

Planning Committee

21 November 2013

Reference:
OUT/13/00958

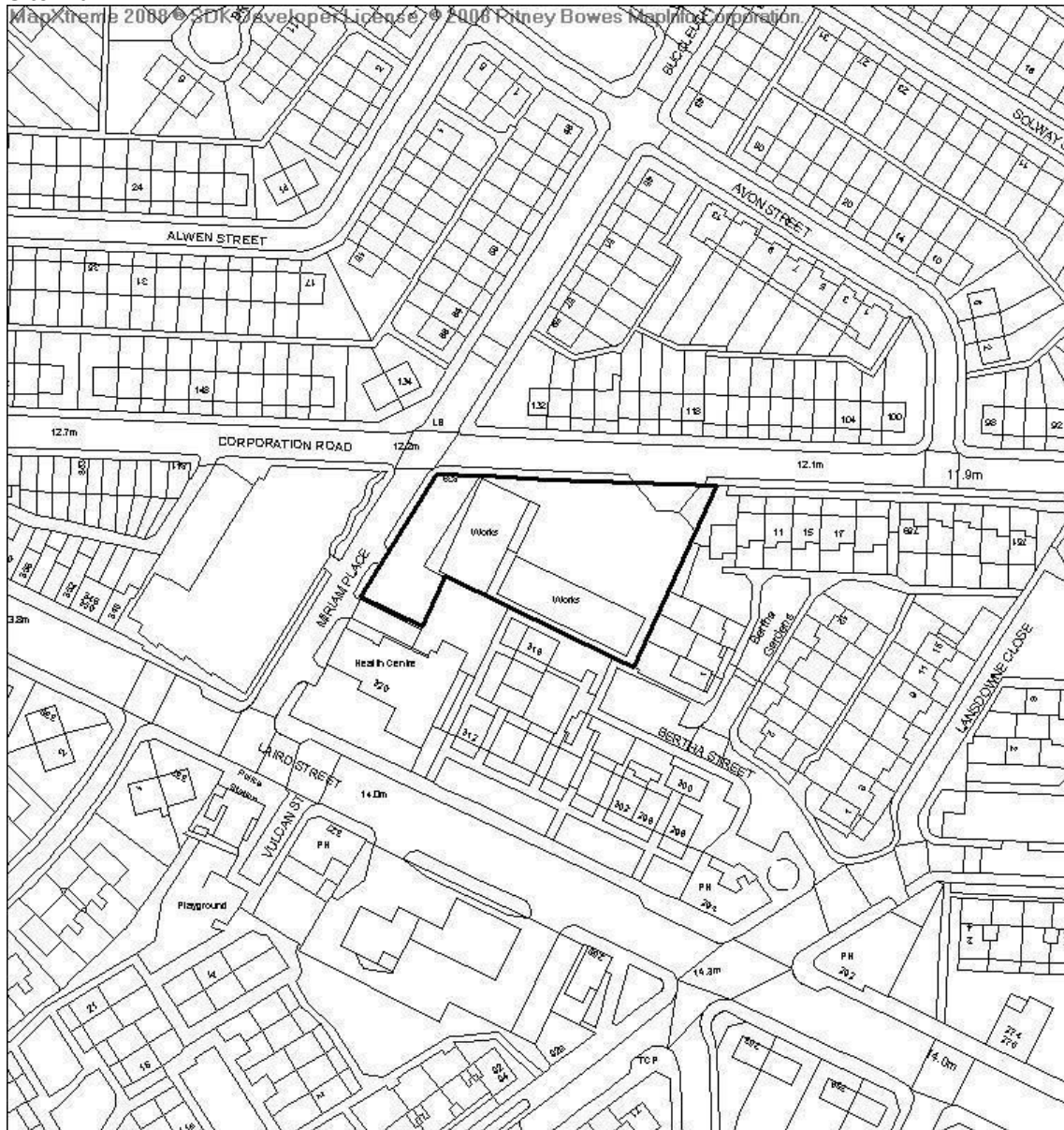
Area Team:
South Team

Case Officer:
Mrs C Parker

Ward:
Bidston and St James

Location: 837-839 CORPORATION ROAD, BIRKENHEAD
Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 24no. apartments and a pair of semi-detached houses.
Applicant: Mr N Symington
Agent : DJ Cooke & Co Ltd

Site Plan:



Development Plan allocation and policies:

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

Location: Wirral Tiles, 839, Corporation Road, Birkenhead. L41 8JL
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of first floor workshop extension.
Application No: APP/86/05296
Decision Date: 01/04/1986
Decision Type: Approve

