

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

7th December 2022

Planning Application 22/00952/FUL

Alterations to a four bed terraced house to create two flats.

16 Brinklow Close, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 0HB.

Applicant: Mr Gary Waring
Ward: Matchborough Ward

(see additional papers for site plan)

The case officer of this application is Charlotte Wood, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3412 Email: Charlotte.Wood@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

The application site is a 1970's two storey terraced property which lies within Brinklow Close and forms part of the residential area of Matchborough. Brinklow Close is a cul-de-sac which is accessed off Breaches Lane and lies within close proximity of Washford Industrial Estate to the south.

Brinklow Close is formed of uniform terraced properties laid out in a linear, planned arrangement. There is a high density of dwellings in the area and houses typically have short rear gardens and share communal parking areas. In the case of the host dwelling, there are nearby shared parking areas both to the north east and south east. The parking area to the north east also includes a row of flat roof garages, however none of these have been indicated to belong to the host dwelling. Number 16 Brinklow Close which is subject to this application is attached to numbers 15 and 17 Brinklow Close to the east and west respectively, and is also attached to number 18 to the north by a first floor clad link which has a walkway beneath. The rear garden area of the existing dwelling is to the rear and is enclosed by a 1.8 metre high timber fence with gated access.

Proposal Description

The property is currently a single four bedroom dwelling, however this application proposes alterations to subdivide the dwelling into a one bedroom flat at ground floor and a two bedroomed flat at first floor. Few alterations are required to convert the building to flats. Externally, a new front door accessed off the public footpath would be introduced, and internally, the stairs leading to the first floor would be enclosed. The separating floor between the two flats would have acoustic insulation to comply with Building Regulations. Access to the rear garden space for the first floor flat would be by the rear garden gate. The supporting statement submitted with the application sets out that the proposal has been designed in accordance with current Building Regulations, 'Secure by Design' principles and Code for Sustainable Homes.

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Relevant Policies :

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2: Settlement Hierarchy

Policy 5: Effective and Efficient use of Land

Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

Redditch High Quality Design SPD

Relevant Planning History

No Relevant Planning History

Consultations

Highways Redditch

No highways objections raised, however a condition for cycle parking provision has been recommended.

Public Consultation Response

Nine neighbour letters were sent in relation to this application; however no representations from members of the public have been received.

Cllr Juliet Brunner

Requested that the application is considered at planning committee on the grounds of access and traffic, cumulative impact on community and damage to landscape and ecology.

Assessment of Proposal

The site is shown as "white land" on the Borough of Redditch Local Plan Proposals Map, indicating that it lies within the main urban area of Redditch. Policy 2 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan no. 4 (BORLP 4) states that Redditch urban area, as the main settlement shall be the focus for development as it provides the highest level of services and facilities and offers the most sustainable location. The principle of new residential development or in this case, the subdivision of one dwelling into two flats is therefore acceptable in this location subject to other considerations including character and appearance, residential amenity, highway safety and other technical matters.

Regard should also be had to nationally described space standards set out in the Department for Communities and Local Government's Technical Housing Standards. This document provides minimum internal floor space standards for dwellings of all types

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and tenures. A one bedroom flat should have a minimum floor area of 39 square metres and a two bedroomed flat should have a minimum floor area of 61 square metres. In the case of the current proposal, the one bedroom flat at ground floor would measure 49 square metres and would therefore exceed the described space standard. The proposed two bedroom flat would measure 56 square metres and would therefore be slightly under the required standard. Whilst regard is given to the technical housing standards, this document does not form part of the development plan as they have not been adopted as part of a policy in the local plan. In view of this, the standards are given reduced weight. Furthermore, all the necessary facilities for day-to-day living have been provided within the flats and the open plan layout creates a more spacious feel. Whilst the second bedroom within the proposed first floor flat is small, it would be suitable for a child. Unlike some flat developments, outdoor space is also available for the occupiers.

Having regard to the above considerations, the principle of development is supported by officers.

Character and Appearance

Policy 5 of BoRLP4 states that efficient use of land must be sought in new development schemes and Policy 39 of the BoRLP4 echoes this requirement but also states that development should contribute positively to the surrounding environment. Similarly, Policy 40 of the Local Plan expects development to be of a high quality design that reflects or complements local surroundings and materials.

The site is situated within a dense housing estate where the properties are uniform in their simple appearance with small windows, shallow pitched roofs and white cladded front porches. It is noted that the application site comprises a dwelling that is slightly larger than others due to its grey cladded first floor link which most of the other properties do not have. As the external alterations required to facilitate the subdivision are minor, and the design of the new proposed door would match that of the existing, the development would both make efficient use of land whilst also positively contributing to and complementing the local surroundings, in accordance with Policies 5, 39 and 40 of the BoRLP 4.

