



REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

10 January 2013

REPORT

Subject Heading:

P1176.12 – Pram Store at Highfield Towers, Hillrise Road, Collier Row – Convert Pram Store into a one-bedroom flat with external alterations (received 26 November 2012)

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

Local Development Framework
The London Plan
National Planning Policy Framework

Financial summary:

None

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Clean, safe and green borough	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This report concerns an application for the conversion of the existing disused pram store at Highfield Towers into a one-bedroom flat with external alterations. Staff consider that the proposal would accord with environmental and highways policies

contained in the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

This application is brought before the Committee because the site is Council owned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. *Time Limit* - The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of section 91 of the Town and Country Act 1990.

2. *Requirement for Infrastructure Contribution* – Before any works in connection with the development hereby approved commence, arrangements shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority and put in place to ensure that the infrastructure needs arising from the additional dwelling are adequately met.

Reason: The development would otherwise be unacceptable without adequate infrastructure provision in accordance with Policy DC72 of the LDF and the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.

3. *External materials* – Unless otherwise agreed in writing, external alterations to the building shall be carried out in materials to match those in the existing building.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the proposed development will harmonise with the character of the surrounding area.

4. *Accordance with plans* - The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans, particulars and specifications.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority consider it essential that the whole of the development is carried out and that no departure whatsoever is made from the details approved, since the development would not necessarily be acceptable if partly carried out or carried out differently in any degree from the details submitted.

5. *Cycle storage* - Prior to completion of the works hereby permitted, cycle storage of a type and in a location previously submitted to and agreed in

writing by the Local Planning Authority shall be provided and permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of providing a wide range of facilities for non-motor car residents, in the interests of sustainability.

6. *Sound insulation* - The building shall be so constructed as to provide sound insulation of 45 DnT,w + Ctr dB (minimal value) against airborne external 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.

7. *Construction works/delivery times* - No construction works or construction related deliveries into the site shall take place other than between the hours of 08.00 to 18.00 on Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturdays unless agreed in writing with the local planning authority. No construction works or construction related deliveries shall take place on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority,

Reason: To protect residential amenity and in order that the development accords with Policy DC61 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD.

8. *Secured by design measures* - Prior to the commencement of the works hereby permitted, an area shall be defined to reduce the likelihood of crime being perpetuated to any new occupiers, such area shall be provided with railings/bars or other suitably secure measures and, once approved in writing, shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the flatted accommodation.

Reason: In the interests of crime prevention and to ensure that the amenities of the occupiers are at a reasonable level in accordance with Policies DC61 and DC63 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD.

INFORMATIVES

1. Statement Required by Article 31 (cc) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Order 2010: Improvements required to make the proposal acceptable were negotiated and submitted, in accordance with para 186-187 of NPPF
2. Reason for approval:

The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the aims, objectives and provisions of Policies DC26, DC33 and DC61 of the LDF

Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

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 £97 per request (or £28 where the related permission was for extending or altering a dwellinghouse) is needed.

3. Mayoral CIL

The proposal is liable for the Mayor of London Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Based upon the information supplied with the application, the CIL payable would be £1092. CIL is payable within 60 days of commencement of development. A Liability Notice will be sent to the applicant (or anyone else who has assumed liability) shortly. Further details with regard to CIL are available from the Council's website.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The application site comprises a vacant pram store within the rear right hand part of the ground floor of Highfield Towers, a 16 storey high-rise flatted block. Highfield Towers is within Council ownership. Immediately surrounding this part of the building is a grassed area surrounded by low railings and a parking area/footway.
- 1.2 Apart from the Tower block, the area is mainly residential in character with 1-, 2- and 3-storey residential properties mixed flats and houses.

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is for the conversion of the pram store into a one-bedroom flat with external alterations to provide windows/doors. The proposed flat would have a gross internal floor area of 54.6 sq.m. There would be a new low railing to define the entrance route to the flat from the footway to the rear and parking area.

3. History

- 3.1 None relevant.

4. Consultation/Representations

- 4.1 98 neighbouring occupiers were notified of the proposal. At the time of drafting the report the consultation period had not yet expired. Any

comments/objections received will be reported orally at the Committee Meeting.

- 4.2 Thames Water has written to advise that they have no objections in relation to sewerage infrastructure.
- 4.3 The London Fire Brigade has written to advise that no additional fire hydrants are required.
- 4.4 The Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) has written advising that some crime prevention measures should be brought forward with the proposal to ensure that the new occupiers are not the subject of any criminal activity. Revised plans have been received removing a living room window to the rear and incorporating an entrance route defined by railings. Further comment of the CPDA will be reported at the meeting.

