

**REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**21st July 2011**  
**WITHIN STATUTORY PERIOD**

<b>APPLICATION NO:</b>	<b>P0851.11</b>	
<b>WARD :</b>	Mawneys	<b>Date Received:</b> 27th May 2011
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	315 Collier Row Lane Romford	
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Refurbishment of the first and second floors from office accomodation to 3x residential flats with amenity. New dormer window to front elevation. Part demolition of first and second floors.	
<b>DRAWING NO(S):</b>	2656_PL01 - Location Plan 2656_SK02 - Existing ground & first floor plans 2656_PL02 - Existing second floor and roof plan 2656_SK04 - Existing elevations 2656_PL05 - Proposed ground & first floor plans 2656_PL06 - Proposed second floor & roof plan 2656_PL07 - Proposed elevations 2656_PL08 - Proposed site plan	
<b>RECOMMENDATION :</b>	It is recommended that <b>planning permission be GRANTED</b> subject to conditions given at the end of the report.	

#### **CALL-IN**

No.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission is granted for the reasons set out in the report below.

#### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application site is located to the western side of Collier Row Lane approximately 20m south of the Collier Row roundabout. The site comprises a 3-storey flat roofed building with a recessed hipped roof. On ground floor level the premises is currently occupied by hairdressers (A1 retail) whilst the 1st and 2nd floor is vacant however its last lawful use was for office accommodation (A2). The 1st floor occupies approximately 238sq metres of floor space.

The site is located in the Collier Row Minor District Centre and is surrounded by commercial units. The site is flanked to the north by commercial properties facing Collier Row Road with mostly residential flats above. Those residential flats above Nos. 1 - 7 Collier Row Road are accessed from the rear of the application site. To the south is a car sales and MOT centre with Tesco's on the opposite side of Collier Row Lane. The remainder of the area further south along Collier Row Lane is mainly characterised by residential development.

Access to the site is from the front via an entrance door to the side of the retail unit at ground floor level.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL**

This Council is in receipt of a planning application seeking permission to refurbish the 1st and 2nd floors at No. 315 Collier Row Lane from office accommodation to 3 residential flats with amenity areas. Amenity spaces would be formed by demolishing part of the building in the

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middle.

Access to all 3 flats would remain from the single front door facing Collier Row Lane. On first floor level there would be 2 x 1-bedroom flats, each with a separate bedroom, open plan kitchen / living area and a bathroom. Each flat would have a small amenity area to the rear accessed from the bedrooms. Each amenity area would measure approximately 3m by 1.9m

The internal staircase then continues to the 2nd floor where there would be a 3rd 2-bedroom flat with separate kitchen, bathroom and living room. Amenity to the 2-bedroom flat is restricted to the terrace at 1st floor level which also provides access to Flat 2.

The proposal would mainly involve internal changes with the only external alterations the addition of a single, pitched roof front dormer at 2nd floor level.

No provision is indicated for off-street parking, refuse storage areas or cycle storage.

### **RELEVANT HISTORY**

None relevant to this application.

### **CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS**

Notification letters were sent to 36 neighbouring properties with no letters of objection received.

The Council's Crime Prevention Design Advisor commented on the application and recommends appropriate conditions as the Design and Access Statement fails to demonstrate or mention how crime prevention measures have been considered in the design and how it reflects the 7 attributes of Safer Places as required by Policy DC63 (Delivering Safer Places).

### **RELEVANT POLICIES**

Policies CP1 (Housing Supply), CP2 (Sustainable Communities), CP17 (Design), DC2 (Housing Mix and Density), DC3 (Housing Design and Layout), DC4 (Conversions to residential and subdivision of residential uses), DC16 (Core and Fringe Frontages in District and Local Centres), DC33 (Car Parking), DC35 (Cycling), DC36 (Servicing), DC61 (Urban Design) and DC63 (Delivering Safer Places) of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document are also considered to be relevant together with the Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document.

The London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London) is also a further material consideration.

PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development'

PPS3 'Housing'.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

The main issues to be considered in this case are the principle of development, site layout and amenity space, impact on local character and streetscene, residential amenity and highways/parking.

### **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

The site is located within the retail fringe of the Collier Row Minor District Centre where Policy DC16 sets out a presumption in favour of retail development (A1) at ground floor level. The

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subject site currently comprise hairdressers at ground floor level and the proposal would retain this A1 use with refurbishment works for the flats taking place on 1st and 2nd floor level.

