

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

15th September 2021

Planning Application 21/01056/FUL

9no New Dwellings, built over 2 Storeys over existing roof of Unit 2

Unit 2, Millsborough House, Ipsley Street, Smallwood, Redditch, B98 7AL

Applicant: Mr D Clarke
Ward: Central Ward

(see additional papers for site plan)

The case officer of this application is Steven Edden, Principal Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 548474 Email: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Councillor Imran Altaf as Ward Member has requested that this application be considered by Planning Committee rather than be determined under delegated powers

Site Description

Millsborough House is a large, predominately commercial building bounded by Ipsley Street (to the north), Millsborough Road (to the east), Summer Street (to the south) and Lodge Road (to the west).

The site contains substantial, generally three storey brick buildings which were formerly in use by Herbert Terry & Sons Ltd when Millsborough House was built in 1912 as a spring production factory. A large central courtyard provides car parking and access to the various units. The courtyard is accessed via Millsborough Road through a vehicular and pedestrian tunnel.

Unit 2, the subject of this planning application is a steel framed, three storey building with substantial brickwork external walls and large buttressing piers. The steel frame supports substantial timber intermediate floors and a lightweight steel truss roof.

Millsborough House is designated as a building of historical interest within the Councils 'Schedule of Buildings of Local Interest 2009'.

The site is located within what was (formerly) the Town Centre Peripheral Zone as designated within the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3. When the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 was adopted in 2017, the 'Peripheral Zone' designation was removed. Millsborough House now falls within the 'expanded' Town Centre boundary as defined within the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4.

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Background

In the 1970's, Millsborough House was purchased by G&C Properties Ltd, a predecessor of the applicant company following the decision of Herbert Terry & Sons to vacate the premises. The former spring factory was subdivided into multiple units for letting to small businesses who predominantly occupy the lower floors.

The site has been purchased relatively recently by the current applicant who is in the process of implementing permission 2014/321/FUL which granted consent to change the use of the vacant first and second floors of Unit 2 to create 14 no. two bedroomed flats (7 flats to the first and 7 to the second floor).

Proposal Description

This is a full planning application for the erection of nine, 2 bedroomed residential flats over two storeys above Unit 2, Millsborough House in the form of a 'roof box' design.

No car parking would be allocated to the occupiers of the proposed 9 flats given the sites sustainable Town Centre location.

Relevant Policies:

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 4: Housing Provision

Policy 5: Effective and Efficient use of Land

Policy 30: Town Centre and Retail Hierarchy

Policy 31: Regeneration for the Town Centre

Policy 37: Historic Buildings and Structures

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

Others:

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Redditch High Quality Design SPD

Relevant Planning History

21/00368/FUL	9no. new dwellings built over two storeys over existing roof of Unit 2: Millsborough House	Application withdrawn	18.06.2021
2014/321/FUL	Conversion of existing Unit 2 into 14 apartments (first and second floors)	Granted subject to Section 106 Agreement	08.04.2016

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Consultations

WCC Highways

No objections. The site is in a town centre / residential and sustainable location off unclassified roads, the site benefits from an existing vehicular access. The site is located on the corner of Ipsley Street and Summer Street, both roads benefit from footpaths and street lighting on both sides of the road. Parking restrictions are in force in the vicinity and along these roads, parking bays with time restrictions are also located on these roads. The site is located within walking distance of amenities, bus route and bus stops. Redditch Bus Station and Redditch Railway Station are located approx. 780m from the proposed development.

The applicant has not provided car parking for the proposed development. However, due to the sites location, a car free development is acceptable in this instance. Should you be minded to grant permission a condition requiring the provision of sheltered, safe and secure cycle parking to comply with WCC Council's adopted highway design guide should be imposed.

Conservation Officer

Millsborough House comprises a substantial courtyard plan building located on Ipsley Street/Millsborough Road/Lodge Road/Summer Street. It is the Former spring factory of Herbert Terry & Sons. The front building, located on the corner of Ipsley Street and Lodge Road dates to 1912 probably designed by F.W.B. Yorke, and was extended in 1930-2 along Millsborough Road, again by Yorke assisted by his son F.R.S. Yorke.

The front building comprises 2 storeys with attic and basement. It is divided by pilasters with entablature above, into five bays, with moulded sill string to ground-floor windows. Windows are mainly large multipaned leaded casements, with paired sashes on the attic storey and arched windows to basement. The ground floor is dominated by a prominent porch with segmental canopy on paired columns with double doors and stained-glass fanlight and side lights. Above the central entrance bay is a shaped parapet inscribed 'Established 1855'. The front range was extended by three bays in an Art Deco in style with chevron detail. The vast warehouse addition along Millsborough Road is also in Art Deco style.

The rear section fronting Summer Road and the subject of this application is a simpler building, constructed in brick with large windows. There is a two north light roof to the section on the corner of Millsborough Road and Summer Road, with a pitched roof covering the remaining section running parallel with Summer Road. From looking at historic maps this part of the building was constructed in the early part of the 20th century.

