need to reduce the height by one storey to fit in with the proportions of the architecture of the Close.

6. POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2019):

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places

6.2 London Plan (2021):

- D1 London's form, character and capacity for growth
- D2 Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities
- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D4 Delivering good design
- D5 Inclusive design
- D6 Housing quality and standards
- D7 Accessible housing
- D14 Noise
- H1 Increasing housing supply
- G5 Urban greening
- G6 Biodiversity and access to nature
- G7 Trees and woodlands
- SI 1 Improving air quality
- SI 2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
- SI 5 Water infrastructure
- SI 13 Sustainable drainage
- T3 Transport capacity, connectivity and safeguarding
- T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
- T5 Cycling
- T6 Car parking
- T6.1 Residential parking
- T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction

6.3 Merton adopted Core Strategy (July 2011):

- CS 8 Housing choice
- CS 9 Housing provision

CS 11 Infrastructure
CS 13 Open space, leisure and nature conservation
CS 14 Design
CS 15 Climate change
CS 17 Waste management
CS 18 Active Transport
CS 20 Parking servicing and delivery

6.4 Merton adopted Sites and Policies document (July 2014):

DM O2 Nature conservation, Trees, hedges and landscape features

DM D2 Design considerations

DM D3 Alterations and extensions to existing buildings

DM D4 Managing heritage assets

DM EP2 Reducing and mitigating noise

DM F2 Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) and: Wastewater and Water Infrastructure

DM T1 Support for sustainable transport and active travel

DM T2 Transport impacts of development

DM T3 Car parking and servicing standards

DM T4 Transport infrastructure

6.5 Other guidance:

National Design Guide – October 2019

DCLG: Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard March 2015

Merton's Design SPG 2004

Mayor's SPG - Housing 2016

Mayor's SPG – Sustainable Design and Construction 2014

Mayor's SPG – Character and Context 2014

7. **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

Material Considerations

The key issues in the assessment of this planning application are:

- Principle of development
- Design and impact upon character and appearance
- Impact upon neighbouring amenity
- Standard of accommodation
- Transport, parking and cycle storage
- Refuse storage and collection
- Sustainable design and construction
- Biodiversity and Landscaping
- Drainage and runoff

7.1 Principle of development

- 7.1.1 Policy H1 of the London Plan 2021 states that development plan policies should seek to identify new sources of land for residential development including intensification of housing provision through development at higher densities. Core Strategy policies CS8 & CS9 seek to encourage proposals for well-designed and conveniently located new housing that will create socially mixed and sustainable neighbourhoods through physical regeneration and effective use of space. The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and the London

Plan promote sustainable development that encourages the development of additional dwellings at locations with good public transport accessibility.

7.1.2 The proposed development would result in a net increase of 8 homes in the borough. Intensification of land is generally encouraged in the Local and London Plan, therefore the provision of additional residential units would be consistent with policy objectives. The proposal will make a useful contribution to meeting Merton's strategic housing target (918 homes annually) and Merton's 5-year housing land supply requirement.

7.1.2 Policy H2 of the London Plan supports incremental intensification of existing residential areas within PTALs 3-6 (this would include the proposal site). Such areas are expected to play an important role in contributing towards the housing targets for small sites. This can take a number of forms, such as: new build, infill development, residential conversions, redevelopment or extension of existing buildings.

7.1.3 Policy CS13 of the Core Planning Strategy states that any proposals for new dwellings in back gardens must be justified against the:

- local context and character of the site
- biodiversity value of the site
- value in terms of green corridors and green islands
- flood risk and climate change impacts

7.1.4 In terms of the above, the site is not within a green corridor or area designated as open space, within a low flood risk area, and is not an area of high biodiversity value. The proposals impact on local context and character are discussed within the section of the report headed 'design and impact upon character and appearance'. However, the conclusions reached is that the principle of development could be supported.

7.2 Design and impact upon the character and appearance

7.2.1 The NPPF, London Plan policies D3 and D4, Core Strategy policy CS 14 and SPP Policy DM D2 and DMD3 require well designed proposals which make a positive contribution to the public realm, are of the highest quality materials and design and which are appropriate in their context. Thus, development proposals must respect the appearance, materials, scale, bulk, proportions and character of their surroundings.

