

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

17th January 2018

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**Planning Application 17/01366/FUL**

**Conversion of existing 3 Bed dwelling to two 2 Bed flats with ancillary parking**

**271 Birchfield Road, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 4NB.**

**Applicant: Mr J Zollman  
Ward: West Ward**

**(see additional papers for site plan)**

The author of this report is Sarah Willetts, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881607 Email: Sarah.willetts@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

**Site Description**

This particular site relates to a detached single dwelling located on the southern side of Birchfield Road in Redditch. The property is a traditional bay fronted house. To the side of the house is the access driveway which extends to the back of the property where there are a collection of outbuildings extending into the area at the rear. From the frontage land levels drop substantially by over 5m by the end of the plot. The property is located within a well established residential area of Redditch.

**Proposal**

Conversion of Three Bedroom Dwelling into two 2 Bedroom Flats with ancillary off road parking

**Relevant Policies:**

**Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2: Settlement Hierarchy

Policy 3: Development Strategy

Policy 5: Effective and Efficient use of Land

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

**Others**

SPG - Encouraging Good Design

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

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**Relevant Planning History**

197/036/FUL	Erection of Store Room And Garage	05.03.1987
1997/116/FUL	Garage	15.05.1997
1995/027/S73	Vary Two Conditions Of 92/042 - To Store Building Materials On A Permanent Basis	10.03.1995
1992/042/FUL	Temporary Storage Of Pet Supplies	26.03.1992

**Consultations**

**Highways Redditch** - No Comments Received To

**Tree Officer**– No comments received to date

**Drainage Engineers**– No comments received to date

**Severn Trent** – No comments received to date

**Public Consultation Response**

13 Individual letters sent:

4 Detailed responses received made with reference to the following:-

- There is speeding traffic along this section of road, despite there being 2 nurseries, 2 OAP facilities, 1 place of worship and it being a pedestrian route to at least 3 schools (Webheath, Mount Carmel and Walkwood) in this regard, and accepting that there are double yellow lines on this side of the Birchfield Road, can you provide comfort that assessment to have been made to check what implications this application will have on the road and it's numerous users?
- The plans do not make clear how many parking spaces are provided... with 8 dwellings in total, I have an expectation of 8 plus at least 3 visitors... without this provision then on street parking (whether illegal on double yellows or legal but dangerous on the main road ) will be a substantial issue

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- There are no landscaping provisions with this application... there are issues of maintaining the large tree roadside on the site and also the ivy and other plants that continue to over grow and infest our properties from this site along the boundary. I would request that the application is qualified by a requirement to undertake such maintenance both during the works and thereafter
- Unsure whether the flats are to be let privately or sold and whether there are any restrictions on the same
- Inadequate information posted regarding restrictions on the development phase to include but not limited to working hours, noise impact, parking for builders, delivery and collection of building materials. The concern is the impact on pedestrian, cycle and vehicular use of Birchfield Road considering the current high volume of traffic, and existing parking restrictions marked out with double yellow lines and cycle lanes, which are regularly ignored by road users on a daily basis.
- 271 Birchfield Road may be being used as 2 separate flats based on current activity in the property, and that this application ref 17/01366/FUL is retrospective permission to split to 2 separate flats - please seek to gain access and verify that the house is being used correctly and not already as 2 flats
- Environmental impact: there is no indication who will maintain the landscaping, with maintenance to existing trees, hedgerows and wall adjoining to Noonan Close (recommended a full structural survey on this boundary wall as the impact from groundworks and development to residential dwellings can have a detrimental impact
- Potential for overlooking from development – Right to enjoy my home and garden under the Human rights Act and not to be adversely overlooked. Additionally, Article 8 of the Human Rights Act states that a person has the substantive right to respect for their private and family life. Roof lights will create light into bedroom windows.
- Drainage issues historically and ongoing in the area. Concerned this will increase this in terms of foul Drainage STW are aware of this issue.

**Assessment of Proposal**

**Principle**

The house is located within a well established residential area of Redditch and the principle of residential development is considered acceptable. The property is in residential use and this will continue.