Residential Amenity

Paragraph 127(f) of the NPPF states that planning decisions should seek a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Furthermore, the Borough of Redditch High Quality Design SPD provides further guidance in relation to residential amenity, seeking to protect against adverse loss of light, outlook, privacy and overbearing impact.

Given that there would be no extensions to the building as part of the subdivision, there would be no negative impact through loss of light, outlook or overbearing impact. There would also be no additional windows inserted into the building, only the new front door and the windows that currently serve habitable rooms would continue to serve habitable rooms. In view of this there would be no material impact to privacy arising as a result of the proposed development.

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The amenity space would be shared between the occupiers of the two flats and would offer a garden of 8.2 metres in length and 60 square metres in area. The Borough of Redditch High Quality Design SPD (2019) specifies that two storey dwellings should have a garden length of 10.5 metres and an area of 70 sq metres, however the document states that a more flexible approach should be taken with communal amenity space for flats. The SPD also states that amenity space should be suitably sited and in scale with the plot, surroundings and reflect the existing local density. Whilst the shared garden area would be relatively small, it would reflect the local surroundings and building to plot densities. Given that both flats would benefit from access to outdoor space, and in view of the modest size of the new units and also the relatively close proximity of the site to a public area of open space, the proposed amenity space is considered acceptable.

Based on the above assessment, the proposal raises no concerns in relation to residential amenity.

Highways

Whilst no private parking is available to serve the proposed flats, given the sustainable location of the site, Worcestershire County Council's Highway Officer has raised no objections to the proposal. As the site is located a short walk from facilities such as schools, a nursery, pharmacy, church, pub, shop and takeaways and is also close to bus stops, future occupiers would be able to carry out day to day living and get to places of work without the need of a car. It is also noted that the existing two storey dwelling has four bedrooms and the proposed flats would have a total of three bedrooms. The proposed flats would have access to nearby shared parking areas and given that the lack of private parking spaces is a pre-existing situation for the existing four bedroomed dwelling, there is not a clear reason to refuse the development on highway grounds.

Given the nearby shared parking area and the sustainable location of the site, the proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy 19 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan no. 4. The Highways Officer has, however, recommended that a condition for the provision of cycle parking facilities is provided is attached to any planning permission granted.

Other Matters

Cllr Brunner the local ward member has raised concerns with the proposal and requested that the application was determined at planning committee. The issues that were raised related to:

1. Access and traffic.
2. Cumulative impact on community.
3. Damage to Landscape and Ecology.

Whilst parking and access have been assessed above, in terms of traffic, the proposal includes no extensions and the cumulative number of bedrooms of the two flats would be the less than the existing house. In view of this, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in a significant increase to traffic. Access and parking arrangements for the proposed development would not be changed from the existing

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arrangements. It is also noted that paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. It is not considered that this would be the case for this development.

Similarly to the above, it is not expected that the proposal would result in significantly more individuals and therefore impact to local services and the wider community would be very minor.

The proposal would not result in any extensions and few alterations to the existing building and therefore it is not considered that there would be an impact to the landscape. Given the urban location of the development and as it would involve the conversion of existing development rather than new development it is not considered that the proposal would have any harmful impacts to ecology. Whilst there would be some internal alterations to the building, there would not be any major roof works and having regard to the age and location of the host building, it is unlikely that the proposal would impact bats or nesting birds.

Conclusion

The proposal would create an additional residential unit. As the units would be small, they would make a valuable contribution to Redditch's housing stock and would make efficient use of land, as supported by Policy 5 of the BoRLP 4. The proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and external alterations would be relatively minor and would be in keeping with the local surroundings. In view of the minor changes to the exterior of the property and the location of new windows, there would be no detrimental impact to residential amenity of neighbours and in view of the provision of outdoor space shared between the two flats, it would provide a good standard of amenity for the future occupiers. Whilst no private parking is provided for the new flats, this is a pre-existing situation and in view of the accessible location of the site to services and the ability to use shared parking areas, this does not raise any material concerns. No other objections have been received from technical consultees and no objections have been received from neighbouring residents. The local ward member has raised several concerns, these have been addressed above and it is not considered that these concerns individually or collectively warrant the refusal of this planning application. It is therefore considered that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

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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:

Location Plan - Ordnance Survey - at scale 1:500

Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations - Job no. 22/27 drawing no. 02

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

- 3) The new door to be installed on the front elevation shall be white uPVC to match the existing front door on the building.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, to safeguard the visual amenities of the area.

- 4) The Development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until sheltered and secure cycle parking for one bicycle per flat had been provided on site. Thereafter the cycle parking shall be kept available for the parking of bicycles only.

Reason: To comply with the Worcestershire County Council's highway design guide.

Procedural Matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee at the request of the local ward councillor.