7.2.2 The subject building is locally listed, and therefore classified as an undesignated heritage asset. The buildings designation notes states that - *No.s 2,4,6 AND 8 Blenheim Road, are a series of 4 detached houses which can be dated to around 1891. They are 2 storey, and also contain accommodation within steeply pitched roofs. The materials used in construction include brick, timber and pebbledash. The houses are built in a very ornate style, and feature fine plaster panels within the gables, as well as moulded lintels and quoins.*

7.2.3 Given this designation SPP policy DM D4 is also applicable, and states that proposals affecting a heritage asset or its setting should conserve and enhance the significance of the asset as well as its surroundings

7.2.4 Works to existing building

7.2.5 The proposed alterations visible from the street are the replacement of the ground floor window with a new ground floor, replacement of a garage door

with a window and a reduction of width to the garage enclosure to create a side path leading to the rear garden. The latter would also marginally alter the outline of the roof over the garage. The railings at ground floor would be removed to facilitate a front entrance opening. Although the first floor veranda with railings would be retained and incorporated within the scheme. Overall these works would have a minimal impact on the appearance of the building as seen from Blenheim Road, and would not appear harmful.

7.2.6 The extensions at the rear of the building are minor in scale and would not project past the build line of the existing building. The ground floor extension would be constructed on the footprint of the existing conservatory and would feature a bay structure, which replicates this part of the building's existing proportions. The building's upper parts would be extended rearward by approximately 1.8m. These alterations are considered visually acceptable, given that the extended parts and their roof forms share similar design cues to the original building. The pattern of roof formations is also similar to the existing.

7.2.7 In terms of the front forecourt to Blenheim Road, in its current configuration the forecourt has two dropped kerbs, a central boundary wall with planting behind. The vast majority of the forecourt is tarmac surface for cars to enter and depart. The applicant's proposal to provide three car parking spaces to the western part of the forecourt and a single parking space on the eastern part would not alter the manner in which this part of the property is currently used, i.e. for parking provision. A central boundary wall would be retained with areas of soft landscaping. The western part of the dropped kerb would be increased in width by 1.8m to facilitate the safe access into and out of the forecourt. Overall the car parking layout would not appear unusual along the front of a large building configured into flats with two separate dwellings on each side.

7.2.8 The success of the proposed alterations and extensions will be reliant on the use of compatible materials and careful detailing, this has been secured through conditions that seek materials particulars and samples. A further condition has been added seeking full details of the ornamental external decoration present on the front and rear of the building, and the applicant's strategy to restore and retain these features. Subject to conditions the changes to the locally listed building would act to conserve the heritage value of the building along with the locally listed group.

7.2.9 Pair of semi-detached houses

7.2.10 The proposal would introduce a pair of two storey, semi-detached houses to the rear of the site and fronting Blenheim Close. The houses would have a modern design, with key features that include front oriel windows to serve both ground and first floors, and a contemporary roof gable profile. At rear the houses would have a ground floor extension, projecting bays and centrally positioned Juliet balcony openings at first floor level.

7.2.11 The Council's draft Small Sites Toolkit SPD intended to provide guidance for developers notes that – *'contemporary proposals with good architectural design can make a positive contribution on the character of the street. A considered material pallet, articulated massing and good attention to detail can all contribute to a successful building'*. The paired houses are considered by Officers to be of good design, being well proportioned, with attractive modern architectural features. Whilst the design would appear visually distinct from other surrounding houses including the locally listed building. This approach could provide benefits through creating a clear visual break between old and new parts within the site. Planning officers are also wary that an attempt to

simply design the new houses through replicating the heritage style of the locally listed buildings, risks creating a haphazard built form, and undermining the formal composition of the heritage group.

7.2.12 The new paired houses would not be visible from Blenheim Road, and as such would not undermine the urban grain of development as experienced along this part of the street. The houses would also be well separated from the rear of the existing building on the site, with new boundary fences and landscaping established to visually divide the spaces between the Blenheim Road and Blenheim Close plots. Furthermore, the natural topography of the site means that there is a noticeable level difference between garden levels on Blenheim Road compared with Blenheim Close. This fall in levels including modest additional excavation to create the rear garden of the paired houses means that the new houses sit approximately 1m lower than the locally listed buildings. These factors would ensure that there is an adequate degree of subordination between the development and existing locally listed buildings.