**Design/Appearance**

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Policies 1 and 40 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 require development to compliment the local surroundings. The site is located on a main route which is a highly sustainable location. The application site does propose any major changes to the front or rear of the property and therefore the character of the location remains unaffected.

The current single property is proposed to be converted without any significant changes to the shell of the property. From an external appearance point of view, both the front and rear elevations will remain virtually unchanged. Unit A (Ground floor) will be accessed from the current front door and unit B (First floor) will have a separate access from a side door, which will be moved forward to allow access to the existing staircase.

Included in this proposal is a small element of a single storey building which appears to have been used as the garage. The garage doors will be removed and a new door and two windows will be inserted. Confirmation is awaited regarded the use of this area and adjacent roof window.

The overall finished design of the building is considered acceptable and may be adequately controlled by the imposition of conditions.

**Amenity**

Concerns have been raised in terms of overlooking and the perception of being overlooked. Particular reference is made to roof lights in the smaller outbuilding. It is accepted that there will be changes (change to residential in nature) on the site as the buildings to the rear are also proposed for conversion under the prior notification system however as there is currently a dwelling on the site, there is no perceived issue with overlooking or privacy from the conversion of the house. There appear to be changes to the current garage and part of an adjacent roof. Given the difference in levels the imposition of a suitably worded condition will ensure that no additional windows can be inserted and the current arrangement can be controlled to ensure no direct overlooking may occur.

**Access/parking**

The layout plan shows 2 proposed parking spaces sited close to Birchfield Road. Access will be via the current access. It is noted that that current access presently serves the house and storage units to the rear of the site and comments are awaited from the highways authority to consider the changes in light the previous mixed use and the associated impacts of parking for the new units.

**Trees landscaping**

Concerns have been raised with regard to landscaping on the existing and proposed site. Encouraging Good Design SPG states *'Developments should be encouraged to retain existing trees and landscaping on the site as this will help enhance the development'*. There are two large trees are shown on the layout plan which appear to be within an

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existing planting bed. The layout provided appears to show these trees will remain. Comments are awaited from the tree officer with regard to the retention of the trees and whether the parking area will be within the zone of influence of the trees and therefore any likely impact. The retention of the trees on the frontage will ensure a softer appearance to the development within the street scene.

On the layout a formal amenity space has been laid out. This extends to 52m<sup>2</sup>. Encouraging Good Design SPG states 35m<sup>2</sup> is required for flats and therefore the proposed spaces accords with adopted policy P40 and the supplementary guidance.

**Drainage**

It is understood that although the site does not fall within a flood zone there is an issue with the drainage of foul sewage. There have been events where sewage has backed up in the local system and flooded gardens in the area. Whilst the LPA have not record of this the application suggests connections to the main sewer. In the case of this application, one additional unit. This would be subject to permission from Severn Trent and is not a reason in itself to turn down the application.

**Other Issues**

Concerns have been raised with regard whether the property has already been subdivided however the Local Planning Authority hold no evidence to suggest this is the case. If this were a retrospective application, Government guidance requires the same assessment in any case.

Other comments relate to whether the property will be let or sold however this is not a planning matter or material to the conversion of the house.

Members should also note that a Prior Notification Application has been submitted on land abutting the rear of the application site. This proposal relates to the conversion of outbuildings to residential use and is currently pending consideration (17/01374/CUPRIOR). Matters raised by that proposal are separate to the proposal under consideration as part of this development.

**Conclusion**

The conversion of the house into 2 separate flats would continue to respect the character of this sustainable location. The layout and design of the units is considered acceptable and subject to the imposition of suitably worded conditions this change of use is recommended for approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That having regard to the development plan and to all other material**

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considerations, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

**Conditions**

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.  
Reason: - In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

1838.01A  
4276-03  
1838.02B

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to the commencement of development the applicant shall provide a full hard and soft landscaping plan for approval by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar sizes or species unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.

Reason: - In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy 40 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4

**Procedural matters**

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because two (or more) objections have been received.