

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 16 JANUARY 2020

<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>DATE VALID</u>
19/P2715	15/07/19
Address/Site	36 Aston Road
Ward	Dundonald
Proposal:	Conversion of dwellinghouse into 2 flats, including rear roof extension with two roof lights, erection of garden outbuilding and single storey rear extension.
Drawing Nos	Site Location Plan, FL1786 – 2 Revision C
Contact Officer:	Charlotte Gilhooly (020 8545 4028)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and S106 Agreement.

CHECKLIST INFORMATION.

- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Statement been submitted: No
- Press notice: No
- Site notice: Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 4
- External consultations: 0
- Internal consultations: 1
- Controlled Parking Zone: Yes

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This application was originally brought to Planning Applications Committee on the 17 October 2019 due to the number and nature of objections received. At this Committee, the application was deferred by Members for officers to re-consider the proposal in light of legal advice that was sought previously.

2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The application site comprises a two storey terraced dwelling which is located on the south west side of Aston Road in Raynes Park. Aston Road is residential in character. The current property is a single dwelling and there is an outbuilding under construction in the rear garden. The building is not located in a Conservation area and is not a listed building. The site has a

PTAL rating of 4 (on a scale of 0 to 6, with 0 being the worst). There are no further constraints on the site.

3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

This application seeks planning permission for the conversion of a single dwelling into two self-contained units which will involve 2 x 1 bedroom flats. The proposal will involve the following:

- A flat single storey rear extension: 4.56m wide, 3.8m deep and 3.65m high.
- A pitched outbuilding with one roof light: 4.4m wide, 2.4m/2.5m high and 3.8m deep.
- A rear dormer extension which will be: 4.6m wide, 3.2m deep with an eaves height of 2.2m high and a maximum height of 2.5m.

Flat 1 (ground floor flat) would provide a one bedroom flat with a gross internal floor area of 43.81sqm and a rear outdoor amenity garden area.

Flat 2 (first and second floor) would provide a one bedroom flat over two floors with an internal floor area of 59sqm. No outdoor amenity space has been provided for this flat.

Amended plans: During the assessment of the proposal, the first floor flat (flat 2) was amended from a 2 bedroom unit to a 1 bedroom unit in order to comply with London Space Standards.

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

19/P4171: Erection of a single storey rear extension and a rear roof extension – pending.

5. **CONSULTATION**

Consultation letters were sent to neighbouring properties. 14 representations raising objection were received which are summarised below:

5.1 Character

- The conversion into two flats is detrimental to the character of the Apostles area.
- The double fronted doors will be incongruous in the street scene and be out of keeping to character of the host building.
- The proposal would be detrimental to the unique nature and history of the area.

5.2 Amenity

- Concern over the potential for additional noise and nuisance to adjoining properties as a result of the conversion. For example bedrooms adjoining sitting rooms as a result of changing layout of spaces.
- Concern over the strain on local amenity.
- The outbuilding will result in additional noise and result in a loss of privacy.

- Concern the outbuilding will result in being used as an air bnb property or separate dwelling.

5.3 Family housing

- The upper floor flat would have no amenity space which is one reason why conversion applications have been refused in the past. When such applications were taken to appeal, the Inspector upheld the Council's decision.
- If this application is approved it will set a precedent to allow a flood gate of developers to buy up houses and convert them into flats.
- The proposal is contrary to the Council's Core Strategy as it will involve the loss of a family sized unit.
- The proposal would involve the loss of a family unit. In the past 10 years development in the area has mostly consisted of flats and very little provision for family homes with gardens. Family homes should therefore be protected as per Council Planning Policy.
- There are too many flats and not enough family units.
- It will transform the area from a nice family neighbourhood to commuter apartments.
- Increasing the population density on services such as GPs, schools which are already under strain.

5.4 Drainage

- Concern the existing drainage systems will not be able to cope with additional requirements

5.5 Parking

- Concern over impact on parking in the surrounding area.
- Proposal will increase pressure on parking.

