

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

25th April 2012

PLANNING APPLICATION 2012/032/FUL

ERECTION OF 7 NO. CLASS B.1 UNITS

FORMER HEPWORTH SITE, BROOK STREET, REDDITCH

APPLICANT: SL AND CL FOXALL

EXPIRY DATE: 9TH MAY 2012

WARD: LODGE PARK

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

The author of this report is Sharron Williams, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on extension 3206 (e-mail: sharron.williams@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

Site Description

The site is linear in shape and is a vacant industrial site in an established employment area. The site is approximately 0.37 hectares in area. The site has an established means of access from Brook Street to the south of the site. To the north of the site, the site is bounded by Arrow Road North. To the west and east of the site, are established commercial buildings.

The site is secured with numerous forms of boundary fencing to make it secure, and the site currently has an existing building that will be demolished as a result of the development, although other buildings originally on the site have since been removed.

Some shrub planting exists along the frontage of Brook Street. However, there are no trees of any special merit on the site.

Proposal Description

The application is a resubmission of planning application reference 2011/280/FUL which was withdrawn on 15th December 2011.

The application proposes the erection of 7 commercial units in the form of a row that will be two storeys with a mezzanine floor at first floor level. The units would be for Class B.1 use (Business). The positioning of the units makes the best use of the linear shape of the site. The floor area of the units are either approximately 230 sq m or 274 sq m. The units would be finished in brickwork and cladding with a hipped roof. Glazing and wide roller shutter doors are proposed for the units.

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Vehicular access would still be off Brook Street but has been modified to enable ease of access for larger vehicles that could visit the site for deliveries etc. A total of 52 car spaces and 3 disabled car parking spaces would be provided within the curtilage of the application site.

The application is supported by a Design & Access Statement which states that: the redevelopment for B1 units is entirely appropriate to the established use of the site. The site is rectangular with a narrow frontage onto Brook Street. To ensure the site's efficient redevelopment, the access and all circulation and parking is proposed to the eastern side of the site and the bank of units on the western side allowing the retention of frontage planting. The units have been designed to satisfy identified demand for units of this size in the local area. The units are domestic in scale, and in keeping with the majority of units on the estate. The planting on the frontage of the site is unkempt, but does provide some soft landscaping in the streetscene and is worthy of retention.

The application is supported by a Planning Support Statement which refers to: policies in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, the Core Strategy and Planning Policy Statements / Guidance. The site previously had a large 2 storey factory and offices but some of the buildings have since been demolished. It is understood that the site has been vacant for some time. The proposed units will be two storeys high with a floorarea on average 200 sq m. The design is flexible to accommodate specific end user requirements. A total of 52 car spaces are proposed as well as disabled, cycle and motorcycle parking.

It states that the site is within an established industrial area and redevelopment of such sites for employment development is encouraged in national and local planning policy. Existing access to the site is to be modified to enable access and egress and to accommodate the required car parking provision.

The supporting statement also states that the development is proposed to be a terrace of industrial buildings and the appearance of the building would be brick and cladding which is in character and appearance with other buildings. Galvanised fencing is proposed to the rear of the proposed buildings and existing fencing will be retained.

The applicant has confirmed that there is an identified local need for units of this size. The units are slightly larger than other units in the vicinity and will provide accommodation for local businesses requiring the move to slightly larger premises.

The application is supported by a Cycling and Walking Route Link Statement which states that there are a number of on road cycle routes close to the site which give easy access to surrounding housing areas. There are quiet

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walking routes and alleyway / urban footpaths close to the site. These include walking routes to Arrow Valley Country Park and routes to the Town Centre and suburban centres.

The application is supported by a Secured by Design Statement which states that the development has been designed so that it only has one access into and out of the site. No doors are proposed at the rear of the property and the site is proposed to be secured with some form of security fencing. The site is visible from the main road and this aids natural surveillance.

