

Planning Committee

01 June 2017

Reference:
APP/17/00126

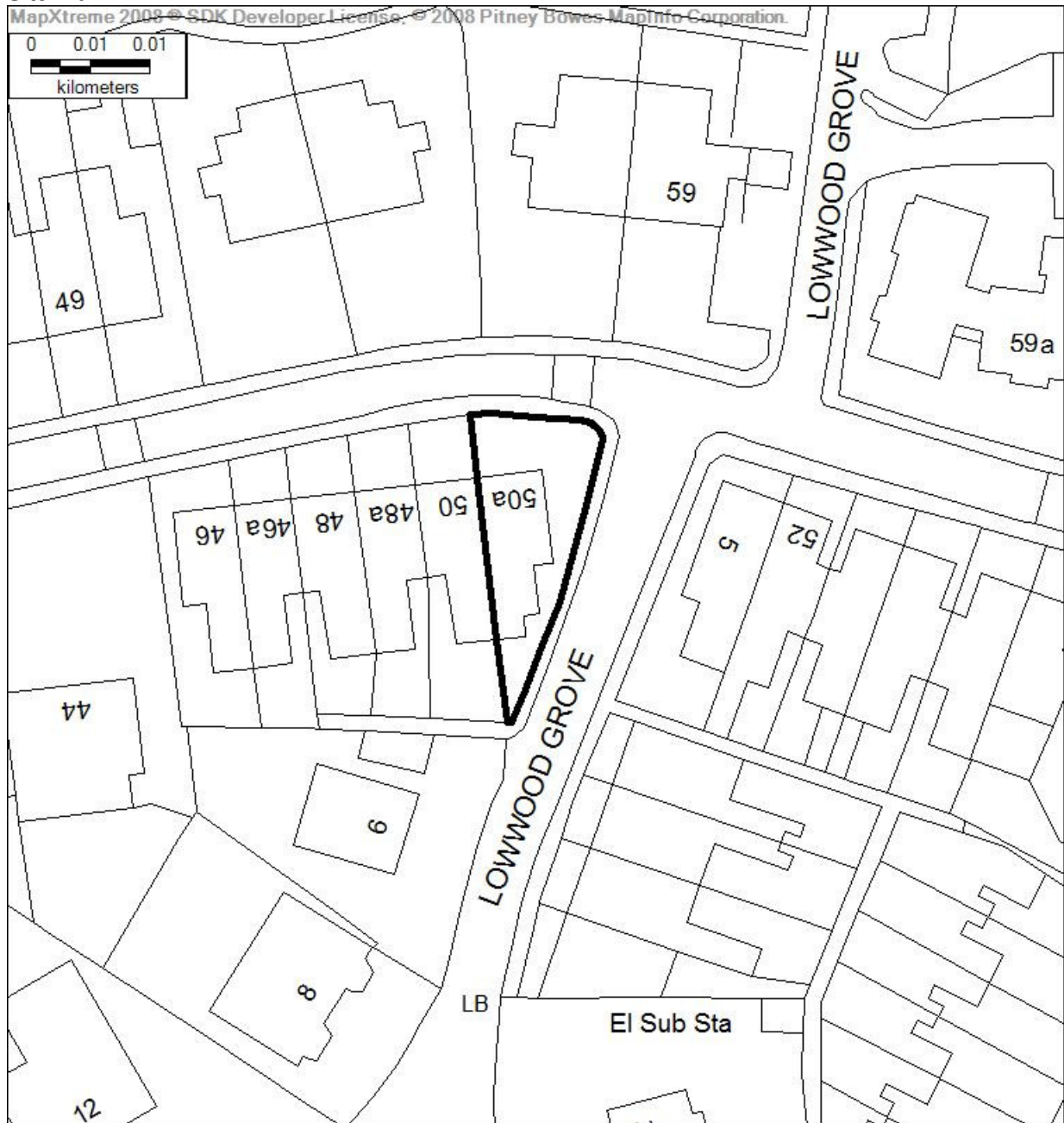
Area Team:
South Team

Case Officer:
Miss A McDougall

Ward:
**Birkenhead and
Tranmere**

Location: 50A THE WOODLANDS, TRANMERE, CH41 2SJ
Proposal: Conversion of dwelling into four self-contained flats and construction of rear dormer window
Applicant: Mr & Mrs O' Kelly
Agent : Bryson Architecture