Location: Wirral Tiles, 839, Corporation Road, Birkenhead. L41 8JL
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Change of use from workshop to showroom at first floor.
Application No: APP/88/07160
Decision Date: 20/12/1988
Decision Type: Approve

Location: Wirral Tiles ,839 Corporaton Road ,Birkenhead ,L41 8JL
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Alterations and extensions to existing storage premises to form accommodation for the manufacture of fibrous plater mouldings.
Application No: APP/82/19742
Decision Date: 04/03/1982
Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Location: Cleveland Work,Warehouse A and B,Corporation Road,Birkenhead
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Change of use to warehousing, erection of entrance gates and boundary fence
Application No: APP/79/12363
Decision Date: 04/06/1979
Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Location: Wirral Tiles ,839 Corporaton Rd ,Birkenhead ,L41 8JL
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Provision of access from store to warehouse
Application No: APP/79/14582
Decision Date: 01/02/1980
Decision Type: Approve

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

Having regard to the Council Guidance on Publicity for Applications, 51 notifications were sent to adjoining properties. A site notice was also displayed. At the time of writing this report one objection has been received from the North Birkenhead Development Trust stating concern that the windows of the apartments would overlook the Miriam Place Day Nursery.

Merseyside Cycling Campaign - Secure cycle storage should be provided.

CONSULTATIONS:

Head of Environment & Regulation (Traffic & Transportation Division) - No objection subject to conditions.

Head of Environment & Regulation (Pollution Control Division) - No objection subject to conditions.

Head of Housing & Community Safety (Housing Strategy) - Further details on the provision and

standard of the affordable housing units is required. Further information is also required to identify the type and size of the units before a Section 106 is agreed.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer - There has been no consultation with the applicant about the Designing Out Crime Assessment (DOCA) and further work is required as the location of the proposed development does suffer from significant crime and disorder issues.

Director's Comments:

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

The application relates to the redevelopment of the site for 24 apartments and a pair of semi-detached houses. The proposal is defined as Major Development and if recommended for approval is required to be considered by the Planning Committee under the Council's adopted Scheme of Delegation for Determining Planning Applications. Where recommended for refusal, the Scheme of Delegation allows for a delegated decision. The proposal is recommended for refusal for the reasons set out below, however Councillor Crabtree has requested Committee determination on the grounds that the proposal is not out of keeping with the area and will provide much needed housing development in the area.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for the erection of a three storey block of 24 apartments and a pair of semi-detached houses on a site that currently comprises a showroom, warehouse and storage buildings. The proposal is submitted in outline and includes matters of access, appearance, layout and scale with only landscaping reserved. As such the proposal includes a site plan and elevation details showing the footprint of the buildings along with scale, appearance and design.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of a residential development within a Primarily Residential Area is acceptable subject to the National Planning Policy Framework and Wirral's UDP Policies URN1, HSG2 and HS4.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site is located fronting Corporation Road and is on the corner with Miriam Place. There is an existing two-storey tile showroom on the immediate corner and a warehouse building adjacent to this with other single storey storage buildings at the rear of the site. The site is enclosed by a high, brick boundary wall with palisade railings at the access point into the site further along Corporation Road (away from Miriam Place). There are two-storey terraced houses opposite the site and immediately adjacent at the side of the existing access. The site turns the corner into Miriam Place with the showroom located up to the pavement. The side of St James Community Centre faces Miriam Place with its main frontage facing Laird Street. A single storey health centre building is located opposite the community centre on the corner of Miriam Place and Laird Street. Adjacent to this are three storey flats set back from the main road further along Laird Street and there is an open grassed area with a number of trees that screen the flats. Corporation Road reflects the character of a residential street whereas Laird Street is a busier road that comprises a mix of commercial, retail and residential.

POLICY CONTEXT

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports sustainable housing development which encompasses good design and widens the choice of high quality homes. Development should make a positive contribution to an area and use opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area. Local Planning Authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community and identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations to reflect local demand.

The proposal includes an Affordable Housing Statement that confirms that 10% affordable housing units will be provided. This is in accordance with Policies HSG2 and URN1 where it states that the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs should make full and effective use of land by bringing unused land into beneficial use. Policy HS4 states that proposals should be an appropriate scale that relates well to surrounding property, in particular with regard to existing densities and form of development. The development should not result in a detrimental change in the character of the area and should provide appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment that contributes to a secure

environment.