Policy DC4 state that the conversion of space above retail units is encouraged as this can help bring activity to town and district centres and increase their vitality and viability.

Policy 3A.5 of the London Plan states that DPD policies should ensure that new developments offer a range of housing choices, in terms of the mix of housing sizes and types, taking account of the housing requirements of different groups.

PPS1 encourages a mixture of uses within town centres, which can assist in creating vitality, diversity and a reduction in the need to travel. PPS1 also seeks to ensure that housing is available where jobs are created and encourages the provision of a mixture and range of housing. PPS3 generally encourages the provision of residential development in urban areas. PPS6 encourages diversification within town centres and acknowledges that the occupation of flats above shops can increase activity in town centres during the evening and night, thereby contributing to personal safety. In order to include an element of housing within town centres planning authorities are encouraged to take a flexible approach to residential car parking and other standards. There is, therefore, general support for the principle of providing additional residential units in the town centre.

In principle town centre living is becoming increasingly popular as people are seeking to integrate their working, social and home lives by choosing to live in locations with easy access to facilities and public transport. Indeed Government guidance encourages the provision of residential development in town centre locations. As such, the creation of 3 self contained flats on 1st and 2nd floor would be acceptable in principle.

### **DENSITY/SITE LAYOUT**

Policy DC4 requires that each flat should be adequately sized, self-contained and with reasonable outlook and aspect. The proposed flats are considered to be adequately sized and would be self-contained. The attractiveness of this property as living accommodation would ultimately be a matter of choice for a prospective occupier.

The proposal would involve part demolition of the middle section of the building to incorporate a terrace area which would serve as amenity to the proposed flats. The amenity area would be separated into 3 areas, providing Flat 1 and Flat 2 on 1st floor level each with a private amenity area of approximately 1.9m x 3m (approximately 5.7sq metres). Each flat would have direct access to the amenity areas via their bedrooms.

The drawings indicate a 3rd area on 1st floor level which would serve as amenity for the 2-bedroom flat on 2nd floor level. However, this is a shared area which also serves as a through-route to the main access to Flat 2 on 1st floor level. The area can also be accessed from Flat 1 and therefore does not provide a private, usable space to the flat on 2nd floor level. Staff can therefore conclude that Flat 3 on 2nd floor level has no amenity provision.

The Council's Residential Design SPD requires that every living unit should have access to a private amenity area which is practical for day to day use. Notwithstanding the requirements of the Residential Design SPD, Staff are of the opinion that amenity space requirements for flats in commercial areas may be considered more flexibly and this is supported by Government advice.

It is also noted on the drawings that outlook for Flat 3 is limited with 1 window serving the living area which will overlook Collier Row Road and 1 window serving the main bedroom, overlooking

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the rear of commercial units and a parking area.

In Staff's opinion, the proposed flats would be of adequately size, self-contained and adequate for town centre living. The attractiveness of this property as living accommodation would ultimately be a matter of choice for prospective occupiers. Members are however invited to apply their judgement to the lack of amenity space provision for Flat 3 which is the 2-bedroom flat and its limited levels of outlook

Overall the amenity space provision is considered compliant with the requirements of the Council's Residential Design SPD however there is a judgement for Members to be made on the quality of living accommodation provided by Flat 3 in light of the issues raised above.

### **DESIGN/IMPACT ON STREET/GARDEN SCENE**

Policy DC61 of the LDF Development Plan Document seeks to ensure that new developments are satisfactorily located and are of a high standard of design and layout. Furthermore, the appearance of new developments should be compatible with the character of the surrounding area, and should not prejudice the environment of the occupiers and adjacent properties. Policy DC61 of the DPD states that planning permission will only be granted for development which maintains, enhances or improves the character and appearance of the local area.

The proposed refurbishment works would mainly be internal. A new dormer window is proposed within the front elevation on 2nd floor level serving the living area of Flat 3. Staff noted that the proposed dormer is similar in size and design when compared to the front dormers which were incorporated in the recently approved scheme at No. 311 Collier Row Road (Planning Ref: P0930.10) and therefore have no objections in terms of its size, location or design in the street scene.

The only other external works proposed is to demolish part of the middle of the building in order to provide a terrace / balcony area on 1st floor level with screening towards the sides. This area would serve as private amenity areas as mentioned above and due to its location and set-back from the front of the building, would not be visible from the street scene.

