

**Planning Committee**

15 November 2011

**Reference:**  
**APP/11/01098**

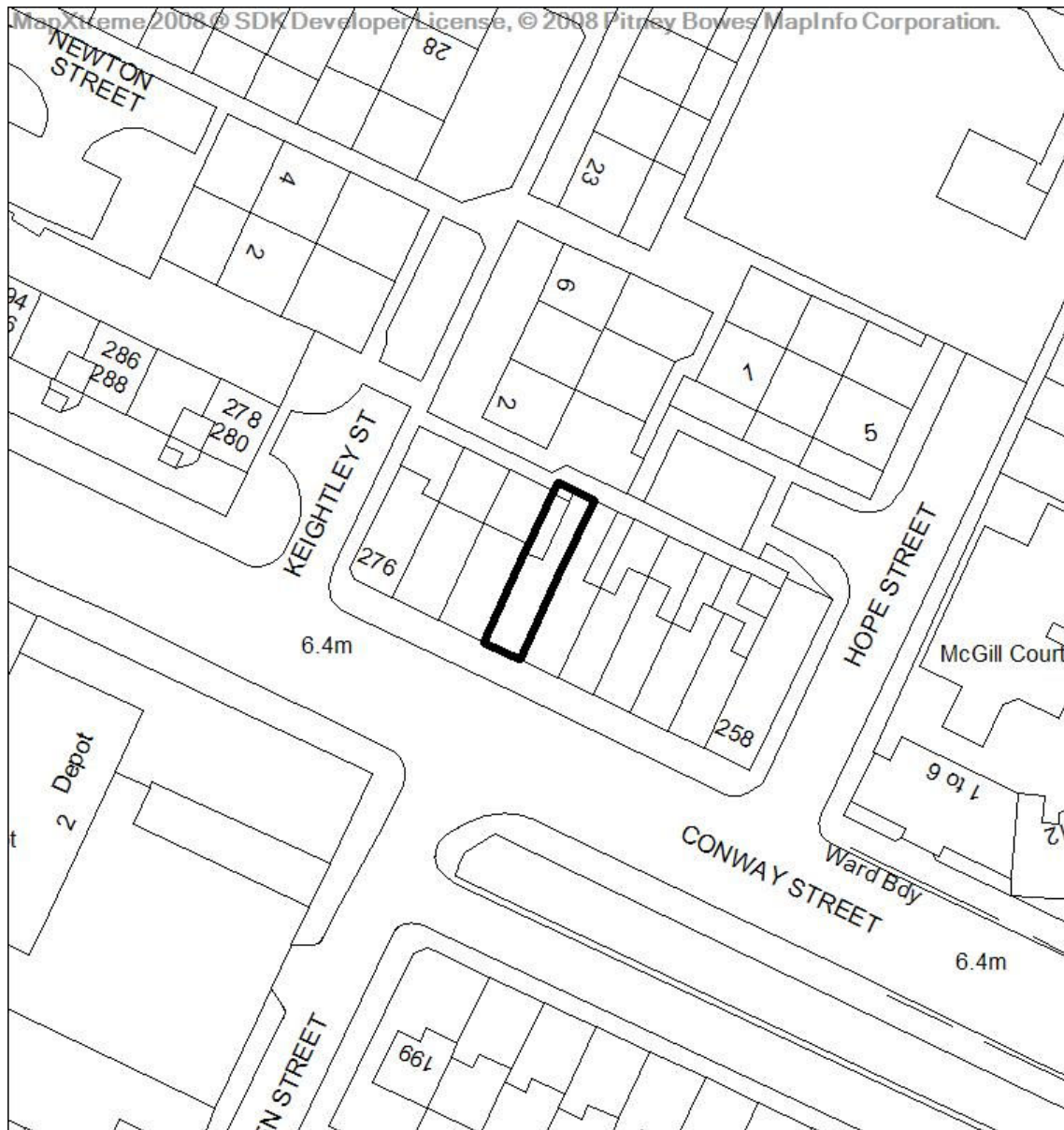
**Area Team:**  
**North Team**

**Case Officer:**  
**Miss K Elliot**

**Ward:**  
**Bidston and St James**

**Location:** 270 CONWAY STREET, BIRKENHEAD, CH41 3JA  
**Proposal:** First floor fire escape staircase to rear of 270 Conway Street.  
**Applicant:** Mr Kullar  
**Agent :** SDA

**Site Plan:**



**Development Plan allocation and policies:**

Primarily Residential Area

**Planning History:**

None relevant.

**Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:****REPRESENTATIONS**

Having regard to the Council's Guidance on Publicity for Applications, six letters of notification were sent to the occupiers of adjoining properties. A Site Notice was also displayed. At the time of writing this report, no representations had been received.

**CONSULTATIONS**

None required.

**Director's Comments:****REASON FOR REFERRAL**

The application is submitted by SDA Architects and Surveyors, a partner and architect of which is an elected Member of the Council.

**INTRODUCTION**

The proposal is for the erection of a first floor fire escape staircase at the rear of the property.

**PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

The principle of the development is acceptable subject to the provisions of Policies HS13, HS11 and SPG11.

**SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The site comprises a mid-terrace property with a vacant shop occupying the ground floor and residential accommodation above. This is characteristic of all the other units in the small parade. There are residential properties at the rear of the site. The commercial premises has a single storey outrigger at the rear of the site and many of the other properties have extensions, some of which enclose the rear yards. There is an existing fire escape at No.274 which provides access to the first floor accommodation.

**POLICY CONTEXT**

Policies HS13, HS11 and SPG11 are directly relevant in this instance.

**APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES**

The rear yard where the proposed staircase is to be located is enclosed by 2 metres walls on all sides, supplemented by barbed wire above at the rear. The site is separated from No.2 Keightley Street by a gated alleyway. The upper floor flat is currently accessed through the ground floor commercial premises via an internal staircase and this will remain the primary route. The proposed external staircase is required to provide a fire escape route from the upper floor flat. Policy HS13 states that staircase access should, where possible, be provided within the main structure of the building, or if they are to be located externally, should be sited so as to minimise significant overlooking of neighbour's windows or private amenity space. The amended plans show how the proposed staircase will be incorporated in to the existing building.

All of the properties within the parade are commercial throughout at ground floor, therefore it is considered that the rear yards do not provide private amenity space to the upper floor flats on either side but appear to be used in conjunction with the ground floor business premises. The proposed staircase is not considered to result in direct overlooking or compromise the privacy of neighbouring properties on either side. The design of the staircase is such that it has two small platforms which are approximately 0.7 metres in area. These are not considered large enough to constitute an area which could be used as a balcony and neither should it be assumed that they will be used as such. The proposed staircase will be within 10 metres of the side boundary of No.2 Keightley Street at the rear, however there is already a degree of overlooking between the sites and this is not considered to be

exacerbated to an unacceptable degree by the proposal.

Views of the proposed staircase from the street scene are restricted due to its concealed location. The proposal is not considered to result in visual harm or detract from the original design of the property or the character of the area. Its impact on the street scene is negligible considering it is located at the rear of the site which is generally where proposals such as this should be located to avoid undue visual harm. The staircase is a typical feature of terraced properties of this type where access to upper floors is limited. Overall the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of scale and design and is recommended for approval.

#### **SEPARATION DISTANCES**

SPG11 states that habitable room windows directly facing each other should be at least 21 metres apart. Main habitable room windows should be at least 14 metres from any blank gable. The bottom edge of the proposed staircase will be approximately 5 metres from the side boundary of No.2 Keightley Street. The highest point of the staircase will be approximately 11 metres from the same boundary. There is already a window in the rear elevation at this point therefore the proposal is not considered to result in further direct overlooking to properties at the rear than the existing arrangement.

#### **HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Highway Implications relating to this proposal.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES**

There are no Environmental/Sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

#### **HEALTH ISSUES**

There are no health implications relating to this application.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the character of the street scene or on the amenities that the occupiers of neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy. The proposal complies with the provisions of Policies HS13, HS11 and SPG11.

#### **Summary of Decision:**

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the character of the street scene or on the amenities that the occupiers of neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy. The proposal complies with the provisions of Policies HS13, HS11 and SPG11.

**Recommended Decision:    Approve**

#### **Recommended Conditions and Reasons:**

1.    The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

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

2.    The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the plan received by the Local Planning Authority on 21/10/2011.

**Reason:** For the avoidance of doubt.

**Further Notes for Committee:**

**Last Comments By: 14/10/2011 11:54:17**

**Expiry Date: 04/11/2011**