The applicant is proposing to add two floors of accommodation to Unit 2, the rear section of the complex facing Summer Street. The new floors will be slightly set back on the Summer Street elevation but within a frame which is flush with the existing elevation. It would be flush on the Millsborough Road elevation and covered with a shallow mono pitched roof sloping towards Summer Street. The pattern of fenestration would follow the

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large windows to the floors beneath, although smaller panes of glass are proposed. It is unclear from the application which materials are to be used to construct the addition. The proposals are similar to an application made earlier in the year ref 21/00368/FUL, which was withdrawn by the applicant in June 2021.

Policy 37 of the Redditch Local Plan supports applications for development which conserve and enhance a building, its setting and features of special architectural or historic interest and will expect proposals in respect of the Borough's industrial heritage to better reveal their significance. Applications for development that will harm a historic building will not be permitted unless there is a clear and convincing justification. In terms of the NPPF, Paragraph 194 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, the level of detail being proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance. Paragraph 203 requires that the effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated should be taken into account in determining the application, and a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of harm and the significance of the asset.

A planning application was granted in 2014 (2014/321/FUL) to convert the first and second floors of the Unit 2 residential use. Although Unit 2 itself is of lesser architectural merit compared to that of the Art Deco addition fronting Millsborough Road, the proposed extension would be clearly seen in the context of this elevation. The proposed addition of two floors to this building with no set back on this elevation, will result in a dominant and incongruous addition to this building. The proposed materials for the addition are unclear, the drawings suggest that they will contrast with the red brick of the original building. The proposed windows, although lining up with the original window openings below, are proposed to have small panes and appear comparatively fussy. The proposed addition would clearly detract from the architectural interest of the building and in doing so harm the significance of the building.

A heritage statement has been submitted with the application and the proposed scheme is justified with reference to photographs of 19th industrial buildings from other parts of the country where additional floors of accommodation have been added. No information has been provided in respect of these buildings. It may be possible to add additional floors to this building but thought needs to be given to the overall appearance of the scheme and particularly the impact on the Millsborough Road elevation. The scheme will clearly not conserve or enhance the building, for the reasons noted above, and no justification for the harm to this non designated heritage asset has been submitted as required by the policies in the Local Plan.

From a conservation perspective it is recommended that the application is refused.

North Worcestershire Water Management

The site falls within flood zone 1 and it is not considered that there is any significant fluvial flood risk to the site. Risk to the site from surface water flooding is indicated as low based on the EA's flood mapping.

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Based on the available information of no increased building footprint and the proposed connection to existing drainage there is no reason to withhold approval of this application on flood risk grounds and I do not deem it necessary to recommend attaching a drainage condition.

Waste Management

No objection

West Mercia Constabulary

No objection

Town Centre Co-ordinator

No comments received

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeological Service

Should the development be deemed acceptable a programme of archaeological works should be secured and implemented by means of a suitably worded condition attached to any grant of planning permission.

Cllr Imran Altaf

Having examined the application, I feel it would be a significant investment for the town and specifically central ward.

Public Consultation Response

None received at the time of writing

Assessment of Proposal

Principle

Millsborough House is located within the Town Centre where Policy 30 applies.

The proposal is in accordance with the requirements of this policy because it comprises of an acceptable (residential) use which would complement the role and function of the town centre. Further, the sites' location is considered to be highly sustainable. The principle of residential development would be compatible with surrounding land uses and as such principle of residential development is acceptable.

Highways, access, and parking

County Highways have raised no objections to the scheme in terms of access and parking issues. No on-site dedicated car parking is provided for future occupiers. However, due to the highly sustainable location of the site, WCC Highways consider that a 'car free' development is acceptable. Your officers have noted that no objections have been received from nearby residents in respect of highway safety matters and have concluded that in highway safety terms, the development is acceptable.

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Housing Land Supply

Currently, The Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land within the Borough (currently 3.24 years where 5 is required).

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) says that in such circumstances, policies which are the most important for determining the application are out-of-date. The so called 'tilted balance' as advocated by the framework is engaged and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in the Framework applies. Where such policies are out of date, Paragraph 11 advises that permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Design and scale of proposed development

The former spring factory of Herbert Terry & Sons (Millsborough House) – of which Unit 2 is a component is recognised as a non-designated heritage asset on both the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) (ref: WSM66531) and on the Borough Councils 2009 Schedule of Buildings of Local Interest.