5.6 Internal

Transport Planner

The location of the property has a Public Transport Accessibility Level rating of 4, which indicates a good level of connections and accessibility to public transport for current and future occupiers.

The site is located in a Controlled Parking Zone (Zone RPS) where parking and loading is controlled from Monday to Friday between 8:00am – 6:30pm.

Cycle Parking:

Cycle parking should be installed on site in accordance with London Plan standards on cycle parking for new residential developments

The London Plan and London Housing SPG Standard 20 (Policy 6.9) states all developments should provide dedicated storage space for cycles at the following level:

- 1 per studio and one bed dwellings;
- 2 per all other dwellings.

The proposal would require a total of 2 cycle parking spaces, 1 for each one bedroom unit which should be secure & undercover.

Refuse:

Given there is an already established collection route along this road, it is not considered the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the waste collection services in the area.

Recommendation: The proposal is unlikely have a significant impact on the adjoining highway.

Raise no objection, subject to:

- Cycle parking to be implemented

6. POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- Section 4 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.
- Section 12 – Achieving well designed places.

6.2 London Plan (2016)

Relevant policies include:

- 3.3 Increasing housing supply
- 3.4 Optimising housing potential
- 3.5 Quality and design of housing developments
- 3.8 Housing choice
- 3.11 Affordable Housing Targets
- 5.1 Climate change mitigation
- 5.2 Minimising carbon dioxide emissions
- 5.3 Sustainable design and construction
- 5.17 Waste Capacity
- 6.9 Cycling
- 6.13 Parking
- 7.1 Lifetime neighbourhoods
- 7.3 Designing out crime
- 7.4 Local character
- 7.5 Public realm
- 7.6 Architecture
- 8.2 Planning Obligations

6.3.1 Merton Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011)

Relevant policies include:

- CS 8 Housing choice
- CS 9 Housing provision

- CS 11 Infrastructure
- CS 14 Design
- CS 15 Climate change
- CS 18 Transport
- CS 20 Parking servicing and delivery

6.4 Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014)

Relevant policies include:

- DM H3 Support for affordable housing
- DM D1 Urban Design
- DM D2 Design considerations
- DM D3 Alterations and extensions to existing buildings
- DM EP 2 Reducing and mitigating noise
- DM H2 Housing Mix
- DM O2 Nature conservation
- DM T3 Car parking and servicing standards

6.5 Supplementary planning considerations

- London Plan Housing SPG – 2016
- DCLG Technical Housing Standards - nationally described space standards 2015
- Draft London Plan 2019
- National Design Guide 2019

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key planning considerations of the proposal are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Deferral of application at October Planning Committee
- Design and impact upon the character and appearance of the area
- Impact upon neighbouring amenity
- Standard of accommodation
- Transport, parking and cycle storage
- Refuse
- Sustainability
- Developer contributions

7.1 Principle of development

7.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework, London Plan Policy 3.3 and the Council's Core Strategy Policy CS8 and CS9 all seek to increase sustainable housing provision and access to a mixture of dwelling types for the local community, providing that an acceptable standard of accommodation would be provided. Policy 3.3 of the London Plan 2016 also states that boroughs should seek to enable additional development capacity which includes intensification, developing at higher densities.

7.1.2 The development seeks to provide two residential units by increasing the density on site. As a family unit is considered to be three or more bedrooms (Merton's Core Strategy 2014, CS14), the proposal would therefore not involve the loss of a family unit (current dwelling on site is a two bedroom unit). The principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable and compliant with local planning policy. However, it is subject to the following criteria being equally fulfilled and compliant with the planning policies referred to above.

7.1.4 The planning considerations for an extension to an existing building relate to the impact of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host building along with the surrounding area and the impact upon neighbouring amenity.

