

Planning Committee

15 July 2021

Reference:
APP/20/01084

Area Team:
Development
Management Team

Case Officer:
Miss A McDougall **Ward:**
Oxton

Location:
Proposal:

Redcourt, 7 DEVONSHIRE PLACE, OXTON, CH43 1TX
Change of use from school to residential for the proposal of the refurbishment of Redcourt, a grade II listed vacant school building, into 15no. 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. Adjacent to Redcourt, it is proposed to build a 3/4 storey stand alone apartment block, comprising 30no. 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. Both apartment blocks will have separate vehicular and pedestrian access from Devonshire Place, car parking, cycle storage, bin storage and generous private amenity space is provided.

Applicant: Forth Homes Ltd.
Agent : Paddock Johnson Partnership

Qualifying Petition: Yes, Number of Signatures: 40

Site Plan:

Development Plan designation:

Primarily Residential Area
Density and Design Guidelines Area

Planning History:

- Location: St Anselms Preparatory School, Redcourt, Devonshire Place, Oxton, Wirral, L43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Renewal of temporary planning permission for classrooms
Application No: APP/97/06884
Decision Date: 30/01/1998
Decision Type: Approve
- Location: Redcourt St Anselms Preparatory School, 7 Devonshire Place, Oxton, Wirral, CH43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Demolition of existing flat roof to eastern side block. Raising of side block walls & new timber flat roof over block. Internal alterations. New ramped access. Widen side entrance for vehicular access and new gates.
Application No: APP/09/05557
Decision Date: 08/07/2009
Decision Type: Approve
- Location: 7, Devonshire Place, , Oxton, Birkenhead, Wirral. CH43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of a school hall, gymnasium and dining room (renewal of permission no. APP/97/5733/E).
Application No: APP/01/07306
Decision Date: 25/01/2002
Decision Type: Approve
- Location: 7, Devonshire Place, , Oxton, Birkenhead, Wirral. L43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of a school hall, Gymnasium and dining room.
Application No: APP/97/05733
Decision Date: 04/07/1997
Decision Type: Approve
- Location: St Anselms Preparatory School, Redcourt, 7 Devonshire Place, Oxton, Wirral, CH43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Renewal of temporary planning permission for classrooms (variation of condition 1 of permission APP/2001/6078/E)
Application No: APP/02/07554
Decision Date: 17/04/2003
Decision Type: Approve
- Location: St Anselms Preparatory School, Redcourt, Devonshire Place, Oxton, Wirral, CH43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Renewal of temporary planning permission for classrooms.
Application No: APP/99/06885
Decision Date: 01/12/1999
Decision Type: Approve
- Location: Redcourt, St Anselms Preparatory School, 7 Devonshire Place, Oxton, Wirral L43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of a two storey extension toilets and entrance lobby

Application No: APP/98/05519
Decision Date: 24/06/1998
Decision Type: Approve

Location: St. Anselms-Redcourt, 7, Devonshire Place, Oxton. L43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Provision of pedestrian access.
Application No: APP/97/05575
Decision Date: 26/06/1997
Decision Type: Approve

Location: Redcourt, 7, Devonshire Place, Oxton. L43 4UP
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of two temporary classroom units.
Application No: APP/96/05244
Decision Date: 10/04/1996
Decision Type: Approve

Location: St Anselms Preparatory School, Redcourt, Devonshire Place, Oxton, Wirral,
CH43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Renewal of temporary planning permission for classrooms.
Application No: APP/01/06078
Decision Date: 03/08/2001
Decision Type: Approve

Location: Redcourt St Anselms Preparatory School, Devonshire Place, Oxton, Wirral,
CH43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of external playground equipment to rear.
Application No: APP/09/06020
Decision Date: 01/12/2009 10:45:40
Decision Type: Approve

Location: Redcourt St Anselms Preparatory Sch, DEVONSHIRE PLACE, OXTON,
CH43 1TX
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of a covered walkway.
Application No: APP/10/00442
Decision Date: 24/06/2010
Decision Type: Refuse

Location: St Anselms College ,Devonshire Rd ,Oxton L43 4UP
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Erection of School Hall
Application No: APP/78/10068
Decision Date: 27/07/1978
Decision Type: Conditional Approval

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:

1.0 WARD MEMBER COMMENTS

1.1 No comments received.

2.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

A petition of objection of 40 signatures and 27 letters have been received. Following amendments to the proposal, notification letters were resent on 26th May 2021 with an expiry date of 9th June 2021. No additional comments were received following renotification.