7.2.13 As viewed from Blenheim Close, the paired buildings would be seen alongside other houses on Blenheim Close that do not have any special heritage value or design consistency. The contemporary designed houses are not considered to appear visually abrupt or out of context within this part of the street. It should be further noted that being a Close the street receives limited vehicle or pedestrian traffic, and therefore it would not form a prominent development.

7.2.14 The paired houses would be configured over two storeys, and would be similar in scale to the sets of two storey, semi-detached houses formed on the southern side of the Close. It therefore considered that the overall massing of the proposal is sufficiently informed by the character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

7.2.15 Presently the site's southern boundary has a timber fence-line with planting behind and rear garden beyond (north), with swimming pool. The other properties along this part of Blenheim Close have a similar configuration. The proposal would introduce a new frontage to the street, the paired houses would be set back from the boundary by approximately 6m to allow for parking spaces on the front forecourt. The spacing created by the development is considered appropriate in townscape terms, with an adequate buffer between the public and private realm, allowing opportunities for landscaping. The new houses are also considered to have good spacing between themselves and existing properties on the Close, and therefore the development would not appear cramped alongside existing houses.

7.2.16 The paired houses are to be constructed using slate tiling to roof, white painted render elevations and rear extension walls in matching bricks. Overall, the proposed massing, design and material pallets is considered to respect the general character of the area.

7.3 Impact upon neighbouring amenity

7.3.1 SPP 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.

7.3.2 The alterations and extensions proposed to the existing building would have no material impact on neighbouring houses, given that these extensions would not project past the rear building line of neighbouring houses. The extension of the

garage and two story extension would also not project beyond the rear wall of neighbouring houses to the east and west. As a result the building fronting Blenheim Road, would not result in a sense of enclosure or block light to neighbouring sites. The new windows and openings formed within the existing building due to their position and angle would not create any new opportunities for overlooking into existing houses that do not exist presently.

- 7.3.3 The new pair of houses fronting Blenheim Close, would be setback 6m from the boundary. The closest neighbour to the houses would be No. 7 Blenheim Close located to the east, and at the end of the cul-de-sac. The position of the new buildings is such that there is limited overlapping from No. 7's front windows and the new houses, ensuring that existing levels of view and spaciousness are largely preserved. Whilst there is some overlapping as viewed on plan between the paired houses and No.7, it is worth noting that the northernmost part of No.7 is a single storey double garage, and therefore would be of low sensitivity towards the changes proposed. In addition, the nearest point of the proposed pair and No. 7 would be approximately 8m distance which is considered more than adequate to ensure that the development does not appear cramped or create an uncomfortable relationship with No. 7.
- 7.3.4 There are no houses directly west of the proposed pair, as the space to the side is the rear garden of No. 4 Blenheim Road. The proposed pair of houses to be set lower than the neighbour's rear garden level, coupled with their low roof eaves height are not considered to result in an imposing development. The proposal would not enclose this neighbour's habitable rooms and garden spaces, including the existing rear garden building located against the side boundary.
- 7.3.5 While the London Housing Design guide contains no prescriptive threshold, it acknowledges that historically an 18-20m separation distance between windows has been considered by planning officers as adequate to safeguard visual privacy. The distance between upper-floor, rear facing windows of the pair of houses and locally listed building would be approximately 20m. This level of separation would be compliant with the Council's guidance distances between habitable spaces. The distance at ground floor level would be smaller at approximately 15.5m. However, it is important to note that views between neighbouring sites at ground level would be limited due to the 1.8m boundary fencing to be formed between the pair of houses and neighbours. It should be further noted that the rear garden of the proposed pair would be excavated a further 1m below prevailing ground level further helping to eliminate overlooking at this level.
- 7.3.6 In terms of views from windows of the paired dwellings towards other adjacent neighbours along Blenheim Road, the distance of 20m between habitable rooms would be sufficient to protect existing occupiers. In addition, there is a line of established trees and planting along each side boundary that provides visual screening between the site and neighbours. Conditions, have been recommended for full details of landscaping including existing trees and other planting to safeguard privacy, this includes new landscaping between the new pair of houses and locally listed building. In addition, the central Juliet balcony have been conditioned to have obscure glass screens along the bottom part of the Juliet opening; therefore, views obtained would be similar to a that of a traditional window opening. The proposals would have no side facing windows.
- 7.3.7 In terms of noise, the introduction of 9 residential units containing a mix of houses and flats on a large plot that faces onto two different streets, and within

an established suburban setting, would not cause a level of noise or disturbance that would justify refusal of the application.