Supplementary Planning Document 2 (SPD2) - Designing for Self Contained Flat Development and Conversions states that new buildings must be sited having regard to the layout, pattern and use of spaces between other buildings; not be visually overbearing or dominant and adequate garden space should be provided (as a guide a third of the whole site should remain as private landscaped communal area).

The outline proposal includes layout, scale and appearance, which is considered unacceptable and therefore contrary to Policy HS4, the NPPF and SPD2.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The siting of the apartment block would occupy a substantial proportion of the site that wraps around from Corporation Road into Miriam Place. The proposed building is a substantial three-storey with a deep roof pitch. The proximity of the building to the road frontage exacerbates its bulk and impact on the street scene. Corporation Road mainly comprises modest two-storey terraced housing and the height, scale and bulk of this proposal would result in a visually overpowering development that would be detrimental to the character of the area. The principle of a three-storey development could be acceptable where the design, scale, height and appearance is more sympathetic to its surroundings. Amendments to the scheme were requested from the applicant however, no changes have been made. Comparisons have been made to other three and four storey development within the Borough, including the existing flats on Laird Street (to the south west of the application site). Other development may well have been considered as acceptable and such approvals/developments do not set a precedent on sites such as this, which are considered and assessed on their own merits. The flats on Laird Street form part of the character of this busier road with a mix of uses as opposed to a traditional residential street that comprises mainly two storey housing. Furthermore, the flats although three storey, have a flat roof, the scale/bulk is more appropriate in this street scene and their appearance is softened by the open grassed area to the front and a number of trees and landscaping.

It is accepted that developing the site would remove a warehouse building and unsightly buildings with a more appropriate residential use, however the overall scale, bulk and appearance would be an overdevelopment of the site that would detract from the character of the area rather than adding to it.

The siting of apartment building occupies the majority of the site with the remaining areas taken up with car parking. There is no provision of adequate garden space for the occupiers of the apartments that is proportionate given the scale of the development. The building will be dominant within the street scene and does not meet the required separation distances to the houses opposite the site (this is set out in the next section) and the inability to meet the separation further demonstrates that the proposal constitutes overdevelopment.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

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. If there are differences in land levels or where development adjoins that of different ridge height, such as three-storey development adjacent to two-storey property, a greater separation should be provided. For every metre difference in ridge height (or part thereof) the above distances should be increased by 2 metres.

Although the front elevation of the proposed apartment building is staggered the majority of the frontage contains both first and second floor windows. A greater separation distance is required given the proposed three storey opposite the two-storey housing. The height of the apartment building would be 11.5 metres the ridge whereas the approximate height of the terraced housing opposite is between 8 and 9 metres, as such a minimum distance of 23 metres should be provided. There is a significant shortfall to this as the proposed apartment building at its nearest point to the houses opposite is only 17 metres and only 21 metres from its furthest point.

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

Officers have requested amendments to the proposal to address the issues set out in this report and to ensure that the site is developed in a more appropriate manner, no amendments have been received. Although the proposal is submitted in outline, it includes matters of scale, layout, appearance and access and on the basis of the submitted details, the proposal would introduce a large scale building that would appear over dominant and detrimental to the character of the immediate area. There is inadequate separation distance between the proposed development and existing houses that would detrimentally impact on the amenity of the occupiers of these houses. The proposal would not provide an adequate amount of private amenity or garden space for the occupiers of the proposed apartments. The proposal is therefore contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, UDP Policy HS4 and SPD2 and is recommended for refusal.

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 would introduce a large scale building that would appear over dominant and detrimental to the character of the immediate area. There is inadequate separation distance between the proposed development and existing houses that would detrimentally impact on the amenity of the occupiers of these houses. The proposal would not provide an adequate amount of private amenity or garden space for the occupiers of the proposed apartments.

Recommended Refuse
Decision:

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The proposal would introduce a large scale building which the Local Planning Authority considers would appear over dominant and detrimental to the character of the immediate area. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy HS4 of the Wirral unitary Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Document 2.
2. The proposal would result in an unneighbourly form of development in that there is inadequate separation distance between the proposed development and existing houses on Corporation Road that the Local Planning Authority considers would detrimentally impact on the amenity of the occupiers of these houses. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy HS4 of the Wirral unitary Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Document 2.
3. The Local Planning Authority considers the proposal to be unsatisfactory in that the layout of the site would result in a form of development lacking adequate provision of private amenity space, which the occupiers of the proposed development could reasonably expect to enjoy. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy HS4 of the Wirral unitary Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Document 2.

Further Notes for Committee:

Last Comments By: 13/09/2013 10:59:58

Expiry Date: 01/11/2013