REPRESENTATIONS

A summary of objections raised;

- design
- scale
- massing
- overlooking
- impact of new build onto the listed building
- insufficient planting/potential harm from proposed trees
- outlook and loss of privacy
- insufficient parking provision
- density
- impact onto Bat roosts

CONSULTATIONS

Environmental Protection - Conditions requested

Highways/Traffic & Transportation Division - Conditions for removal of road markings

MEAS - Conditions requested

Conservation - Conditions requested

Housing Strategy - Details relating to Affordable Housing requirements

LLFA - No objection subject to conditions

3.1 Reason for referral to Planning Committee

- 3.1.1 The Council has received a Petition of Objection containing 40 signatures and 27 separate objection letters.

3.2 Site and Surroundings

- 3.2.1 The application site consists of the Grade II Listed building known as "Redcourt". It is accessed via Devonshire Place and was previously used as the school "Redcourt". The school closed in 2019 and had a pupil capacity of 171 places.

- 3.2.2 The building is Grade II Listed. The listing is described by Historic England as:

"House, now in use as school. 1876-9. Edmund Kirby for George Rae. Red brick with red sandstone dressings and plain tiled roof. Simplified Tudor style, with expressive asymmetrical planning. 3 storeys. Entrance front of 3 bays with moulded brick arched doorway to the right. Central advanced gabled bay with mullioned and transomed windows. Mullioned and transomed windows in left-hand bay with hipped dormer window over. To the right of the doorway, stack slightly corbelled out, with inscription stone set in: "Redcourt built in the years 1876-9 by George Rae. God's Providence mine inheritance." Right-hand return elevation has central stack and advanced gable to right, with 6-light mullioned and transomed windows to ground and 1st floor, 5-light mullioned window to attic. 4-light mullioned and transomed windows in left-hand bay, and narrow lights within the chimney to ground and 1st floor. Rear elevation with full-height canted bay to right, and asymmetrical gable to left. Paired 3-light mullioned windows in central section to 1st floor, 4-light mullioned window with transom to ground floor, and 4-light mullioned window to attic. Lower service wing to right. Subtle brick detailing throughout, with simply moulded string courses, and eaves stressed by deep bands of slightly stepped brickwork. Gable and axial stacks have star-shaped or octagonal shafts."

- 3.2.3 The site is located within a Primarily Residential Area. There are a variety of house types within the immediate vicinity, to the north and east are two-storey modern dwellings, to the south are larger properties and to the west adjoining the application site is a 3/4 storey building that has been converted into flats. The proposal is to convert the listed building and erect a new residential block on the existing hardstanding to the west of the school building. The large brick wall at the front of the site will be retained.

3.3 Proposed Development

- 3.3.1 The development proposals seek to obtain planning permission for the change of use from school to residential, for the refurbishment of Redcourt, a Grade II listed vacant school

building, into 15no. 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. Existing pre fabricated classrooms to the rear will be demolished and removed and it is also proposed to demolish a 2 storey modern extension to the side. The area to the rear of the school building will be laid out as amenity space and the frontage will be utilised to provide 14 parking spaces. The existing access will be utilised to provide access to the car park area.

- 3.3.2 Adjacent to Redcourt, it is proposed to build a 3/4 storey stand alone apartment block, comprising 30no. 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. The area to the front of the building will be laid out to provide 29 car parking spaces. The car parking will be predominantly hidden behind the existing brick wall to the site and the area will be softened with appropriate landscaping. An amenity space is provided to the side of the new building. There are 16 secure cycle stands proposed to the existing building and 32 stands proposed to the new build, the plans also show bin storage for both buildings, however these will be covered by a planning condition.
- 3.3.3 The supporting Design and Access Statement states that 20% of the units will be provided for affordable housing requirements.
- 3.3.4 The plans have been amended significantly from the original submission in order to improve the design of the new build and revise the car park layout to improve amenity for existing residents and provide more landscaping.
- 3.3.5 A separate application for listed building consent for works to the school building is also on this agenda, under reference LBC/20/01085.

3.4 Unitary Development Plan

3.4.1 Policy HS4: Criteria for New Housing Development

Proposals for new housing development on allocated sites and within the Primarily Residential Areas shown on the Proposals Map will be permitted subject to the proposal fulfilling all the following criteria:

(i) the proposal being of a scale which relates well to surrounding property, in particular with regard to existing densities and form of development;

(ii) the proposal not resulting in a detrimental change in the character of the area;

(iii) access and services being capable of satisfactory provision, particularly for off-street car parking areas and garages, and adequate vehicular access;

(iv) the provision of appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment which relates the proposed development to its surroundings, paying particular attention to the maintenance of existing natural features and vegetation in accordance with Policy GR5;

(v) the appropriate provision of design features which contribute to a secure environment and reduce the likelihood of crime;

(vi) incorporating provision for accessible public open space and children's play areas in accordance with Policy GR6; and

(vii) the provision of adequate individual private or communal garden space to each dwelling.