The proposal would not have any impact on the character and appearance of the street scene and is considered compliant with the aims and objectives of Policy DC61 of the LDF in this respect.

### **IMPACT ON AMENITY**

Policy DC61 considers that new developments should not materially reduce the degree of privacy enjoyed by the occupants of adjoining properties or have an unreasonably adverse effect on sunlight and daylight to adjoining properties.

The proposal is for the conversion of an existing building, and would therefore not result in any overshadowing or overbearing appearance to neighbouring properties over and above what is currently experienced.

Assessing the impact of the proposal on the recently approved development (not yet constructed) at No. 313 (Planning Ref: P0930.10), the proposed amenity areas would be adjacent to the amenity area of the scheme at No. 313. The proposed amenity area and those approved at No. 313 would be on 1st floor level. The drawings approved at No. 313 indicate a matt frosted glass screen to be provided to the sides of the amenity areas at a height of 1.7m. Similarly, the current proposal indicates a screen to be provided to the sides of the amenity

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areas. Staff are therefore of the opinion that the amenity areas for both properties (No. 313 and 315) would be private, screened from public views and would not be overlooked as a result of this proposal.

It was noted upon site inspection that there are residential flats above commercial units directly north of the application site with balconies facing south towards the application site. Similarly to the relationship with No. 313, the proposal's provision of screening along the boundaries of the amenity areas would make it private and it is not considered that any overlooking would occur.

No additional flank wall windows are proposed and those which are already in the flank walls will serve the bathroom and bedroom of Flat 2 and bedroom of Flat 1. The proposal at the neighbouring property, No. 313 indicates no flank wall windows and as such, the flank wall windows in this current application is not considered to result in any potential for overlooking to the neighbouring property, once constructed.

Overall the development is not considered to result in a materially harmful impact on the amenities of future occupiers of the proposed flats or those amenities of surrounding neighbouring properties. Members, again, may wish to give consideration to the level of outlook provided to the 3 flats. Staff are however of the opinion that the proposal is consistent with the level of accommodation provided in town centres and given that 2 of the 3 flats have private amenity areas, all flats are of a decent size and self contained, overall the scheme is considered acceptable.

#### **HIGHWAY/PARKING**

Policy DC33 in respect of car parking refers to the density matrix in Policy DC2. The site has a PTAL rating of 1-2 and therefore requires 2 - 1.5 parking spaces per unit for a development of this type in Collier Row.

In this instance, no off-street parking provision are proposed. The applicant however submitted a Transport Statement in support of the lack of parking provision to the development. The transport statement makes mention of the fact that there are vast quantities of on-street parking available on the adjoining roads close to the application site. It is further mentioned that there is a bus stop directly opposite the site which provides services to the following destinations:

- 247 (Romford Station towards Barkingside Station)
- 365 ( Mardyke Estate towards Havering Park)
- 175 (Hillrise Estate towards For Main Works)
- 294 (Havering Park towards Noak Hill)

It is further stated that the bus stop mentioned above is a 2min walk to Collier Row which gives access to the following bus routes:

- 252 (Hornchurch Town Centre towards Collier Row)
- 375 (Romford towards Passingford Bridge, Stapleford Abbotts)

The Transport Statement gives the site a PTAL rating of 3, in accordance with that supplied by Transport for London. As mentioned above, mention is made of the accessibility to public transport and the statement relies on on-street parking along side roads within close proximity to the application site.

Parking provision at a range of 1.5-1 space per unit is anticipated for the proposed flats (4.5 to 3

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spaces). The proposal makes provision for 2 off-street parking spaces in connection with the commercial use(s).

The level of provision proposed is considerably below that anticipated and the Highways Authority object to the scheme on this basis. The acceptability of the level of provision made for off-street car parking is a matter of judgement, given the maximum nature of the standards. In light of the town centre location of the site (enabling easy access to services and facilities), the bus stop opposite the site from which a number of bus routes operate, the existence of a pay and display car park to the rear of Tesco, which is opposite the site and the current parking restrictions between 8am - 6.30pm Monday to Saturday on Collier Row Lane together with footway parking in Moorlands Close, Staff consider that it would be unreasonable to require a greater degree of off-street parking on the site, which is limited in its size. In order to make the best use of land, some compromise can be required and the compromise here is in relation to car parking.