7.3.8 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development will not give rise to materially harmful visual intrusion, sense of enclosure, loss of daylight or sunlight, noise, or loss of privacy to adjacent residential occupiers. The development is considered to comply with Sites and Policies Plan policy DM D2.

7.4 Standard of accommodation

7.4.1 Policy D6 of the London Plan states that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally and externally. New residential development should ensure that it reflects the minimum internal space standards (specified as Gross Internal Areas).

7.4.2 All of the residential units would meet or exceed Internal Space Standards (GIA), and would have adequately sized rooms and convenient and efficient room layouts, which are functional and fit for purpose. Habitable rooms would benefit from good outlook as well as adequate daylight / sunlight. All of the dwellinghouses would be dual aspect. Whilst it is acknowledged that 4 of the 5 flats would be single aspect, such an arrangement would not be unusual within a converted property. The aspect of each of the 4 flats would be further supplemented by large bay windows to main living spaces. It should be further noted that three of the four single aspect flats are one bedroom with the other being a two bedroom flat, and therefore are not family size.

7.4.3 In terms of external amenity space, the three ground floor units within the existing building would have private gardens at the rear (each exceeding 12m²), whilst Flat 4 will have the use of an existing terrace with views of the front garden. The remaining flats would have access to the shared garden at the rear. This area at approximately 80sqm would exceed external space requirements, and be accessed by a pathway created between the former garage and boundary.

7.4.4 Planning officers note that the Merton Sites and Policies Plan normally seeks for new houses to have private garden space of 50sqm. Whilst the new pair of semi-detached houses would exceed 50sqm, the two houses created to either side of the existing building would have gardens less than minimum standards at 11.2sqm and 45sqm respectively. Whilst this is lower than the requirement set out in Policy DMD2, having regard to the fact that the proposed houses would not be providing family sized accommodation (three bedrooms or more). House 1 being single bedroom and House 2 being two bedroom, it is considered that a reasonable degree of flexibility could be applied. The dwellings would form part of the ensemble of the reconfigured and remodelled locally listed building that would essentially comprise flats. Officers consider that the amount of garden space would provide a suitable standard of accommodation for the intended number of occupiers within these households and that garden space standards should not be pursued in an overly prescriptive or slavish manner.

7.4.5 In terms of privacy of dwellings within the development, the placement and angles of windows, and position of external amenity areas are such that the views between other flats are minimised. Conditions further controlling obscure glazing, boundary fences, and landscaping would ensure further mitigation is built into the development to avoid views either within the development or from neighbouring houses towards habitable spaces of the proposed dwellings.

7.4.6 In terms of housing mix, the proposal would provide a balance of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes, which would be broadly in-line with the Council's indicative housing needs as set within the Merton's Housing Strategy (2011-2015).

7.4.7 Overall, the standard of accommodation is considered to be acceptable.

7.5 Transport, parking and cycle storage

7.5.1 Core Strategy Policy CS 20 considers matters of pedestrian movement, safety, servicing and loading facilities for local businesses and manoeuvring for emergency vehicles as well as refuse storage and collection. Core Strategy Policy CS 18 promotes active means of transport, and CS 19 promotes public transport.

7.5.2 The site is located in an area with a public transport accessibility rating of 3 (moderate). A total of 4 on-site parking spaces would be provided for the proposed 6 dwellings that front Blenheim. The pair of houses formed along Blenheim Close would each have one on-site parking space. Officer's position is that the development would not harmfully impact the safe and efficient operation of the highway, or existing levels of on-street car parks. The Council's Parking Surveys find that across all of Merton car ownership for households is between 60 and 70%, and car ownership levels are likely be less than the above averages, for small units. Given that the scheme has a number of small one and two bedroom flats, cars created through the proposal are unlikely to be great, and should be largely in balance with the level of parking provided on-site. The proposal is therefore unlikely to result in undue parking stress to the detriment of neighbour amenity.

7.5.3 Policy T6.1 of the London Plan requires that all residential car parking spaces must provide infrastructure for electric or Ultra-Low Emission vehicles. At least 20 per cent of spaces should have active charging facilities, with passive provision for all remaining spaces. Electric car charging has been conditioned. The increase in traffic generated by the proposal would not be significant as to materially impact the local highway network. No objections have been raised towards the scheme by the Council's Transport Planning Officer.

