

Planning Committee

21 August 2014

Reference:
APP/14/00662

Area Team:
North Team

Case Officer:
Mrs S Day

Ward:
Wallasey

Location: Blockbuster Video Hire, 139-141 WALLASEY VILLAGE, CH45 3LF
Proposal: Conversion of upper floors of existing building to 4no. apartments, including conversion of existing hipped roof to gable and first & second floor rear extension.

Applicant: Mr Mark Foster
Agent : Collins Architecture

Site Plan:



Development Plan allocation and policies:
Traditional Suburban Centre

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

Location: 139-141, Wallasey Village, Wallasey Village. L45 3LF
Application Type: Advertisement Consent
Proposal: Erection of two illuminated fascia box signs and projecting sign.
Application No: ADV/95/05256
Decision Date: 27/03/1995
Decision Type: Approved

Location: Ritz Video Hire, 139-141, Wallasey Village, Wallasey Village. L45 3LF
Application Type: Advertisement Consent
Proposal: Erection of illuminated fascia sign.
Application No: ADV/89/07685
Decision Date: 29/01/1990
Decision Type: Approved

Location: 139-141 Wallasey Village ,Wallasey Village ,L45 3LF
Application Type: Advertisement Consent
Proposal: Illuminated fascia sign
Application No: ADV/83/23519
Decision Date: 14/10/1983
Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Location: 139/141 Wallasey Village ,Wallasey Village ,L45 3LF
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Change of use of second floor to
Health Centre and construction of first floor extension to centre at the
premises
Application No: APP/84/24627
Decision Date: 24/05/1984
Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Location: 139/141 Wallasey Village ,Wallasey,L45 3LF
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of security wall.
Application No: APP/84/24108
Decision Date: 22/03/1984
Decision Type: Refused

Location: 139/141 Wallasey Village ,Wallasey Village L45 3LF
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Change of use of ground floor and first floor offices to Health Centre
Application No: APP/83/22423
Decision Date: 07/07/1983
Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Location: 139-141 Wallasey Village ,Wallasey,L45 3LF
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Change of use to office
Application No: APP/80/15506
Decision Date: 24/07/1980
Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:

REPRESENTATIONS

Having regard to the Council's Guidance on Publicity for Applications, neighbour notifications were sent to 13 neighbouring properties. A Site Notice was displayed at the site. In response a qualifying

petition of 30 signatures has been received and objections from 8,10 13,17,28 Beechwood Avenue. The objections relate to:-

1. Increase in traffic in an already congested area
2. Lack of off street parking for the development
3. Already too many flats in the area without adequate parking.

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Environment and Regulation (Pollution Control Division) - No objections

Head of Environment and Regulation (Traffic & Transportation Division) - No objections

Councillor Leah Fraser has also requested the application be removed from delegation for the following reasons:-

1. **Parking:** parking is already extremely limited in this area. Presently there is limited parking for residents and the two roads to the side and back of the existing Blockbuster building are cul-de-sacs with terraced housing and no off street parking. A recent conversion in the area and the building of a bungalow opposite Blockbusters, which have no access means that parking takes place on the main road limiting parking previously available to residents and local shoppers to the area. The parking problem is further exacerbated with a large secondary school (St Mary's College) opposite and a double glazing firm both using parking space for vans and buses.
2. **Commercial Area:** this is a mainly commercial area. The loss of part of these premises which could be used for commercial purposes in a key town centre would be contrary to the Wallasey Village Plan discussed at recent meetings with traders in conjunction with council officers. There has already been interest in this building when local solicitors submitted plans to convert. They subsequently withdrew their application; however, if the proposed conversion of part of the building into flats went ahead it may limit further commercial interest in the future.
3. **Impact:** The proposed development and result in an increase in the disturbance and have a further detrimental impact on the everyday lives and amenity local resident should reasonably expect to enjoy.

