

Planning Committee

Planning Committee

18 January 2018

Reference:
APP/17/01092

Area Team:
South Team

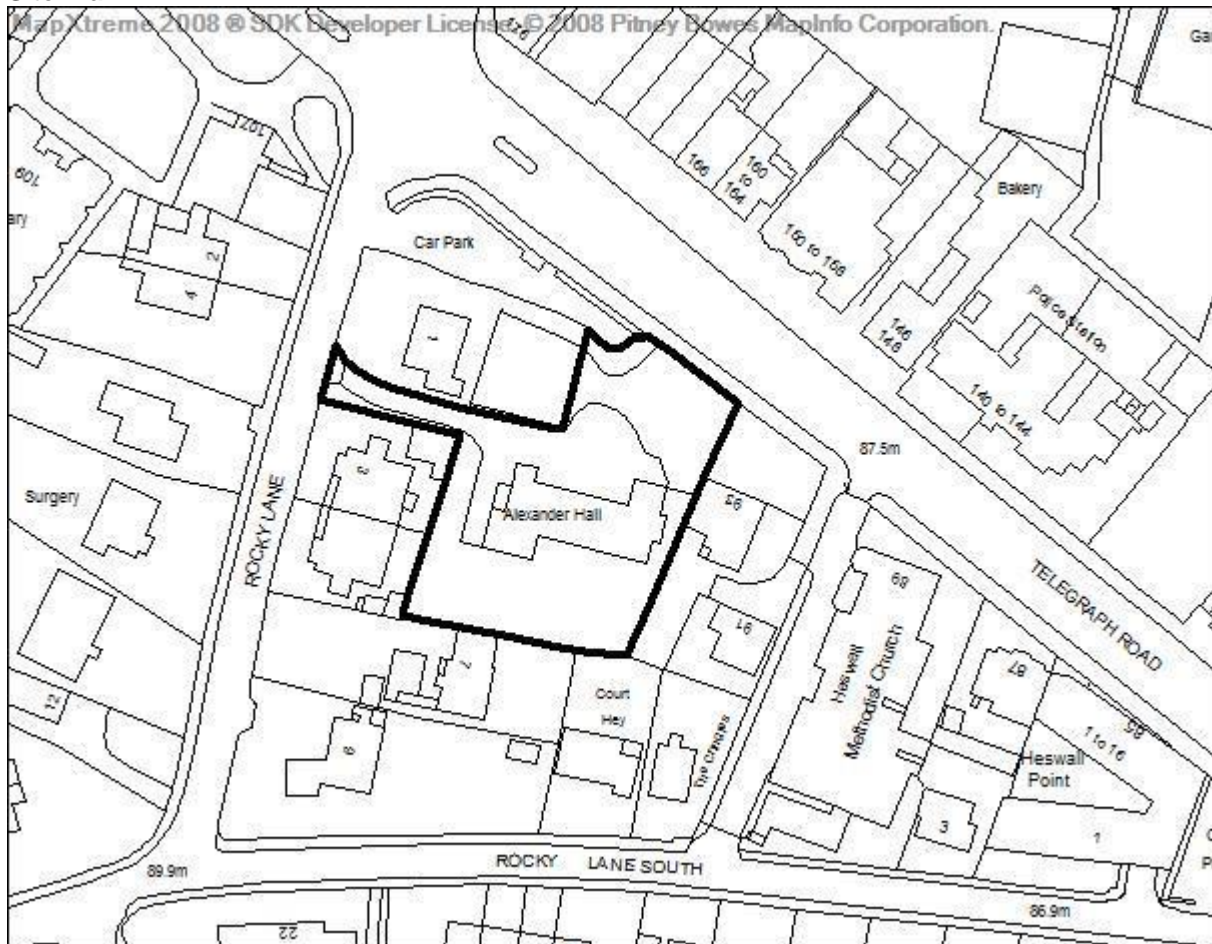
Case Officer:
Miss A McDougall

Ward:
Heswall

Location: Alexander Hall, ROCKY LANE, HESWALL, CH60 0BY
Proposal: Demolition of the Alexander Hall and erection of ten apartments - amendments to Approved Proposal, APP/16/00024 & Approved Proposal APP/15/00718 including amendments to lift shafts, window style & internal alterations, conditions attached to APP/16/00024 addressed.