Site Plan:



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Development Plan allocation and policies:

Primarily Residential Area
Clifton Park Conservation Area

Planning History:

No planning history

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:REPRESENTATIONS:

Having regard to the Council Guidance on Publicity for Applications, 23 notifications were sent to adjoining properties. A site notice was also displayed. At the time of writing this report a qualifying petition of objection and 2 objections have been received, listing the following grounds:

1. parking
2. overlooking from dormer window

Councillors Jean Stapleton and Phil Davies object to the application. The Woodlands is a very narrow road and any increase in parking will cause further pressure on the one-way system. The area already suffers from anti-social behaviour and any proliferation of multi-occupancy properties has the potential to add to the deterioration of the area. Further multi-occupancy properties will also have a detrimental impact on the character of Clifton Park Conservation Area.

Frank Field MP objects to the proposed development for the same reasons cited by the Ward Councillors above.

CONSULTATIONS:

Highways - No Objections

Birkenhead & Tranmere Neighbourhood Planning Forum - Objection on the impact of the dormer window and subdivision of houses within this area

Conservation Areas Wirral - Detrimental impact of increasing number of flats to the area, parking problems and appearance of the conservation area

DIRECTORS COMMENTS:**REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

A qualifying petition of objection containing 142 signatures has been submitted.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is to convert an existing dwelling into four flats with the erection of a dormer window extension to the rear elevation.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of development is considered acceptable.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The property is located at the end of a row of 6 houses that form a terrace front The Woodlands, there are larger detached properties opposite that are listed buildings. The application site falls within Clifton Park Conservation Area and whilst the house and the established row of 6 properties are considered attractive in appearance they are not considered to be of historical importance. The terraced row itself is well formed, well maintained and visually balanced when viewed from The Woodlands. The application site also bounds Lowwood Grove which includes terraced properties that are of a similar age and appearance, the elevation facing Lowwood Grove is detailed and includes a two-storey bay that adds character to the street scene.

The existing dwelling is set over four floors, including a basement and rooms within the roof, to the rear the house has a two-storey outrigger with a gated entrance from Lowwood Grove.

POLICY CONTEXT

Clifton Park Conservation Area Appraisal

In the cases of semi-detached or terraced properties, the effect of any extension on the block as a whole must be considered if character is not to be lost. The materials, form and positioning of any extension must also be carefully considered if the buildings character is not to be lost. Materials should be of a quality that matches the existing building and should not detract from it. Traditional materials would generally be preferable to man-made ones, however, there may be instances where a 'sleeker' more modern alternative (e.g. lightweight materials such as glass) may actually detract less. The form of any extension should consider the scale, proportion and massing of the original as well as roof pitch. A new extension should generally be positioned in an unobtrusive position as possible, with the rear elevation being preferred to the front and sides.

HS13 Self-Contained Flat Conversions Policy

Proposals for the conversion of existing buildings into self-contained flats will be permitted subject to:

- (i) the conversion ensuring the privacy of neighbours and occupants including the layout of car parking areas to prevent overlooking of habitable room windows;
- (ii) access normally being provided to individual flats within the main structure of the building. If external staircases have to be provided they must not result in significant overlooking of neighbours' windows or private amenity space;
- (iii) any extensions required complying with Policy HS11;
- (iv) any new windows required to serve habitable rooms, such as living rooms, kitchens or bedrooms, not overlooking adjoining properties to an unacceptable degree;
- (v) any interior vertical partitions not cutting across windows and ceiling height reductions not being visible externally;
- (vi) adequate sound proofing between flats;
- (vii) any basement flat having windows with two-thirds of their height above the existing outside ground level giving sufficient daylight penetration, a reasonable outlook and not immediately adjacent to parking bays and vehicle accessways;
- (viii) main living rooms having a reasonable outlook and not lit solely by roof lights, nor in close proximity to high boundary or gable walls;
- (ix) access to rear yards/ gardens being provided from each flat;
- (x) adequate visibility at entrance and exit points and turning space for vehicles; and
- (xi) the proposal otherwise complying with Policy HS4 and Policy HS5.

