

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

13th February 2013

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**PLANNING APPLICATION 2012/307/FUL**

**ERECTION OF 14 NO. APARTMENTS AND 3 NO. RETAIL UNITS**

**150 EVESHAM STREET, REDDITCH**

**APPLICANT: MR G WARING  
EXPIRY DATE: 11TH MARCH 2013**

**WARD: CENTRAL**

**(See additional papers for Site Plan)**

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**Site Description**

The site is a large corner plot located at the Evesham Street / Ludlow Road / Mount Pleasant road junction. The site is steeply sloping with levels falling away from south to north along Evesham Street and with levels falling away more steeply from east to west in the direction of Oakly Road, such that the south east corner of the site is the highest point within the site.

The plot has been derelict since 2008 when the site's original building (known as 'Park House') was demolished.

**Proposal Description**

Permission is sought to erect a single block containing 14 no. flats and 3 no. retail units. The retail units would be located at the ground floor level, with the residential units being accommodated over the ground, first and second floor levels.

The lowest level with existing vehicular access would be used for undercroft parking for 14 no. vehicles and a services and storage area.

The Evesham Street pavement level would be the main access point for the residential units, giving access to 4 no. one bedroomed ground floor flats at ground floor level. Access to the three small retail units proposed would be off the Evesham Street public footpath. The shops would be at the Ludlow Road end of the site. A flat walkway behind low level planting and railings would afford easy access suitable for ambulant disabled persons.

The first floor of the building would accommodate 5 no. one bedroomed flats and 1 no. two bedroomed flat. The second floor would accommodate 2 no. one bedroomed flats and 2 no. two bedroomed flats.

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Flats to the ground and second floors would have rear, west facing balcony terraces with a trellis division/privacy panel to separate the units from each other. Flats on the intermediate floor would have 'Juliet' type balconies with inwards opening French windows.

The building would be constructed from a traditional facing red brick with reconstituted stone quoins to the corners of the building. The roof would be pitched and hipped with plain tiles.

A grassed and landscaped communal amenity area would be provided beyond the rear wall of the building within the western half of the site.

Vehicular access to the undercroft parking area would be via Ludlow Road.

## **Relevant Key Policies**

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

[www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

[www.wmra.gov.uk](http://www.wmra.gov.uk)

[www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)

[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

## ***National Planning Policy***

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## ***Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Worcestershire County Structure Plan (WCSP)***

Whilst the RSS and WCSP still exist and form part of the Development Plan for Redditch, they do not contain any policies that are directly related to or relevant to this application proposal. Therefore, in light of recent indications at national level that Regional Spatial Strategies and Structure Plans are likely to be abolished in the near future, it is not considered necessary to provide any detail at this point in relation to the RSS, or the WCSP.

## ***Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3***

CS.6	Implementation of Development
CS.7	The Sustainable Location of Development
E(TCR).4	Peripheral Zone
B(BE).13	Qualities of Good Design
C(T).12	Parking Standards

## ***Supplementary Planning Guidance / Supplementary Planning Documents***

Encouraging Good Design

Planning obligations for education contributions

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Open space provision

The application site lies within the Town Centre Peripheral Zone.

## ***Relevant Site planning History***

None.

## **Public Consultation Responses**

### **Responses in favour**

One letter received stating that the proposed development should be considered favourably since the new development would improve a derelict site and provide much needed residential units in a central / near to town centre area.

### **Responses against**

Two letters received in objection to the proposals. Comments summarised as follows:

- Proposal would result in loss of light to nearby properties
- Insufficient parking being provided
- No need for further retail units in this area
- Access to the site is poor
- Traffic will increase in an already congested area near to a junction and main bus route

One letter has been received which comments that the applicant should demonstrate the sustainable credentials of the scheme. The letter also comments that monies available under the S106 planning obligation should be spent on specific projects within the central ward. Officers would comment that the letter has been passed to the relevant department within the Council which is responsible for allocating such monies, so that the contents of the letter can be taken into consideration if permission is granted for the scheme.

## **Consultee Responses**

### ***County Highway Network Control***

No objection subject to conditions concerning access, turning and parking.

### ***Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health)***

Comments awaited.

### ***Severn Trent Water***

No objection. Drainage details to be subject to agreement with Severn Trent.

### ***WCC Educational Services***

Confirm that a financial contribution towards education provision would be required in this case.

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## **Assessment of Proposal**

The key issues for consideration in this case are considered to be:

- a) The layout and appearance of the proposals
- b) The impact of the development upon nearby residential amenities
- c) The impact of the proposals on highway safety
- d) Sustainability
- e) Planning Obligation required

The site is located within the Town Centre Peripheral Zone. Under the terms of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, such areas are suitable for a variety and mix of uses including residential, commercial and leisure uses. In principle therefore, the proposed mix of residential and commercial (retail) uses at ground floor level would be wholly appropriate having regard to Policy E(TCR).4 of the Local Plan.