For all proposals whose main elevations are parallel, or nearly so, an adequate distance should be kept between habitable rooms in separate dwellings. In addition, where the gable end of one property fronts onto the rear elevation of another, then an adequate separation should be achieved.

3.4.2 Policy HS5: Density and Design Guidelines

In the following existing residential areas as outlined on the Proposals Map, in addition to

the criteria in Policy HS4, proposals for new residential development will be subject to controls over density and layout as follows:

1. Noctorum Ridge, Noctorum

Zone 2

Density range 25-30 dwellings per hectare in two or three storey houses. New purpose-built three storey blocks of flats will not be permitted, although the conversion of existing property into self-contained flats will be permitted subject to Policy HS13.

3.4.3 Policy HSG2: Affordable Housing

UDP Policy HSG2 enables the Council to seek the provision of affordable housing as part of new housing development. The normal requirement in this location is to provide for 20% affordable housing on-site subject to viability

3.4.4 Policy CH1: Development Affecting Listed Buildings and Structures

Development likely to affect a building or structure listed under Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 will be permitted where:

- (i) the proposals are of a nature and scale appropriate to retaining the character and design of the building or structure and its setting; and
- (ii) adequate provision is made for the preservation of the special architectural or historic features of the building or structure.

When granting consent, special regard will be given to matters of detailed design, to the nature, quality and type of materials proposed to be used, and to the need for the alteration or development proposed, in terms of securing the viable, long-term future of the building or structure.

3.4.5 Policy NC7: Species Protection

Development which would have an adverse effect on wildlife species protected by law will not be permitted unless the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the protection of the species can be secured through the use of planning conditions and/ or planning obligations.

3.4.6 Policy HS13: Self-Contained Flat Conversions

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.

3.4.7 Policy TR12: Requirements for Cycle Parking Policy

Where considered practicable and desirable by the Local Planning Authority, new development will be required to provide cycle parking facilities in line with the guidance below:

(i) retail, commercial, industrial premises and places of entertainment - one stand for every twenty car parking spaces:

(ii) educational establishments of secondary school level and above - one stand for every five students. In addition, for all educational establishments - one stand for every twenty staff car parking spaces;

(iii) flats - one stand for every flat, to be provided within the curtilage of the development;

(iv) railway stations/ park-and-ride - a minimum of ten stands at each station;

(v) bus stations - one stand for every two bus stands.

3.5 **Other Material Planning Considerations**

3.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration, in particular Sections 12, 15 and 16.

12. Achieving well designed places

The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Plans should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

3.5.2 Supplementary Planning Document 2: Designin for Self-Contained Flat Development and Conversions;

- Consideration of the design and position of development in context with neighbouring buildings, the townscape and landscape of the wider locality;
- Consideration of the scale, massing and height of the intended development in relation to adjoining buildings, topography, views, vistas and general height patterns in the area; and
- Respect for the character of the area.

A successful project should, therefore, be expected to:

- relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it;
- respect important views (from public vantage points);
- respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- use materials and building methods, which are as high or of higher quality as those used in existing buildings; and
- create new views and juxtapositions, which add to the variety and texture of the setting.

New buildings for self contained flats must be sited with regard to the layout, pattern and use of the spaces between other buildings in the surrounding areas.

Unless it can be demonstrated that privacy would not be unduly affected, 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.

Adequate landscaped garden space should be provided for the exclusive use of residents. This should be accessible to each flat and have a size, shape and location to be useful to occupiers. As a general guide, developers should ensure that at least one third of the whole site remains available as private landscaped communal areas. Driveways, garages, parking, servicing bin and cycle stores will not be considered to be part of this amenity area.

Surrounding buildings may have a standard pattern. This does not always prevent the

introduction of taller or lower buildings, but it will require a design approach that softens any change in height to ensure that the resulting building is at a scale proportionate to the surrounding area. All new proposals will be required to either protect or improve the existing roofscape.

The bulk of large buildings can be reduced through variations in the footprint, height and roof form of the building as well as the spacing in relation to neighbouring properties. For example, elevations and roofs with varied shapes can reduce the overall massing of a larger block of flats because the use of multiple components will not appear as big as a single large component. The design of large buildings as a single block is not likely to be acceptable.

3.5.3 Wirral Tree Strategy:

Planning applications will need to demonstrate that there will be enough room for the future growth of new and retained trees to ensure long term retention and avoid pressure from future occupiers to top, lop, or fell healthy trees due to safety concerns or effects on living conditions in order to obtain reasonable sunlight and unshaded external amenity space.