The application is supported by a Climate Change Statement which states that flexible solar photovoltaic energy tiles are proposed at the rear for energy use for hot water, heating and lighting. This will enable the opportunity to generate energy without increasing the carbon dioxide footprint. Thermal insulation will be used for the walls, floors and roof construction and will help in the reduction of the use of energy. Energy efficient lamps are to be fitted internally and some areas will have motion sensor lighting. External lighting will be PIR with daylight cut off sensors or solar lighting. Dual flush cisterns to toilets and eco friendly taps are proposed to use less power to create jets of water.

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

www.wmra.gov.uk

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF encourages sustainable development and building a strong and competitive economy. The proposal would contribute towards economic prosperity as it will be utilising an employment site for B1 use contributing towards building a strong, responsive, sustainable and competitive economy. Therefore, the proposal would comply with the relevant aims of the NPPF.

Regional Spatial Strategy

Whilst the RSS still exists and forms part of the Development Plan for Redditch, it does 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 such policy is 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.

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Worcestershire County Structure Plan

- SD.3 Use of Previously Developed Land
- SD.4 Minimising the Need to Travel
- T.1 Location of Development

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

- CS.5 Achieving Balanced Communities
- CS.7 The Sustainable Location of Development
- S.1 Designing Out Crime
- B(BE).13 Qualities of Good Design
- E(EMP).2 Design of Employment Development
- E(EMP).3 Primarily Employment Areas
- E(EMP).3a Development Affecting Primarily Employment Areas
- C(T).12 Parking Standards

The site is within an area designated for Primarily Employment Uses in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

Supplementary Planning Guidance / Supplementary Planning Documents

- Borough of Redditch Designing for Community Safety Supplementary Planning Document
- Borough of Redditch Employment Land Monitoring Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Borough of Redditch Encouraging Good Design Supplementary Planning Guidance

Other relevant corporate plans and strategies

- Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

Emerging Policies

The Core Strategy is the document that will eventually replace the Local Plan No.3, and is currently working through the process towards adoption. It has been published and consulted upon, and therefore counts as emerging policy to which some weight can be given in the decision making process. The current version is the 'Revised Preferred Draft Core Strategy' (January 2011). The Core Strategy contains objectives for the overall approach to development in the Borough up until 2026, as well as strategic policies. It seeks to encourage economic development within the Borough. The proposal would work towards achieving the relevant Vision and Objectives set out in the Core Strategy as the application proposes new Class B.1 uses on an employment site.

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Relevant Site Planning History

Appn. no	Proposal	Decision	Date
2011/280	Erection of 7 Class B.1 units	Withdrawn	15 Dec 2011

The previous application (2011/280/FUL) showed the provision of 29 car spaces for the scheme. The maximum requirement of car parking provision is 68 car spaces. Officers had concerns that the limited provision of car parking would result in cars being parked off site. Members may be aware that car parking can be a problem in this area and particularly HGVs tend to park on the road causing highway problems. In addition, the access arrangements for the scheme meant that potentially HGVs would need to reverse out onto Brook Street causing a highway hazard. Again, this could have resulted in drivers parking the HGVs on the road adding to the congestion in the area. Although the principle of employment use was acceptable, Officers were concerned that the potential parking of cars and HGVs would cause problems in the area. The application was withdrawn for the scheme to be revised.

Public Consultation responses

No comments submitted.

Consultee responses

County Highway Network Control

No objection subject to conditions regarding access, turning and parking, and alterations to the highway to provide a new vehicle crossover.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

No objections to the proposal.

Crime Risk Manager

No objections or comments on the basic design of development but concerned about proposal's perimeter security. Proposal shows part of site to have palisade fencing and the rest as chain link fencing. If permission granted would request consistent, high security fencing.

Severn Trent Water

No objection subject to a condition regarding drainage details.

Development Plans

This application is in conformity with planning policy at all levels; national policy, adopted local policy, including Local Plan No.3 and emerging Core Strategy policy and from a planning policy perspective, this application can be supported.

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North Worcestershire Water Management

The agent has supplied additional information at their request and further comments are anticipated from North Worcestershire Water Management. These will be reported on the Update paper.

