

Development Plan designation:

Traditional Suburban Centre

Planning History:

There is no relevant planning history for this site

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:REPRESENTATIONS

Having regard to the Council's Guidance for Publicity on Planning Applications, 27 notifications were sent to adjoining properties and a site notice was displayed near the site. At the time of writing, there had been a qualifying petition of objection received, containing 41 signatures and 1 individual objection. The objections can be summarised as follows:

1. Loss of light and privacy;
2. No refuse or bin facilities;
3. No parking for residents or customers

CONSULTATIONS

Highways - No objection

Environmental Health - No objection

Director's Comments:

Consideration of this application was deferred from Planning Committee on 15 November 2018 to allow for a formal Members Site Visit to take place.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

A qualifying petition of objection was received containing 41 signatures.

INTRODUCTION

The application is for the demolition of the existing buildings at 1 - 7 Leasowe Road and the erection of a new three-storey building containing 3 new retail units on the ground floor with 9 residential units above.

The proposal has been amended from the original submission, with the rear part of the proposed building being reduced in height and width and the design being slightly altered.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site is located near to the roundabout at the junction of Leasowe Road and Wallasey Village. The site currently contains a brick building and a white-clad building, both of which are approximately two-storeys in height and both of which are in a considerably poor condition which has a negative impact upon the character and appearance of the area. The site was previously used for commercial purposes, but the retail units now appear to be vacant.

The site is designated in Wirra's Unitary Development Plan as part of the Wallasey Village Traditional Suburban Centre, and there are a number of commercial units within the immediate vicinity. There are also residential properties to the rear of the site (on Lycett Road) and opposite the site on Leasowe Road.

POLICY CONTEXT

The residential element of proposed development is subject to Wirral UDP Policy HS7 Upper Floor Uses in Retail Premises and HS4: Criteria for New Housing Development and Supplementary Planning Document 2: Designing for Self Contained Flat Developments and Conversions. These policies state that residential schemes should not result in a detrimental change in the character of the area, should be compatible taking account of access, amenity and shop security and be of a scale which relates well to the surrounding area, and should promote good design and layout.

UDP Policy SH2: Criteria for Development in Traditional Suburban Centres and UDP Policy SH8 are also applicable., Retail uses are be permitted provided the scheme does not generate traffic in excess

of that which can be accommodated on the network, does not undermine the vitality or viability of other centres and the siting, scale and design is not detrimental to the character of the area and the shops are fully accessible by people with disabilities.

Policy TR9: Requirements for Off Street Parking, Policy TR12: Requirements for Cycle Parking and Supplementary Planning Document 4: Parking Standards are relevant. Policy WM9: Sustainable Waste Management Design and Layout for New Development in the Joint Waste Local Plan is also relevant.

The National Planning Policy Framework (Revised NPPF July 2018), paragraphs 124, 127, 128 & 130 are also applicable. The creation of high quality building and places is fundamental and decisions should ensure that development will function well, add to the quality of the area, be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping and be sympathetic to local character and history. It is made clear that poor design, which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions should be refused.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

Principle

The existing buildings are in an extremely poor condition and detract from the otherwise vibrant surrounding area. The site is within a highly prominent location, adjacent to the junction of Wallasey Village and Leasowe Road. The principle of demolishing these buildings and replacing them with a mixed-use development with commercial use on the ground-floor and residential use above is acceptable under UDP Policies SH2 and SH7, and could help enhance the vitality of this part of Wallasey Village, both by introducing new shop units and also by increasing the population of the area. Paragraph 85 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

Design & Scale

The scale of the proposed buildings reflects the existing adjoining properties at 99 - 105 Wallasey Village, being three-storey buildings albeit with the top floor set largely within the roof space. Given the location of the site in a dense, urban setting within a Traditional Suburban Centre with good transport links and other three-storey buildings, the principle of this is considered to be acceptable. The site is fairly prominent and located in a key location within a Traditional Suburban Centre, and the principle of a higher density, three-storey building can therefore be supported.

The building will project right up to the back of the footpath, and this reflects the existing buildings on the site and the majority of other commercial properties within the area and is therefore considered to be acceptable. The design approach is fairly contemporary in appearance, with the main brick facade complemented with zinc standing seam roof for the top floor and a series of projecting vertical elements in a modern steel material. Amended plans were submitted to enlarge the glazing elements of the shop fronts to ensure they contribute positively, and also to incorporate the zinc roof to the side/west elevation to enhance the appearance of the building when viewed on approach from the west.

Overall, the building is considered to be of a good design and will have a positive impact upon the surrounding area, adding to the variety of the street scene whilst respecting the prevailing scale of the area.