5. **Relevant Policies**

5.1 LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

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
DC11 – Non-designated sites
DC33 – Car parking
DC35 - Cycling
DC61 – Urban design
DC63 – Delivering safer places
DC72 – Planning Obligations
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Residential Design
Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

5.2 The London Plan

3.3 – Increasing housing supply
3.4 – Optimising housing potential
3.5 – Quality and design of housing developments
3.8 – Housing choice
6.13 – Parking
7.13 – Safety, security and resilience to emergency
7.4 – Local character
8.3 – Planning obligations

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
Chapter 7 - Requiring good design

6. **Staff Comments:**

6.1 The issues in this case are the principle of development, density/site layout, impact in the streetscene, residential amenity, parking/highways, crime prevention/community safety and infrastructure.

6.2 *Principle of development*

6.2.1 The proposal is for the conversion of the existing vacant pram store into a 1-bedroom flat. Staff consider that this would provide additional housing and that there is no objection in principle to the loss of the pram store which is no longer required or used. The conversion would accord with both the need for more housing and the need to provide affordable units in accordance with Policies CP1, DC2 and DC6.

6.2.2 Staff consider that the proposed additional residential unit in this existing residential building would be acceptable in principle, subject to its impact being within acceptable limits.

6.3 *Density and site layout*

6.3.1 The existing tower block is of a high density compared with surrounding development in the area. The addition of an extra flat would slightly increase the density of housing on the site, but this in itself is not considered to be a justifiable reason for refusal if the proposal is considered acceptable in all other respects.

6.3.2 The proposal would provide a one-bed flat in an existing flat block. In line with The London Plan Table 3.3 which indicates a minimum size for a 1bed, 2person being 50 sq.m, the proposed flat would exceed this at 54.6 sq.m. It is therefore considered that the accommodation would be of a suitable size for living in.

6.3.3 There is no private amenity space provided for the proposed flat. However, the tower block has communal amenity areas which would be available to occupiers of the unit. The main outlook from the proposed flat would be to the grassed area immediately in front which is well maintained. It is considered that the flat would receive adequate levels of light and would be of an acceptable quality.

6.4 *Design/Impact on Streetscene/rear garden environment*

6.4.1 The only external alterations would be removal of smaller window openings, new window/door openings and low railings to define the entrance route. All these would match existing and there would be no adverse impact on visual amenity in the streetscene.

6.5 *Impact on Residential Amenity*

6.5.1 The nearest residential properties are those within the existing building and to Hillrise Road and Bolberry Road. The new flat would not directly adjoin any units within the existing block and proposed windows would be to the ground floor and at least 37m from the nearest property 243 Hillrise Road. Although the block is in an elevated position relative to the surrounding properties, the proposed windows would be no closer than existing windows on upper floors to the same elevation of the flatted block and Staff therefore consider that there would be no adverse impact on existing residential amenity from the proposed flat.

6.6 *Highway/Parking*

6.6.1 No additional parking would be provided in relation to the additional 1-bed flat. While the general requirement in this area is for 1.5-2 parking spaces per unit, the proposal is for a one-bed flat and there is existing communal parking provided. There are no highways objections to this scheme.

6.7 *Crime Prevention/Community Safety*

6.7.1 Ground floor flatted units are more vulnerable to crime and anti-social behaviour. The original plans showed no defensible space to the front and a large living room window immediately adjacent to the footway. The Police CPDA objected to this and plans have been revised to omit one living room window and provide an entrance route to the front. There remains a kitchen window which would be susceptible, but overall the proposed flat is considered acceptable in terms of crime prevention measures.

6.8 *Infrastructure Requirements*

6.8.1 In accordance with the Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, a contribution is required where there is a net gain in residential units. In this case a contribution of £6,000 is required. As the site is owned and to be developed by the Council, a legal agreement to secure the contribution would not be possible to complete. Therefore, in these exceptional circumstances, it is recommended in this case that arrangements to secure a contribution be required by condition.

6.9 *The Mayor's Community Infrastructure Levy*

6.9.1 The CIL Regulations require CIL to be paid where a new dwelling is formed by way of change of use (rather than conversion) and the building has not been in use for at least 6 of the last 12 months. The pram shed has been empty for some time and therefore CIL payment of £1092 would be required in this case.

7. **Conclusions**

7.1 Staff consider that the proposal would be acceptable in principle and, would not have an adverse impact on visual or residential amenity, that it would be

acceptable on other grounds and would be in accordance with policies contained in the LDF.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

8. **Financial Implications and risks:**

8.1 None

9. **Legal Implications and risks:**

9.1 This application is considered on its merits independently of the Council's interest as owner of the site.

10. **Human Resource Implications:**

10.1 None

11. **Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications:**

11.1 The proposal would provide an additional affordable housing unit to the benefit of those unable to secure a unit at market rates.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The planning application as submitted or subsequently revised including all forms and plans.
2. The case sheet and examination sheet.
3. Ordnance survey extract showing site and surroundings.
4. Standard Planning Conditions and Standard Green Belt reason for refusal.
5. Relevant details of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Article 4 Directions.
6. Copy of all consultations/representations received and correspondence, including other Council Directorates and Statutory Consultees.
7. The relevant planning history.