Indeed, in choosing whether to purchase/rent a property in such a location, potential occupants would be aware of the lack of car parking facilities prior to occupation. Whilst Staff acknowledge that a similar proposal was granted permission in 2010 at the neighbouring site (Planning Ref: P0930.10, making provision for 2 off-street parking spaces in connection with the commercial use) which may arguably result in a combined impact in this location, Staff are of the view that the location of the site in proximity to shops and services and bus routes is sufficient to justify the level of provision in this instance. Members are however invited to apply their judgement.

#### **OTHER ISSUES**

Servicing for both the retail/commercial units and the flats would take place from Collier Row Lane and this is considered to be satisfactory. The forecourt in front of the unit would enable smaller delivery vehicles to pull up on it from the carriageway to service/delivery to the units/flats.

No provision has been made for refuse or cycle storage however, such details can be agreed by means of an appropriate condition.

#### **KEY ISSUES/CONCLUSIONS**

The proposed residential use of the site at first and second floor is acceptable in principle. The development involves minor external alterations which are not considered to detract from the character and appearance of the street scene. It is not considered that the proposal would result in a significant loss of amenity to neighbouring or future occupiers. The proposal presents adequately sized units however with a limited degree of outlook and although the 2 flats at first floor level have access to private amenity areas, flat 3 on 2nd floor level has no private amenity space. Staff consider this arrangement to be acceptable given its town centre location however, Members are invited to apply their judgement. The proposal would retain 2 off-street parking spaces for the retail unit at ground floor level however, no parking provision is made for the 3 flats above. Objections are raised by the Highways Authority however, Staff are of the opinion that the lack of dedicated parking provision would not be harmful to the adjoining side roads and that the development is close enough to shops, services and bus routes to justify this level of parking provision. Members are invited to apply their judgement to the level of parking provision.

For the reasons outlined in the report, Staff consider the proposal to be acceptable and approval is recommended accordingly.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

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It is recommended that **planning permission be GRANTED** subject to conditions

1. S SC4 (Time limit) 3yrs
2. S SC32 (Accordance with plans)
3. SC46 (Standard flank window condition)
4. M SC09 (Materials)
5. M SC59 (Cycle Storage)
6. S SC58 (Storage of refuse)
7. S SC06 (Parking provision)
8. M SC62 (Hours of construction)

9. Non standard condition

Prior to the commencement of the development, all details of boundary screening and screen walling shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To protect the visual amenities of the development and to prevent undue overlooking of adjoining properties.

10. Non standard condition

No development shall take place until a scheme for external lighting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior commencement of the hereby approved development and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

In the interests of security and residential amenity and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC61 and DC63.

11. Non standard condition

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a full and detailed application for the Secured by Design scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, setting out how the principles and practices of the aforementioned scheme are to be incorporated. Once approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Havering Crime Prevention Design Advisor, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason:

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In the interest of residential amenity and creating safer, sustainable communities, reflecting guidance set out in PPS1 and Policies CP17, DC61 and DC63 of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

**12.** Non standard condition

Before any development is commenced, a scheme for protecting the proposed dwellings from noise from adjacent commercial uses shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Any works which form part of the scheme shall be completed before any of the permitted dwellings is occupied.

Reason:

To prevent noise nuisance to adjoining properties in accordance with the recommendations of Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 "Planning & Noise" 1994.

**13.** Non standard condition

The flats shall be so constructed as to provide sound insulation of 43 DnT,w + Ctr dB (minimum values) against airborne noise and 64 L'nT,w dB (maximum values) against impact noise to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To prevent noise nuisance to adjoining properties in accordance with the recommendations of Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 "Planning & Noise" 1994.

**1** **INFORMATIVES:**

1. Reason for approval:

The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the aims, objectives and provisions of the Design for Living Supplementary Planning Document and Policies CP1, CP2, CP17, DC2, DC3, DC4 and DC61 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

2. In aiming to satisfy condition 11, the applicant should seek the advice of the Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor. The services of the local Police CPDA is available free of charge through Havering Development and Building Control or Romford Police Station, 19 Main Road, Romford, Essex, RM1 3BJ.

Note: Following a change in government legislation a fee is now required when submitting details pursuant to the discharge of conditions, in order to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) (England) Regulations, which came into force from 06.04.2008. A fee of £85 per request is needed.



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