Applicant: Alexander Hall Developments Ltd
Agent : KJP Architecture

Site Plan:



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Development Plan Designation:
Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

Location: Alexander Hall, ROCKY LANE, HESWALL, CH60 0BY
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Demolition of the Alexander Hall and erection of Eight Apartments

(Amended Plans)

Application No: APP/15/00718

Decision Date: 09/09/2015

Decision Type: Approve

Location: Alexander Hall, ROCKY LANE, HESWALL, CH60 0BY

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Demolition of the Alexander Hall and erection of ten apartments - additional two units to Approved Application APP/15/00718

Application No: APP/16/00024

Decision Date: 22/04/2016

Decision Type: Approve

Location: Alexander Hall, Rocky Lane, Heswall, L60 0BY

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Use of hall by pre-school playgroup

Application No: APP/79/12050

Decision Date: 18/04/1979

Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:

REPRESENTATIONS:

Having regard to the Council Guidance on Publicity for Applications, 28 notifications were sent to adjoining properties. A site notice was also displayed. At the time of writing this report 2 objections and a Qualifying petition of objection have been received, listing the following grounds:

1. increase height and mass
2. impact onto privacy
3. does not meet the separation distances
4. loss of garden space
5. loss of sandstone
6. interior arrangement
7. parking is inadequate
8. additional roof lights
9. boundary treatment and landscaping
10. not built what was approved

CONSULTATIONS:

Highways - No Objections

Environmental Protection - No Objections

LLFA - Previous condition to be carried over

The Heswall Society - Objection to the amendments due to layout, height, overlooking, loss of garden and contrary to SPD2

DIRECTORS COMMENTS:

REASON FOR REFERRAL

The application is a major development and a qualifying petition of objection containing 44 signatures has been received.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for amendments to a previously approved residential development.

The original proposal was for 8 flats approved under reference 15/00718, a subsequent application was submitted for an extension and the addition of 2 flats under planning reference 16/00024. The total development as approved cumulated in 10 residential units, the proposal as built does not seek to alter the number of residential units.

The building is now near completion and following a site visit there are works that have been included that did not form part of either planning approval and require further consent, this application seeks to gain approval for retrospective works, these works include an increase to part of the roof height,

additional windows, balconies and roof lights.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of development has been determined as acceptable for a residential development on this plot.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Alexander Hall was a vacant, former Council building accessed from Rocky Lane via an existing driveway with part of the site fronting onto Telegraph Road to the south, the building has since been demolished and the building externally is complete, although certain elements of the building do not correspond with the previously approved plans.

Other than the boundary onto Telegraph Road, the site is bounded with houses/residential curtilage/garden areas of houses along Rocky Lane and Rocky Lane South. There are mainly houses along Rocky Lane with commercial and retail units on Telegraph Road. There are a number of trees and scrub around the perimeter of the site, some of which have been removed following start of works. The existing building was vacant and in a poor state of repair.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policies URN1 and HS4 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan are relevant to this proposal. The proposal is in accordance with Policy URN1 where it states that 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, whilst providing adequate individual private or communal garden space for each dwelling.

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.

Development Management Policies in the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton are also applicable. Policy WM8 requires development to incorporate measures for achieving efficient use of resources, Policy WM9 also requires development to provide measures for waste collection and recycling, including home composting.

National Planning Policy Framework, which is a significant material consideration, states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that proposals should optimise the potential of the site to accommodate the development. It is a core principle that planning decisions should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. Paragraph 135 states that the scale of any harm or loss of a non-heritage asset should be taken into account when determining a planning application. The original building was in an adequate state of repair however does not display any original or unique features that would warrant its retention.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The application seeks retrospective approval of works that have been undertaken without prior planning consent, however the site does benefit from two current planning approvals for a total of 10 flats. A number of the discrepancies have a minimal impact onto the general appearance of the building or amenity of neighbouring properties such as the inclusion of roof lights and slight increase/decreases to eaves height, window positions etc.

There are however two elements of the build that are of concern and sited to the west facing elevation, these include the addition of step out balconies and increase in roof height from two storey to three storey with an increase in roof pitch height.

The plans have been further amended following a meeting with the agent as the roof height was

shown as being higher on plan in comparison to what has been built, this amendment was received 21st November 2017 plan 005. The element of roof that has been increased in height only occupies a small area of the building and has a hipped roof design so as to minimise the overall impact, the increase in height does result in additional windows that serve flat 10 however neither window serves habitable rooms, as such these windows can be conditioned to be fixed and obscurely glazed so that the interface distances are met, these blank second storey windows are 20m from the rear elevation of the houses on Rocky Lane, which given the additional storey meets the interface distances from habitable room to blank elevation.

Concerns have been raised with regards to additional roof lights, it is not considered that the roof lights result in an increase in overlooking as they are not "true" windows they do not afford the same outlook, the roof pitch and height has been approved and the roof lights are not considered to cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring properties.