## **Layout and appearance**

The slope of the site in two directions and the sharp difference in levels across the plot, has dictated the design of the building in terms of points of access, parking and the location of the retail units.

The most prominent, Evesham Street facing elevation would be three storeys in height. Due to the sloping nature of Evesham Street, the height of the block at this point would vary between approximately 11.5 to 12.5 metres in height. The building would be taller than that of the nearest existing building – a flat roofed structure (144 to 148 Evesham Street) which is 9 metres tall and sited immediately beyond the northern boundary of the site. However, street-scene drawings submitted by the applicant's agent demonstrate to your officers that the building would sit comfortably within the plot, given that the properties 4-6 Mount Pleasant (to the south) are taller, at 11.5 metres to ridge and where ground levels are raised some 2.5 metres above the sites southern boundary.

The appearance of the proposed development including its elevational treatment is considered to respect the local vernacular, that of older (probably Edwardian) brick built two and three storey buildings. The Evesham Street principal elevation has been recessed at various points. This, together with the use of stone window heads, sills and quoins, break up and relieve the buildings massing.

Separation distances between the proposed development and other existing built form together with amenity space requirements for future occupiers have been examined and are considered to be acceptable having regards to policy guidance in this respect.

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## Impact on residential amenity

The proposed development by virtue of its siting and scale would not have an overbearing or visually intimidating impact upon nearby properties. A distance well in-excess of the Council's minimum (22 metres) would exist between rear facing windows serving the proposed apartments and the terraced dwellings of Oakly Road to the west. Officers are satisfied therefore that daylight to existing habitable rooms would not be prejudiced and that there would be no loss of privacy caused by any overlooking effect.

Clearly many forms of new built development have the potential to disturb and inconvenience nearby occupiers during the construction phase. In the case of permission being granted for this development, it is recommended that hours of operation on site be restricted by condition. Action can be taken separately and immediately by Environmental Health Officers under the Environmental Protection Act if a statutory nuisance is considered to exist.

## Highways and Access

The proposed development would provide a total of 14 car parking spaces within the basement area of the building. This provision would accord with highway standards and with Policy C(T).12 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3. County Highway Network Control has no objection to the use of the vehicular access from Ludlow Road together with the proposed car parking arrangements and provision. Conditions are recommended which are considered reasonable to impose.

In order for resident access to comply with Building Regulations requirements for both able and disabled access, the front doors to the ground floor flats and stair access to the upper levels would be via a flat ramp from the Ludlow Road end of the site. At the Town Centre end of the ramp, steps are to be provided down to the sloping Evesham Street pavement. Pedestrian access to the building is considered to be acceptable.

## Sustainability

The location of the site is considered to be highly sustainable, being situated as it is, within close proximity to local amenities including shops, the bus and train station, reducing reliance on the motor car.

Secure storage for bicycles would be provided within the scheme enabling their use for practical or leisure purposes.

The site is currently derelict. A greater area of green open space would be created as part of the scheme and permeable surfacing would be used in the creation of external hard surfaces to benefit surface water drainage on site. Rainwater harvesting would be employed for use on soft landscape watering. The apartments would enjoy an elevated position with west facing rear habitable rooms benefiting from solar gain.

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## Planning Obligation

The size of the proposed development is above the policy threshold for requiring contributions which should be sought via a planning obligation which in this case would cover:

- A contribution towards playing pitches, play areas and open space in the area, due to increased demand/requirement from future residents in compliance with the SPD
- A contribution towards County education facilities. The County have confirmed that there is a need in this area to take contributions towards three schools: Holyoaks Field First School, Birchensale Middle and Trinity High School

The planning obligation has now been completed

## Conclusion

The proposed development would accord with policy criteria and objectives and now that the planning obligation has been completed to the satisfaction of officers, a favourable recommendation can be made.

## Recommendation

**That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions and informatives as summarised below:**

- 1 Development to commence within 3 years
- 2 Plans approved specified
- 3 Landscaping to be submitted and approved
- 4 Landscaping to be carried out in accordance with details approved
- 5 Hours of work during construction to be limited
- 6 Access turning and parking provision
- 7 Cycle storage provision details
- 8 Permeable hardsurfacing to be used
- 9 Sustainability statement. Further details to be submitted

## Informatives

- 1 Reason for approval
- 2 Drainage
- 3 LPA acted in a positive and proactive manner

## **Procedural matters**

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the recommendation is that permission be granted subject to a planning obligation. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.