Assessment of proposal

The key issues for consideration in this case are as follows:-

Principle

The site is within an established employment area that is zoned for Primarily Employment Uses in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3. Therefore, the redevelopment of this site for Class B1 units for business purposes would be acceptable and complies with policies E(EMP).3 and E(EMP).3a of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, as well as core planning principles identified in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The site has previously been used for commercial development in the past and some of the buildings have been demolished. Therefore, the site would be classed as a brownfield site and redeveloping the site would comply with Policy CS. 7 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 3, as well as core planning principles identified in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design and layout

The proposal makes the best use of the linear shape of the site with the building footprint being in the form of a terraced row with communal car parking in front of the units. The design of the buildings comprises a mix of brickwork and cladding to provide interest to the elevations. The streetscene submitted with the application shows that the proposal would be in scale with the neighbouring buildings and due to the detail of cladding on the proposed side elevation, the proposal would create interest in the streetscene. The proposal would comply with Policies B(BE).13 and E(EMP).2 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.

Landscaping and trees

Some landscaping exists at the front of the site and it is intended to retain this planting but to carry out some pruning to reduce the overall height of the planting.

Highways and access

The layout of the site has been changed since the previous application in such a way that a total of 52 car parking spaces can be provided within the site, as well as 3 disabled car parking spaces. This provision complies with the Council's maximum car parking standards. Also, the means of access has moved slightly to enable better access for HGV's but also enables HGVs to turn around within the site. Enabling better access for such vehicles means that there is less chance of these vehicles parking on the road. The proposed car parking provision complies with Policy CT.12 of the Borough of Redditch

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Local Plan No.3. Whilst any existing highway difficulties cannot be sought to be solved through this application, care has been taken to ensure that they would not be worsened as a result of the proposed development. As such, County Network Control has no objection to the proposal and recommend conditions which are considered reasonable to impose.

Sustainability

The applicant has provided a Climate Change Statement to support the application. The proposal includes the installation of solar photovoltaic energy tiles that are proposed to be installed on the western plane of the roof to maximise sunlight intake. The energy generated would be used for hot water, and heating. Low energy lighting and thermal insulation for the walls are also proposed. The provision of rear windows is proposed on the western elevation to maximise natural daylight into the units.

Other issues

The site at present has a mixture of various types of boundary treatment some of which is not secure, particularly the western boundary. The proposal shows that 2 metre high galvanised palisade fencing would be provided along this boundary, whilst existing chainlink and palisade fencing would remain. Comments have been submitted by the Crime Risk Manager who has raised concerns that the effectiveness of the new palisade fence would be compromised if the existing chainlink fence is to be retained. Palisade fencing should be provided for the whole site to improve security. Officers have concerns about the use of such fencing due to its appearance on the streetscene. It has been noted that neighbouring sites have this fencing; some also have the fencing painted. Officers would be concerned that the cumulative impact of this type of fencing could have a detrimental impact on the streetscene. Officers would be happy to discuss this matter further with the applicant and consider other possible options. For this reason, a condition is proposed to request boundary treatment to be submitted for approval.

Conclusion

The proposal would be an acceptable use in this location that is in a Primarily Employment Area, the design of the units are in keeping with the area and would enhance the streetscene. Adequate car parking and access arrangements for vehicles would be provided reducing the possibility of off site parking which is currently a problem in this area. Boundary treatment needs to be considered further, however, the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

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Recommendation

That having regarded 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 Materials to be used on walls and roofs to be submitted and approved.
- 3 Plans approved specified.
- 4 Boundary treatment to be submitted and approved.
- 5 Hours of work during construction to be limited.
- 6 Drainage plans for the disposal of surface water and foul sewage to be submitted and approved.
- 7 Access, turning and parking.

Informatives

- 1 Private apparatus within the highway.
- 2 Alteration of highway to provide new or amend vehicle crossover.

Procedural matters

This application is reported to Planning Committee for determination because the application is for major development (more than 1000 sq metres of new commercial / industrial floorspace) and falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.