Residential Amenity

The proposed development will consist of a three-storey element towards the front of the site, with the ground-floor commercial units projecting all the way to the rear of the site, with a small first-floor rear projection also included to accommodate one of the residential units.

The existing buildings take up almost the entire site, and the proposed development will also do this. The existing buildings project right up to the rear boundary, close to the rear of the residential properties of 4 - 10 Lycett Road, and the ground-floor commercial units will also do this. There will therefore be no greater impact from the ground-floor part of the proposal.

Negotiations have taken place with the applicant and amended plans have been submitted to reduce the height and width of the first-floor rear element, which ensures that it is no higher or wider than

the part of the existing building which it replaces. This part of the proposed building will also be set away from the rear boundary marginally more than the existing building, by 0.228m. Whilst separation distances between the existing building and the residential properties are substandard (between approximately 6.6m to 8.8m), the proposed development will not exacerbate this situation or result in any further loss of light. The applicant has insisted that the additional unit provided within this part of the building is required to ensure the viability of the scheme, although only minimal weight is given to this. However, on balance, given that this part of the proposed building will be no higher or wider than the building it replaces, and given the negative impact the existing buildings have in this prominent location and the positive impact the new development will have on regenerating this site, it is considered that the proposal can be supported.

The main part of the building will be approximately 3 metres taller than the existing building, but this will be approximately 15 metres from the properties on Lycett Road and given the dense urban grain within the immediate area, it is not considered that this would have such an impact on existing residents as to warrant refusal of the application. There are no habitable windows to the rear of the proposed building, with only windows serving a communal corridor at first and second floor level, together with a hall and bathroom for one of the apartments. A condition has been attached to obscurely glaze these to ensure no overlooking of neighbouring properties will take place. A condition has also been attached to ensure that the flat-roof to the rear, above the retail units, cannot be used by future residential occupiers given that this would result in a loss of amenity to existing residents.

The proposed building will be approximately 30 metres from dwellings on the opposite side of Leasowe Road, which is more than sufficient to ensure it does not impact upon those residents.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

Separation distances are dealt with in more detail above.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

There is no off-street parking for this proposal. However, given that the site is within a sustainable location close to numerous local services and transport links, this is considered to be acceptable. Cycle (and bin) facilities will be located to the rear of the building.

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 proposed development will have a positive impact upon the vitality, viability and appearance of the surrounding commercial area and the scheme, as amended, will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policies SH2, SH7, SH8 and HS4, SPD2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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 proposed development will have a positive impact upon the vitality, viability and appearance of the surrounding commercial area and the scheme, as amended, will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policies SH2, SH7, SH8 and HS4, SPD2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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 19th October 2018 and 25th October 2018 and listed as follows: P-AL-00-001 Revision A; P-AS-20-001 Revision D; P-AL-20-001 Revision C; P-AE-20-003; P-AE-20-001 Revision C

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

3. Before any construction above ground level, samples of the materials to be used in the external construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved materials shall then be used in the construction of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy HS4 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

4. Prior to first occupation of the development, all first and second floor windows in the rear elevation (serving the access corridor for all apartments, and the entrance hall and bathroom for one apartment) shall be obscurely glazed and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity having regard to Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policy SH2.

5. The retail units hereby permitted shall only be open to the public between the hours of 08:00 and 21:00 hours

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby residential properties having regard to Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policy SH2

6. Prior to any works above ground level, a full scheme of works for the reinstatement to standard footway levels of any existing vehicle access from the highway that is rendered obsolete by the development shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the approved works have been completed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interest of amenity and highway safety and to accord with the provisions of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan

7. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL a Construction Management Plan or Construction Method Statement for the construction of the development hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The construction works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Details submitted in respect of the method statement shall provide for routes for construction traffic, the provision of parking facilities for contractors and visitors during all stages of the development, hours of operation, the provision of a means of storage and/or delivery for all plant, site huts, site facilities and materials and shall provide for wheel cleaning facilities during the demolition, excavation, site preparation and construction stages of the development and/or method(s) of prevention of mud being carried onto the highway.

Reason: In the interests of the safe operation of the local highway network and having regards to visual and residential amenities of the area.

8. The flat-roof area to the rear of the building hereby permitted shall not be used by occupiers of these apartments other than for maintenance purposes

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of residential amenity, having regard to Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policy SH4

9. Before any construction above ground level, details of secure covered cycle parking and/or storage facilities shall be 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.

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 Highway Management team area manager via www.wirral.gov.uk prior to the commencement of the works for the approval of the proposed details.

A pre-site inspection is required prior to the development works commencing with the LA- any damage to the existing highway that occurs as a result of the development would require reinstatement, at the developers expense, to the LA specifications and written approval. For further details contact Highway Management, area manager via www.wirral.gov.uk

Last Comments By: 07/08/2018
Expiry Date: 28/08/2018