Planning applications will need to provide sufficient information to enable proper consideration of trees on and around the development site with tree survey and planting scheme with appropriate root protection zones undertaken to the latest British Standard. The selection of new species to be planted will use the “right tree for right place” approach.

3.5.4 Joint Waste Strategy Policy WM9

Sustainable Waste Management Design and Layout for New Development

The design and layout of new built developments and uses must, where relevant, provide measures as part

of their design strategy to address the following:

1. Facilitation of collection and storage of waste, including separated recyclable materials;
2. Provide sufficient access to enable waste and recyclable materials to be easily collected and transported for treatment;
3. Accommodation of home composting in dwellings with individual gardens;
4. Facilitate small scale, low carbon combined heat and power in major new employment and residential schemes, where appropriate.

3.6 **Assessment**

3.6.1 The main issues pertinent in the assessment of the proposal are;

- Principle of Development;
- Impact on Heritage Assets and Design;
- Highways;
- Ecology; and
- Amenity

3.7 Principle of Development:

3.7.1 The proposal is for a residential development within a Primarily Residential Area, and therefore the principle of the conversion of an existing building and erection of an additional residential building are considered acceptable, having regard to all relevant policies, as set out above. The proposal will also allow an existing vacant listed building to be brought back into use and this is supported in principle subject to the detailed considerations set out below.

3.7.2 Policy HS5 relates to density and design guidance in Noctorum Ridge. The application site is located in Zone 2. The policy does not allow for three storey blocks of flats within this location, however given the scale of the existing neighbouring buildings and the objectives of preserving the listed building, the scale and mass of the proposed building is in keeping with the properties either side and is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the setting of the listed building. Therefore it is considered that the proposal securing the continued use of the listed building outweighs the policy guidance for this area, taking into

account neighbouring scale and design.

3.8 Impact on Heritage Assets and Design:

3.8.1 Impact on the Listed Building

Para 193 of the NPPF requires great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets. This proposal seeks to reuse the existing grade II listed building and bring it back into a viable use, which is supported. The application for listed building consent, also on this agenda, sets out in more detail the consideration of the interventions required to use the building as 15 flats.

3.8.2 There are minimal external alterations to the listed building, the external changes include roof lights and a glazed lightwell which will serve one of the basement flats.

3.8.3 The works to the internal layout of the building are centred largely on the subdivision of the existing building into the self contained flats. This results in some areas with the use of suspended ceilings to allow for internal rooms such as hallways and bathrooms without harming the historic fabric. A window assessment has been produced to show which windows and casements are original, although many of the panes and closures have been replaced over the years likely due to damage and failure. Where appropriate, original detailed ceilings are to be retained, predominantly on the ground floor where the ceilings are considered to be an important historic feature with ornate detailing. The works to the listed building also include the removal of an existing, more modern annexe which is not considered to harm the overall site or the setting of the listed building. The changes to the external finish are supported and the conversion of the existing building from a school to residential allows for the continued use of the building. The mediation works in terms of protecting existing details and replacement with similar materials/window frames, for examples, are considered to have less than substantial harm

3.8.4 The works internally to the listed building are considered acceptable. The building was most recently used as a school and there are elements of the original historic fabric that have been lost, such as windows (original glazing and frames), as well as the buildings original layout. The works include retention of detail through false ceilings on some floors and, where possible, retention of ceilings so that the remaining historic fabric can be preserved. It is noted that to the basement and higher floors, the detailing is more limited but where possible has been retained. There is one original internal door to the whole building, this will be preserved and the replacement doors are to reflect/replicate the detailing of this original door.

3.8.5 Whilst overall the reuse of the asset will be beneficial to its significance, the application proposal will cause moderate adverse harm to the interior of the property. An internal record would be invaluable in reducing harm to the significance of the asset through the recording and identification of historic fabric for retention in the design. This will be secured by condition. On this basis, and having regard to the NPPF and UDP Policy CH1, the proposed works in relation to the Listed Building are considered acceptable.

3.8.6 Impact of New Build on Listed Building

The proposed new building sits between two large existing buildings, one of which is the Grade II Listed Redcourt. The scale of the proposed building reflects the established scale along this street scene setting of Devonshire Place. The external finish of the building has been amended so that it does not conflict with the external finish of Redcourt, the amendments to the external finish are considered to create a difference between the existing and proposed without resulting in harmful development particularly in connection with the setting of the listed building.