CH2 Development Affecting Conservation Areas Policy

Development located within, adjacent to, or otherwise affecting the setting or special character of a Conservation Area, will be permitted where the visual and operational impact of the proposals can be demonstrated to preserve or enhance:

- (i) the distinctive characteristics of the Area, including important views into and out of the designated Area;
- (ii) the general design and layout of the Area, including the relationship between its buildings, structures, trees and characteristic open spaces; and
- (iii) the character and setting of period buildings and other elements which make a positive contribution to the appearance and special character of the Area.

When granting consent, special regard will be given to matters of detailed design, especially within main frontages and prominent elevations, and to the nature, quality and type of materials proposed to be used.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The proposal is to sub divide the existing single dwelling into four self-contained flats. Three of the flats will be accessed from the front door entrance and one flat will be located within the two-storey outrigger with access from Lowwood Grove. Flat 1 is located on the ground floor and utilises the basement as a second bedroom, the basement has existing light wells to the front and side elevation, this is the only two bedroom flat.

The layout of each flat reflects the original setting of the building and utilises the existing windows with minimal internal alterations. The overall layout of each flat is considered acceptable, the proposal includes the removal of windows at ground floor and their replacement with French doors into the garden but this is considered to have a minimal impact on the appearance of the dwelling or the neighbouring properties as the original openings are to be retained.

The proposed development also includes a dormer window to the rear elevation which will sit behind the existing chimney breast. The erection of the rear dormer provides additional living space within the roof to allow the formation of a self-contained flat within the roof which has outlook to the front and rear.

The rear dormer is a standard flat roof style dormer extension that has two windows to the rear elevation, the dormer is lower than the main roof and is set in 0.5m from the adjoining house and 0.7m in from the edge of the main roof to Lowwood Grove side.

Having regard to the Conservation Area appraisal and Policy CH2, the conversion of the building is considered to have a minimal impact on the appearance of the building or the conservation area, the proposed dormer window is not considered to be a positive contribution however the scale and position of the dormer allow for the retention of original features and is not considered to dominate the building itself or cause harm to the setting of the building onto the street scene. The location of the dormer will not have a detrimental impact onto the balanced appearance of the terrace of houses as it will not be visible when viewed from The Woodlands, as such the overall development is considered acceptable having regard to the Councils current policies.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

The conversion utilises existing windows, the proposed rear dormer does not have direct window to window outlook, the property at 7 Lowwood Grove is closest in proximity but set at an angle a distance of 17m away. The proposal is therefore considered to meet the Councils current interface distances of 14m window to blank elevation.

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.

CONCLUSION

The conversion of the building and the erection of a rear dormer have a minimal impact in terms of the setting and appearance of the building within the street scene and in terms of impact onto the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore acceptable having regard to Wirral's UDP Policies HS13, CH2 and the Clifton Park Conservation Area Appraisal.

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 policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

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Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore acceptable having regard to Wirral's UDP Policies HS13, CH2 and the Clifton Park Conservation Area Appraisal.

Recommended Decision: **Approve**

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

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

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 28 February 2017 and listed as follows: 2016 152 004 rev.04 & 2016 152 003 Rev.02.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to define the permission.

3. PRIOR TO THE FIRST OCCUPATION OF THE DWELLINGS arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse, and vehicle access thereto, shall be made within the curtilage of the site, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance and adequate standards of hygiene and refuse collection, having regard to policies WM8 and WM9 of the Waste Local Plan.

4. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE until details of secure covered cycle parking and/or storage facilities have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These facilities shall be provided in accordance with the approved details and made available for use prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted and shall be retained for use at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory facilities for the parking of cycles are provided and to encourage travel by means other than the private car, having regard to Policy TR12 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

Last Comments By: 12/04/2017
Expiry Date: 25/04/2017