7.5.4 The level of cycle parking provided by the proposed development would accord with London Plan standards.

7.6 Refuse storage and collection

7.6.1 Policy SI 7 of the London Plan and policy CS 17 of the Core Strategy requires details of refuse storage and collection arrangements.

7.6.2 The proposed development provides an enclosed, accessible bin store for the development and the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of servicing arrangements.

7.7 Sustainable design and construction

7.7.1 London Plan policies SI 2 to SI 5 and CS policy CS15 seek to ensure the highest standards of sustainability are achieved for developments which includes minimising carbon dioxide emissions, maximising recycling, sourcing materials with a low carbon footprint, ensuring urban greening and minimising the usage of resources such as water.

7.7.2 As per CS policy CS15, minor residential developments are required to achieve a 19% improvement on Part L of the Building Regulations 2013 and water consumption should not exceed 105 litres/person/day. Officers are satisfied that the proposal could meet such standards and therefore a pre-occupation condition will be included to ensure these standards are achieved.

7.8 Biodiversity and landscaping

7.8.1 Policy DMO2 seeks, amongst others, to protect land of ecological value. The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development, seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment including moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature.

7.8.2 There is no indication that the existing site has any significant bio-diversity value and as such it is not considered necessary to submit an ecology report. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of the impact on bio-diversity, and it is noted that the new paired houses would largely occupy space vacated by the property's swimming pool. Landscaping details have been conditioned to ensure that bio-diversity is incorporated into the scheme. The conditions also require details of all existing trees and planting that would be retained, and measures in place to protect these trees and planting during the course of development.

7.9 Drainage and Runoff

7.9.1 Policies DM F1 and DM F2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan and policy CS.16 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development will not have an adverse impact on flooding. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is not located within a critical drainage area. Therefore the proposed development is unlikely to materially increase flood risk to neighbouring house.

7.9.2 However, to allow the Council further controls towards this matter a sustainable urban drainage strategy has been conditioned.

7.10 Community Infrastructure Levy

7.10.1 The proposed development would be subject to payment of the Merton Community Infrastructure Levy and the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

8. Conclusion

8.1 Officers consider the proposal is acceptable in principle, providing a residential development at an increased density, in line with planning policy. The alterations to the locally listed building would preserve the heritage quality of the building given that the changes to the front are minor and at rear largely replicate the form of the existing house.

8.2 The two new houses at the rear may reasonably be considered as delivering a suitable design solution given their context, being contemporary but not uncompromisingly modern. The dwellings are considered to appropriately respond to the surrounding context in terms of massing, heights, and materials. Officers consider that the proposals would not have a harmful impact on the visual amenities of the area or impact the setting of the locally listed buildings. The proposals are not considered to cause undue harm to neighbouring living

quality. Conditions are in place that cover landscaping, obscure glazing, and removal of permitted development rights for extensions and alterations to dwellinghouses. The proposals would not unduly impact upon the highway network, including on-street parking provisions. The proposal would achieve suitable refuse and cycle storage provisions.

8.3 The proposal is considered to accord with the relevant National, Strategic and Local Planning policies and guidance and officers consider that an approval could reasonably be granted in this case. It is not considered that there are any other material considerations which would warrant a refusal of the application.

8.4 It is therefore recommended to grant permission subject to conditions

RECOMMENDATION: Grant Permission Subject to Conditions

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be commenced not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with 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. No development 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 (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 D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2, D3 and D4 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

4. Notwithstanding Condition 3, no development shall take place until full details are provided concerning the strategy to be used to restore and retain the ornamental external decoration present on the front and rear of the existing building. Where the applicant can demonstrate that the ornamental external decoration needs to be removed, full details are to be provided of all replacement ornamental external decoration. 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 D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2, D3 and D4 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

5. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a Construction Logistics Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved measures shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be so maintained for the duration of the use. **Page 24**

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 T4 and T7 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS20 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

6. No development shall take place until a Demolition and Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period.

The Statement shall provide for:

- hours of operation
- the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- loading and unloading of plant and materials
- storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative
- displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate
- wheel washing facilities
- measures to control the emission of noise and vibration during construction.
- measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction/demolition
- a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works
- emissions from Non Road Mobile Machinery during construction
- produced by the Contractor responsible for excavation, underpinning and construction of the basement retaining walls. This shall be reviewed and agreed by the Structural Engineer designing the temporary and permanent retaining structures.
- plan showing any temporary works, underpinning sequence and sections of the retaining walls produced by the relevant appointed Contractor.