3.8.7 The building is four storeys along Devonshire Place and is set slightly further back than the two properties either side. This allows the original buildings either side including, most importantly, the listed building to dominate the street scene without the proposed building conflicting with the setting of the existing site. The principles which formed the basis for the design changes relate to the need to complement scale and form, rather than architectural detailing, and to provide a contemporary interpretation of the main elements

which collectively help to describe the character and appearance of Redcourt. A poorly formed pastiche would not be acceptable on the site, as it would reduce and dilute the quality of the scheme itself, and the setting of Redcourt.

- 3.8.8 The proposed design is clearly contemporary in appearance, whilst incorporating the sweeping roof pitches and animated elevations of Redcourt. The protruding bays, dormers, division into vertical bays and the varied window dimensions all help to provide movement and depth, and respond to the features of Redcourt in a respectful manner without crude imitation. The use of brick provides a continuity of texture, not just relating to the listed building, but also to the general area. The larger openings as part of the bay structures allow for open terraces which, whilst not reflecting the listed building, relate to current models of well-being and private amenity space to the apartments. They will also provide further levels of animation to the elevations. Similarly, the shifting planes help to give a richness to the form without relying on architectural ornamentation, and will establish strong shadow lines and depth across the main facade. The roof arrangement is complex, reflecting that of Redcourt, and terminates with a series of gables and ridges with both east-west and north-south orientation, leading to an interesting roof line which complements the area.
- 3.8.9 Although the brick is of a different tone to the red brick of Redcourt, it helps to establish the new build as a contemporary structure, and illustrates a clear distinction between this and the listed building. It also picks up on some of the lighter tones prevalent in the area.
- 3.8.10 The new build design contains features used within the immediate area such as bays, gables and ridges to the roof line that soften the relationship between the existing and proposed. The scale and mass of the proposed building is considered to complement the listed building rather than harm the setting of the building, the provision of additional residential units in this location allows the reuse of the heritage asset for an appropriate use which does not result in significant harm to the heritage asset or the setting of the listed building.
- 3.9 Highways:
- 3.9.1 The proposals are all contained within the private boundary of the development site and do not impact on the adopted highway to any great extent. The level of proposed in-curtilage parking is in accordance with the SPD4 standards. Following amendments to the layout the car parking scheme provides 43 spaces (there are 45 apartments proposed). This level of provision is considered appropriate for the proposed 1 and 2 bedroom properties. Cycle parking is provided within curtilage and each apartment will have access to secure cycle parking facilities, with 48 cycle spaces shown on the plan. No additional details as to the type/covered have been provided at this stage, but this will be secured through a condition. This level of provision is in accordance with Policy TR12: Cycle Parking Requirements, and is therefore also considered appropriate. The provision of cycle storage for each apartment will help to encourage the use of bicycles for short trips, and will help to make linked trips to Birkenhead Central station and the town centre an attractive option for residents.
- 3.9.2 The proposed access points to the two car parking areas (containing 14 spaces for the existing building, and 29 spaces for the new building) are sufficiently wide so that two vehicles are able to pass one another and satisfactory turning areas are provided. Servicing to the development can be undertaken from the adopted highway of Devonshire Place without causing a significant obstruction to through travelling traffic and is therefore satisfactory.
- 3.9.3 It is noted that adjacent to the development there are existing road markings and traffic signs associated with the former School use, and these items will be required to be removed as part of the necessary off-site highway works. It is considered unlikely that the proposals will generate a significant level of traffic on the network when considering the buildings former use as a School and it is therefore considered to have no material impact on the highway.
- 3.10 Ecology:

- 3.10.1 Bat roosts have been identified within the survey submitted by the agent, and there is also potential for breeding birds near the site. Further mitigation and protection is to be secured through conditions.
- 3.10.2 There will be no trees removed as part of the development. A comprehensive landscaping scheme has been submitted as part of the application and will result in a significant increase in landscaping and green space in comparison to the current situation. There will be a net increase in tree canopy cover, which is in keeping with the requirements of the Wirral Tree Strategy.
- 3.11 Amenity:
- 3.11.1 New Build
To the rear of the plot the new build drops down in height to three storey and this will limit any potential harm from scale and massing to the houses to the rear of the application site.
- 3.11.2 The proposed new build is considered to meet the Councils interface distances both within the site and to neighbouring properties. To the north, the building will be 38m from the houses opposite on Devonshire Place, to the south/rear, the building (blank elevation) will be approximately 26m from the rear elevation of established houses on Beresford Road. To the west, the building will be between 17m (blank elevation) and 21m (window to window) to 13 Devonshire Place. Within the site, the proposed building will be 14m from the west elevation of the listed building.
- 3.11.3 The revisions to the design are considered to take into account the importance of the setting of Redcourt and create a building that does not compete with the scale or appearance of the listed building, and includes substantial areas of landscaping. This ensures that the site as a whole provides significant outdoor amenity space, predominantly to the south of the two buildings. The car parking is proposed to the front (north) of the site and will be set behind the existing high red brick boundary wall. The introduction of soft landscaping around the existing and proposed building softens the setting of the two buildings and reduces the visual impact of the car parking, with much of the car parking area screened by the existing boundary wall.
- 3.11.4 The concerns regarding the car park and the impact of the residential development on neighbouring properties has been raised by local residents. The area is considered to be relatively busy at present due to the impact of existing schools along Devonshire Place, and the roadway currently has restrictions that were installed to reduce the impact and improve highway safety in relation to the building when it was in use as a school. The change of use of the site from a school to residential use will not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts on residential amenity.
- 3.11.5 Due to the amendments to landscaping and design there has been a loss of two parking spaces from the original proposed plans. The previous car park layout proposed parking spaces right next to new residents windows - this has now been amended to avoid this.
- 3.11.6 The design of the site as a whole allows for an acceptable level of useable private amenity space within the grounds, most of which will be to the south side of the buildings and will therefore benefit from good levels of sunlight. It is also noted that the site is within 600m of Birkenhead Park (measured along the public highway). The existing landscaping of the site is low level, there are no substantial trees within the application site (although neighbouring properties have large trees close to the boundary), and the proposal to introduce additional planting is welcome in terms of improving the visual setting of the site as a whole.
- 3.11.7 The layout of the internal new build is considered acceptable, each flat is at least 95% of the Nationally Described Space Standards, and all flats have appropriate outlook from habitable rooms. The proposal is therefore considered to provide acceptable living standards for future occupiers.
- 3.11.8 Listed Building
The overall scheme utilises existing window openings, with some flats benefitting from

additional outlook/light from new roof lights. The overall layout and outlook from the listed building is considered acceptable. The required interface distances are met, and there are no new “true” windows inserted so the outlook and fenestrations will remain as existing.

- 3.11.9 In terms of the layout of the building and the flats, the converted building proposes to utilise the existing main entrance as a shared entrance point, the existing staircase will be the main central access and retained, and all units will be accessed via the central staircase.
- 3.11.10 Unit 12 in the basement will be served mostly via proposed lightwells, although it does also benefit from an existing window that is above ground level. In addition, Unit 11 at second floor is a one-bedroom flat where the bedroom will be served by roof lights. The main living area has a large existing window. Whilst the use of lightwells and rooflights as the main source of light and outlook for habitable windows is not normally acceptable, it is considered that the benefits of securing the continued use of the listed building, and making the best of existing spaces within the listed building, is sufficient justification to allow this layout in this instance.
- 3.12 Other:
- 3.12.1 Affordable Housing - The location of the proposal falls within 20% affordable housing need, the supporting statement submitted with the application states that 20% of the units within the existing/converted building and the proposed building will provide 20% affordable housing. This therefore complies with policy and will be secured through a Section 106 agreement.
- 3.12.2 The application was accompanied by a Drainage Strategy to assess how the development would manage any potential local flood risk. This has been assessed by the Lead Local Flood Authority and has been accepted, subject to the attached conditions.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the recommendation to grant Planning Permission subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 agreement to secure 20% affordable units 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 scheme as a whole is considered to sit well within the established street scene, the increase in soft landscaping and habitat/species protection is welcomed alongside the preservation of the Grade II Listed Building, the development is therefore acceptable having regard to the local Council Policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Recommended Decision: **Approve subject to Section 106 Agreement**

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 25 May 2021 and listed as follows: 20007-112-A; 20007-113-K; 20007-110-D; 20007-111-D; 20007-101-J; 20007-102-D; 20007-106-C; 20007-120; 20007-121; 01.0 A; 02.0 B; 06.0 B; 05.0 B; 03.0 B; 11.0 A; 10.0 B; and received on 2 June 2021 and listed as follows: D177.001 B & D177.002 B.

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

3. Before any construction commences with respect to the new build element of the scheme, samples of the facing 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 and CH1 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

4. Before work commences on the different window treatments types R, S1, R1, N, N1 & N2 as indicated within the Window Strategy (dated 17.03.21), additional detailed cross section drawings (scale 1:2 or 1:5 or similar) shall be cross referenced to the Window schedule in Appendix A and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved drawings shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the significance of the heritage asset to comply with Policy CH1 of the Wirral's UDP and the NPPF.