The west elevation of the building faces the rear elevation of two-storey houses no.3 and 5 Rocky Lane, these houses have relatively small gardens and back onto the site, the west facing elevation was approved with a two-storey wing facing the site and no step out balcony. The site itself is surrounded by housing and each elevation results in a level of impact onto the existing houses, the first floor step out balcony has now been amended to include an internal glazed barrier which prevents the balcony area being used, see drawing number 003 received 21st November 2017, also a photograph from inside the building is included on the file to show the barrier in place. Due to the interface distances and the restricted size of the site, this barrier would be conditioned to remain in situ to restrict any future use of the balcony area that has been constructed.

There are also concerns regarding the loss of amenity space and the increase of parking, however the site has not been fully finished, the formal details of landscaping and hardstanding have not been determined at any stage of the history of the application, as such these conditions will be reimposed onto the decision. The layout plan has also been amended to show soft landscaping reintroduced and the car parking reduced to 10 spaces, one per flat. Given the location of the building within close proximity to Heswall Key Town Centre and a large bus station, the site is considered sustainable in terms of proximity to public transport and shopping.

The resultant building is larger in some areas than the original approval and less sympathetic to the scale of neighbouring buildings, the internal alterations result in changes to the layout of the flats at second floor, however these cumulative alterations are not considered to be unacceptable in their appearance or scale subject to control via appropriate planning conditions.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

Through the control of windows and balconies that have been installed without prior planning approval with appropriate planning conditions, the building as per the built amendments can achieve the separation distances of 14m window to blank elevation and 21m window to window.

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 amendments that have been made to the building are considered to be acceptable subject to appropriate planning condition that will protect the amenities of neighbouring residential properties, having regard to Wirral's UDP Policy HS4 and SPD2.

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:-

The amendments that have been made to the building are considered to be acceptable subject to

appropriate planning condition that will protect the amenities of neighbouring residential properties, having regard to Wirral's UDP Policy HS4 and SPD2.

Recommended Decision: **Approve**

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority and listed as follows: 002 Rev H (11.09.2017) 003 Rev J (21.11.2017) 004 Rev H (11.09.2017) 005 Rev J (21.11.2017) 006 Rev J (21.11.2017) & 008 Rev J (12.12.2017)

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

2. The site shall be suitably landscaped in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before any works commence on site, the scheme shall include details of planting types, heights, soft and hard landscaping, the landscape work to be completed during the first available planting season following completion of the development hereby approved and shall be maintained thereafter to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance and that the proposed development enhances the visual amenity of the locality in accordance with Policy HS4 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan

3. No development shall take place until a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatment shall be completed before the building is occupied. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the locality and the privacy/amenities of the adjoining properties and to accord with Policy HS4 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

4. Prior to first occupation space and facilities for cycle parking of a type and in a location submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority are to be provided and these facilities shall be permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to accord with Policy TR12 in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan

5. Foul water and surface water discharges shall be drained separately from the site.

Reason: To protect the integrity of the public sewerage system

6. Prior to first occupation of the development a surface water drainage scheme based on the hierarchy of drainage options in the NPPG with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

The surface water drainage scheme must be in accordance with the non statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (march 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards and unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA, no surface water shall discharge to the public sewer either directly or indirectly.

Reason; To promote sustainable development and secure proper drainage and manage the risk of flooding and pollution.

7. 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 Policy WM9 of the Waste Local Plan

8. Prior to first occupation of Flat A10 as shown on plan 004, the windows to the west facing elevation shall be fitted with fixed and obscure glazing up to a height of 1.7m from the finished first floor internal floor level and shall be permanently retained in that condition thereafter.

Reason: Having regard to neighbouring residential amenity

9. The outer area of Flat A07 as shown on plan 003 received 21 November 2017 shall not be used as a balcony at any time and the internal screen shall remain in situ to prevent stepping out or use of the external area.

Reason; Having regard to residential privacy, in particular the houses on Rocky Lane.

Further Notes for Committee:

1. "Consent under the Highways Act is required for the construction of a new or the amendment/removal of an existing vehicular access. Such works are undertaken at the developer's expense, including the relocation/replacement and/or removal of street furniture and vegetation as necessary. Submission of a S50 Highway Opening Notice is required prior to commencement of any works on the adopted highway. Please contact the Council's Highway Management team via www.wirral.gov.uk or 0151 606 2004 prior to the commencement of development for further information."

Last Comments By: 16/10/2017 10:23:08

Expiry Date: 11/12/2017