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 T4 and T7 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS20 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

7. No development shall commence until details of a proposed sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, to include the following details – proposed SUDS and their location in the plans, their attenuation capacity, structural integrity, construction, operation and maintenance. The removal of impermeable surfaces should also be shown on the submitted plans.

Reason – To reduce flood risk and to contribute to sustainability in accordance with policy DM F2 of the Sites and Policies Plan and SI 13 of the London Plan 2021.

8. No development shall take place until details of all walls and/or fences 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 until the works to which this condition relates have been carried out in accordance with the approved details. The walls and/or fences shall be permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory and safe development in accordance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D1 and D2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014

9. No development shall take place until full details of a landscaping and planting scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved before the commencement of the use or the occupation of any building hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include on a plan, full details of the size, species, spacing, quantities and location of proposed plants, together with any hard surfacing, means of enclosure. It shall also include details of all existing trees, hedges and any other features to be retained, and measures for their protection during the course of development.

Reason: To enhance the appearance of the development in the interest of the amenities of the area, to ensure the provision sustainable drainage surfaces and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies G6 of the London Plan 2021, policies CS13 and CS16 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2, DM F2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

10. 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 consumption rates of no greater than 105 litres 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 SI2 and SI5 of the London Plan 2021 and Policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011.

11. No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until full details are submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that show infrastructure for electric or Ultra-Low Emission vehicles within the development's on-site car parking. At least 20 per cent of spaces should have active charging facilities, with passive provision for all remaining spaces. The development shall not be occupied until the works to which this condition relates have been carried out in accordance with the approved details. The charging facilities shall be permanently retained thereafter.

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, Policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy T6.1 of the London Plan 2021

12. The vehicle parking area shown on the approved plans along with the vehicle accesses 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 T6.1 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS20 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T3 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

13. No development shall commence until details of secure cycle parking facilities for the occupants of, and visitors to, the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully implemented and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and thereafter retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory facilities for cycle parking are provided and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy T5 of the

London Plan 2021, policy CS18 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM T1 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

14. No development shall take place until a scheme for the storage of refuse and recycling has been 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 scheme has been approved, and the development shall not be occupied until the scheme has been approved and has been carried out in full. Those facilities and measures shall thereafter be retained for use at all times from the date of first occupation.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage of refuse and recycling material and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy CS17 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy DM D2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

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

Reason: To safeguard the amenities and privacy of the occupiers of adjoining properties and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy D4 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2 and D3.

16. Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, the balustrades in front of the Juliet openings at rear first floor level shall be glazed with obscure glass and shall permanently maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities and privacy of the occupiers of adjoining properties and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2 and D3 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

17. 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 Policies Plan 2014.

18. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no extension, enlargement or other alteration of the dwellinghouses hereby approved other than that expressly authorised by this permission shall be carried out without planning permission first obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority considers that further development could cause detriment to the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties or to the character of the area and for this reason would wish to control any future Development plan policies for Merton: policy D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021, policy CS14 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policies DM D2 and D3 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

Informatives:

1. Carbon emissions evidence requirements for post construction stage assessments must provide: 'As Built' SAP Compliance Reports and detailed

DER and TER worksheets for the as built development. The output documents must be based on the 'as built' stage of analysis and must account for any changes to the specification during construction. The outputs must be dated and include the accredited energy assessor's name and registration number, the 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. AND, where the developer has used SAP 10 conversion factors: The completed Carbon Emissions Reporting Spreadsheet based on the 'As Built' SAP outputs. AND, where applicable: MCS certificates and photos of all installed renewable technologies.

2. 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'
3. INF 15 Discharge conditions prior to commencement of work
4. INF 20 Street naming and numbering
5. 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).
6. The applicant should be aware that the site may provide a useful habitat for swifts. Swifts are currently in decline in the UK and in order to encourage and improve the conservation of swifts the applicant is advised to consider the installation of a swift nesting box/bricks on the site.
7. NPPF Note to Applicant – approved schemes