5. Before work commences on types 1, 2, 3 and 5 ceiling treatment as indicated on Drawing No. 20007-120 (dated 17.03.21), detailed cross section drawings (scale 1:2 or 1:5 or similar) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved drawings shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the significance of the heritage asset to comply with Policy CH1 of the Wirral's UDP and the NPPF.

6. As recommended in the Phase II Site Investigation Report accompanying the application, no development shall take place until a suitable remediation scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include the proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, and a description and programme of the works to be undertaken including the verification plan. As a minimum, the scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to its intended use. The approved remediation scheme shall be implemented and a verification report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to the development (or relevant phase of development) being brought into use.

In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development on the part of the site affected must be halted and a risk assessment carried out and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where unacceptable risks are found remediation and verification schemes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These shall be implemented prior to the development (or relevant phase of development) being brought into use.

Reason To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

7. All School Road Markings and associated traffic signs and posts associated with the development site must be removed and replaced with No waiting at any time (double yellow line) restrictions at both entrance points. Details of the scheme together with a programme for the completion of the works must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No part of the development shall be brought into use until the required highway improvement works have been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

8. No tree felling, scrub clearance, vegetation management, ground clearance and/or building works are to take place during the period 1 March to 31 August inclusive. If it is necessary to undertake works during the bird breeding season then buildings, trees, scrub, and vegetation are to be checked first by an appropriately experienced ecologist to ensure no breeding birds are present. If present, details of how they will be protected are required to be submitted for approval.

Reason; The protection of species and habitat having regard to UDP Policy NC7.

9. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of bat boxes to include number, type and location on an appropriately scaled plan as well as timing of installation, has been provided for approval and implemented in accordance with those details.

Reason; Protection of species having regard to Wirral UDP Policy NC7.

10. Prior to installation of the bat boxes, details of location and type shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority, in connection with the mitigation submitted within section 4 of the Bat Emergence Survey Reports (details below) they shall be installed following completion of works and prior to first occupancy.

Common Pipistrelle bats were present, therefore appropriate habitat compensation for this would be two bat boxes erected on the site. Mitigation will include:

- Two x 2F Schwegler Crevice Bat Boxes (or similar) to be erected onto the exterior of the newly converted building following completion of the works. These will be erected more than 3 metres above ground, facing south, south-west or south-east.

Reasons; Mitigation measures for protected species having regard to Wirrals UDP Policy NC7.

11. Prior to commencement of works to the listed building, the Local Planning Authority must be provided with a copy of a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorising the specified development to go ahead or until the local planning authority has been provided with confirmation in writing that the site has been registered under the mitigation class licence to allow low impact work on bat roosts (CL21) and the structures provided as mitigation should be retained as bat roosts in Perpetuity.

Reason; Impact onto protected species and habitat having regard to Wirral UDP Policy NC7.

12. An information leaflet shall be included in all sales packs for the proposed dwellings, informing residents of the presence and importance of European sites and how residents can help protect them, including a 'responsible user code.' A copy of the leaflet must be provided to the Council for review and approval prior to first occupation of any part of the development site.

Reason: Impact onto designated sites having regard to the NPPF.

13. No development shall take place until the applicant has submitted a written programme of archaeological building investigation and recording for approval in writing by the local planning authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved programme.

Reason: To safeguard any archaeological interest of the site and to accord with Policy CH1 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

14. No development shall take place until a Site Waste Management Plan, confirming how demolition and construction waste will be recovered and re-used on the site or at other sites, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Plan shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development would include the re-use of limited resources, and to ensure that the amount of waste for landfill is reduced to accord with policies WM8 and WM9 of the Waste Local Plan.

15. Prior to the commencement of development a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The provisions of the Construction Management Plan shall be implemented in full during the period of construction and shall not be varied unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to accord with the NPPF.

16. Detailed drawings shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced to the new building to indicate the finished site and ground floor levels intended at the completion of the development in relation to the existing site levels and the levels of the adjoining land and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the details so approved.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactorily sited and designed in relation to adjacent development.

17. On insertion the windows hereby approved at ground, first and second floor to the most southern facing elevation which are secondary windows to the flats within the new building 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; To protect the privacy of existing neighbours rear gardens having regards to Wirral UDP Policy HS4

18. Prior to the first occupation of the development arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse, including recycling facilities, 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.

19. Prior to first occupation of the flats, details of secure covered cycle parking and/or storage facilities must 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.

20. Before work commences to the listed building in relation to the ceiling treatment; for type 4 ceiling treatment as indicated on Drawing No. 20007-120 (dated 17.03.21), further investigation is required to confirm that no ornate ceiling exists; documentation and photographic evidence. For avoidance of doubt a detailed cross section drawings (scale 1:2 or 1:5 or similar) shall be submitted confirming type 4 ceiling treatment. Evidence and

drawings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved drawings shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the significance of the heritage asset to comply with Policy CH1 of the Wirral's UDP and the NPPF.