Director's Comments:

This application was deferred from Planning Committee on July 23rd to allow for a Members Site Visit.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

The application is referred to Planning Committee following removal from delegation by Councillor Fraser and a qualifying petition has been received. As such, the application is required to be considered by Planning Committee under the provisions of the Council's Scheme of Delegation for Determining Planning Applications.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is primarily to change the use of the first and second floor of the building to 4 flats. An extension to the first and second floor of the rear of the building is proposed, this would provide a new staircase to the second floor. The proposals also include the alteration of the roof to change it from a hipped roof to a gable. Since the initial submission, the description of the proposal has been amended to clarify that the change of use relates only to the upper floors and not the retail unit.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

139 Wallasey Village lies within an area designated by the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as a Traditional Suburban Centre. Policy SH7 of the UDP supports residential uses above commercial premises subject to the compatibility of the existing and proposed uses. Supplementary Planning Document 2, provides guidance on the provision of new flats.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports sustainable uses which retain the vitality of existing commercial centres.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

139 Wallasey Village is a three storey property at the junction of Wallasey Village and Beechwood

Avenue. The Property has previously been in commercial use at the ground floor and upper floors but is currently vacant. Whilst the adjacent properties on Wallasey Village are mainly commercial, to the rear of the site it is mainly residential. Whilst it is possible to park on the road in front of the building, there is no off street parking available at the application site, or in the surrounding roads.

POLICY CONTEXT

Both Policy SH7 and SPD2 support the retention and conversion of existing buildings to flats. This is subject to parking and amenity considerations and the number of units being appropriate to the conversion. SPD 2 requires a maximum of one parking space per flat .

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The use of upper floors of shops and businesses for flats is a common feature of commercial areas. Permitted development allows one changes to one flat above a shop unit without the requirement for planning permission. Thus, a change of use to two flats above 139 and 141 would not require planning permission . The upper floors have been used as flats in the past and have had planning permission to change to a health centre and gym. The upper floors have now been vacant for some time.

The proposed change would result in two flats on each of the first and second floor. Access to the flats would utilize the existing doorway on Beechwood Avenue to the first floor with an additional staircase to provide access to the second floor. The additional staircase would be accommodated in an extension to the rear of the building. This extension would take the form of a gabled outrigger and is positioned next to an existing flat roof at the rear of the building. The extension is sufficiently far from other properties to avoid any loss of amenity, subject to obscure glazing of the staircase windows

The existing building has a hipped roof on the corner which would be changed to a gable to provide more room for the second floor flats. There are a variety of building designs and styles within the locality and as such, this alteration to the building would not look out of place.

A roof terrace is proposed to serve the first floor flats, this utilises an existing flat roofed extension. Although the roof is quite extensive, only half is proposed to be used for amenity space, this would retain sufficient privacy for adjacent gardens and enable the erection of a screen which would be set back and less obtrusive from the street .

SEPARATION DISTANCES

The new windows to the proposed flats would meet the required separation distances of 14m to the rear and would not result in a loss of privacy to adjacent properties. To avoid any potential overlooking from the staircase extension, the windows will be obscurely glazed and non opening.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

The proposal does not provide any off street parking. However the proposed flats represents an increase in two above what could be allowed as permitted development and is likely to have less impact than the previously approved uses as a fitness centre and offices. The site is close to a train station and bus routes, as well as being situated within a commercial centre. As such this is a very sustainable location.

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 retains the existing commercial unit and will result in an appropriate use of the upper floors which is consistent with the objectives of The National Planning Policy Framework and Unitary Development Plan Policy SH7 and Supplementary Planning Guidance 2.

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 retains the existing commercial unit and will result in an appropriate use of the upper floors which is consistent with the objectives of The National Planning Policy Framework and Unitary Development Plan Policy SH7 and Supplementary Planning Guidance 2.

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. All new external work shall be carried out in materials that match, as closely as possible, in colour, texture and design detail those of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development which does not prejudice the amenity of the locality.

3. Prior to the first occupation of the flats hereby approved, the windows in the rear stairway extension shall be obscurely glazed and non opening. The windows shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To maintain the privacy of neighbouring properties.

4. Concurrent with the commencement of development, details of the screen fence to the first floor amenity areas shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The fence shall be erected as approved, before the first occupation of the flats hereby approved and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenity of adjacent properties.

Further Notes for Committee:

Last Comments By: 01/07/2014 12:33:05
Expiry Date: 29/07/2014