The HER record notes the following:

'Former spring factory of Herbert Terry & Sons. 1912 probably by F.W.B. Yorke, and extended 1930-2 along the Millsborough Road, again by Yorke assisted by his son F.R.S. Yorke. Now divided into smaller units. Brick with stone dressings and hipped roof behind parapet. Courtyard plan with main front facing north. 2 storeys with attic and basement and moulded sill string to ground-floor windows. 5 bays articulated by pilasters with entablature. Windows are mainly large multi-paned leaded casements. Paired sashes on the attic storey and arched windows to basement. Panels between windows of main storeys. Central entrance bay has shaped parapet inscribed 'Established 1855'. Prominent porch with segmental canopy on paired columns with double doors and stained-glass fanlight and side lights. Good iron railings to front. Extension adjoining to east of 3 bays and Art Deco in style with chevron detail. Vast warehouse addition along Millsborough Road also in Art Deco style. This is said to retain the shell of the former Baptist Chapel by John Wills of 1897-8 that was replaced by the new chapel and Sunday school in the Easemore Road.'

The Borough of Redditch Schedule of Buildings of Local Interest notes the following reason for its inclusion on that list:

'A free Classical composition with a remarkably bold Art Deco addition that exploits the elevated site and dominates the skyline. Although altered and in poor condition this building is a significant survival of an important local industry and it makes a considerable contribution to the character and identity of this part of the town centre. Together with Emmanuel Church and the Warwick Arms Hotel it forms a diverse and complementary group of buildings that anchors the somewhat desultory structures that survive in the

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immediate vicinity, helping to create a visual link between the town centre and the Smallwood district beyond'.

The Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 recognises that Redditch has a rich and varied built heritage that is key to preserving the distinct local identity of the Borough. Policy 37 comments that *'the Borough Council will implement strict controls over the use, extension or alteration of a historic building, structure or its setting.'* It goes on to say *'Applications for development that will harm or result in the loss of a historic building or structure will not be permitted unless there is a clear and convincing justification demonstrating that the harm or loss is necessary to deliver substantial public benefits that cannot be achieved through an alternative design or location.'*

Millsborough House is recognised in Policy 37 Reasoned Justification. *37.7 As well as needles, Redditch is known for the development of other metal-based trades including fishing tackle, springs, motorcycles and batteries. Many of the surviving buildings and structures relating these trades make an important contribution to the Borough's heritage, both in terms of their individual histories and their architectural significance. Buildings of note include Forge Mill, British Mills, Ashleigh Works, Millsborough House, Anchor Works and Prospect Works.*

Your officers agree with the Council's Conservation Officers' comments with respect to Unit 2. Although Unit 2 itself is of lesser architectural merit compared to that of the Art Deco addition fronting Millsborough Road (Unit 1), it is a component of a former industrial complex with considerable local historic, architectural, townscape and communal significance.

The proposed roof extension would be clearly seen in the context of this Millsborough Road elevation. Unit 2 (as existing) is clearly smaller in scale and lower in height than that of Unit 1. The proposed addition of two floors of accommodation to this building with no set back on this elevation, is considered to result in an incongruous addition to the building, with the roof line rising above the existing roof line of Unit 1, dominating and competing with Unit 1 rather than remaining subservient.

The proposed materials for the addition are not clear but suggest elements of grey cladding mixed with glazing which would contrast with the red brick of the original building. The proposed windows, although lining up with the original window openings below, are proposed to have small panes and are considered to be at odds with the character of the existing building.

Ground levels fall away steeply in a north to south direction with levels being at their highest where both Lodge Road and Millsborough Road meet Ipsley Street. They are at their lowest where the same roads meet Union Street to the south. The scale and appearance of the development would therefore be particularly visible from Summer Street. The proposals would also remove the distinctive, double 'saw tooth' roof design which is clearly visible from Summer Street. Such roofs regularly appear on industrial and

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former manufacturing buildings of this age and feature on the roof of Ashleigh Works, 24 Bromsgrove Road for example.

Your officers therefore concur with the concerns raised by the Councils Conservation Officer and have concluded that the proposed addition would detract from the architectural interest of the building and in doing so would harm the significance of this historic, non-designated heritage asset, failing to comply with Policy 37 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4.

Conclusion and Planning balance

The Councils lack of 5 year housing land supply means that permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Significant weight should be afforded to the economic and social objectives set out under Paragraph 8 of the NPPF. The scheme would contribute to the Councils housing figures where the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land as required under the NPPF. Account should be taken of the opportunities the development would create for local businesses in the construction of the development and the longer term economic and social benefits. The NPPF's environmental objective requires applications for development to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment. For the reasons set out above, the application proposals are considered to perform poorly against this objective and the adverse impacts of granting permission for the development proposed are considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against policies within the framework which seek to protect and enhance the quality of the built and historic environment.

RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be REFUSED for the following reason

Reason for Refusal

1. The proposed development by reason of scale, appearance and design would fail to conserve or enhance the character of the building, its setting and features of special architectural and historic interest, harming the character and significance of the building. The extensions would be incongruous and dominant with the proposals being contrary to Policies 37, 39 and 40 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Procedural matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the application has been 'called in' to the Planning Committee by one of the Central Ward Members Cllr Altaf