21. Before the new fire doors identified on Drawing No. 20007-121(dated 17.03.21) are installed, further vertical and horizontal cross sections drawings (scale 1:2 or 1:5 or similar) of the architrave surround and door shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved drawings shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the significance of the heritage asset to comply with Policy CH1 of the Wirral's UDP and the NPPF.

22. No development shall commence until detailed plans and particulars of the sustainable drainage system, in the form of a 'Confirmed / Final' Sustainable Drainage Strategy, (based on the 'Below Ground Drainage Outline Drainage Strategy' drawing reference S2 / 220-127 / RSM / AJP / XX / 00 / DR / C / 3010 / rev P02 dated 21 July 2020 / The Alan Johnston Partnership), for the management and disposal of surface water from the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority.

The surface water discharge rate from the site will be restricted to no more than 5 l/s and details of the 'Confirmed / Final' Sustainable Drainage Strategy must meet the requirements specified in the Terms of Condition and meet all requirements, including submission requirements, of Wirral Council's 'Sustainable Drainage Technical Guidance.'

A Construction Phase Surface Water Management Plan and a timetable for completion (including details of any phasing if applicable) must be submitted prior to commencement.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory sustainable drainage facilities are provided to serve the site in accordance with the Paragraphs 163 and 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework, House of Commons Written Statement 161 for Sustainable Drainage Systems

23. The development hereby permitted by this planning permission, including all components of the sustainable drainage system, shall be carried out in accordance with the approved final Sustainable Drainage Strategy, including any phasing embodied within, and maintained in perpetuity in accordance with an agreed Operation and Maintenance Plan, to be submitted for each development phase, approved by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority.

The approved drainage scheme shall be fully constructed prior to occupation in accordance with the approved details, phasing and timetable embodied within the approved final Sustainable Drainage Strategy, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority. 'As built' drainage design / layout drawings and a final Operation and Maintenance Plan, confirming asset details and maintenance arrangements, shall be submitted to the Lead Local Flood Authority, in accordance with any approved phasing, prior to occupation.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory sustainable drainage facilities are provided to serve the site in accordance with the Paragraphs 163 and 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework, House of Commons Written Statement 161 for Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Further Notes for Committee:

1. Traffic and Transportation would recommend that the current waiting restrictions at the Claughton Green junction, which are associated with School parking (the current timeplate

is Mon Fri 0800 to 0930 and 1500 to 1630) are also amended to 'No Waiting at Any Time' to prevent any development traffic from impacting at the junction.

The necessary amendments to the existing Traffic regulation orders and the associated works to remove the associated School road markings and signage and the provision of new road markings would need to be funded and installed entirely at the applicant/developer's expense and at nil cost to the LHA.

2. Terms of Condition 22

Final Detailed Sustainable Drainage Design to comply with DEFRA's technical standards for sustainable drainage systems and the SuDS Manual and include:

- Drawings to include:
 - o Final layout of roads, buildings, finished floor levels, external levels and boundaries
 - o Final layout of sewers; outfalls; SuDS; flow control details (must match flow control in calculations) hatched above ground storage areas with depths indicated
 - o Overland flow paths designed for exceedance of the 1 in 100 plus climate change event, system blockages, etc. An impermeability of 100% for the whole site area (including soft landscaped areas) should be used in all cases when determining exceedance flows
 - o Invert levels (to OS datum), manhole and pipe sizes; pipe gradients; SuDS; emergency overflows and annotation that correlates to the hydraulic calculations.
- Hydraulic modelling for final drainage strategy to include:
 - o System performance for following return periods; 1, 30, 100 plus appropriate climate change allowance
 - o Demonstration of sufficient storage for the 1 in 100 year (plus climate change) critical rainfall event with a limiting discharge rate as stated in the above referenced drainage strategy
 - o Design criteria summary, Full network details table, pipe and manhole schedules, contributing area summary, control/storage structure details, results summary print outs
 - o Flow control device design calculations demonstrating compliance with limiting discharge rate as stated in the above referenced drainage strategy at the correct design head
 - o Volumetric runoff co-efficient (Cv) should be set to '1'
 - o Sensitivity checking for climate change at 40% if lower allowance used
- Timetable demonstrating completed SuDS construction prior to occupation
- Construction phase surface water management plan

Last Comments By: 09/06/2021 13:18:30

Expiry Date: 17/12/2020