7.2 Deferral at October Planning Committee Meeting

7.2.1 The application was deferred at the October Planning Committee for officers to re-consider the proposal in light of legal advice which was referenced by a Councillor during the meeting. Officers have tracked down the legal advice and can provide the following comments:

7.2.2 The legal advice was dated 10th July 2006 and outlines its purpose was to advise what weight could be attached to the Council's 2001 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) titled Residential Extensions, Alterations and Conversions dated November 2001. More specifically, the advice was based on Members of the Planning Applications Committee wishing to be advised on whether they can rely upon the SPG minimum floor space standard for conversions. The SPG outlined that conversion schemes for small houses or buildings with less than 120 sq m of floorspace will not normally be permitted. The conclusion of the legal advice was that the SPG was a material consideration, but with little weight to be attached to it. The legal advice was given in 2006.

7.2.3 With regards to the current context (2020), the Council's Future Merton Deputy Head has confirmed that the 2001 SPG is no longer in existence and does not form part of the Local Development Framework for Merton Council. Therefore no weight can be attached to this document. The assessment of the current planning application therefore has to be assessed in accordance with the current Development Plan and guidance. The application has therefore been brought back to Planning Applications Committee with a recommendation to grant subject to conditions.

7.3 Character and Appearance

7.3.1 London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6 Core Strategy policy CS14 and SPP Policies DMD2 and DMD3 require well designed proposals that are of the highest architectural quality and incorporate a design that is appropriate to its context, so that development relates positively to the appearance, scale, bulk, form, proportions, materials and character of the original building and their surroundings, thus enhancing the character of the wider area. The site lies within the Belvedere sub-area of the Wimbledon North Conservation Area

wherein the character comprises a mixture of traditional dwelling types set in large plots, largely detached.

7.3.2 Single storey rear extension

At 3.8m in depth with a maximum roof height of 2.5m, the proposal is of a scale, form and appearance which would not appear incongruous or out of keeping with the character of the host building or surrounding area. Materials include facing brickwork and white PVC windows to match existing. This element of the proposal is therefore considered acceptable.

7.3.3 Dormer roof extension

The proposed dormer would involve a Juliette balcony. The dormer itself would be set down from the main roof ridge and set back slightly from the rear elevation. Materials include vertical natural slate to dormer cheeks to match existing and white PVC-U windows. This element of the proposal is therefore considered to be subservient to the main roof and in keeping with the character of the main building. There are a number of dormer windows on the rear of houses in the local surrounding area.

7.3.4 Outbuilding

It is noted the outbuilding was under construction during the site visit. However at 2.5m high and 4m deep, the proposal is considered to be of a scale, form and appearance which does not appear as a bulky addition and as the materials involve using fair faced brickwork to match existing, the proposal is considered acceptable.

7.3.5 Two front doors, bins and cycle storage

While the proposal to have two front doors does break up the uniformity of the streetscene of Aston Road, on balance the benefits of an additional unit is considered to outweigh this shortfall. In addition there are two existing properties (12 and 28 Aston Road) which have been subdivided and have two front doors. As such this element of the proposal is not so out of keeping to warrant refusal and is therefore considered acceptable.

7.3.6 As the property is terraced, there is no external access to the rear to store either bins or bikes in the rear garden. As such the only feasible place to have bin and bike storage is at the front of the property. While this is not ideal, it is noted that several properties in the road store bins at the front of the property. As such the principal to store bins and bikes at the front of the site is considered acceptable to the character of the existing streetscene.

7.3.7 Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable to the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

7.4 Neighbouring Amenity

7.4.1 SPP Policy DM D2 states that proposals must be designed to ensure that they would not have an undue negative impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, quality of living conditions, privacy, visual intrusion and noise. The properties which may be affected by the proposal include 34 and 38 Aston Road and 34 and 36 Clifton Park Avenue.

7.4.2 34 and 38 Aston Road

It is noted both adjoining properties have existing single storey rear extensions and the rear of these properties are south west facing. As such the proposed single storey rear extension at 3.8m in depth with a maximum height of 3.65m is not considered to result in a loss of daylight or sunlight or be overbearing and visually intrusive.

7.4.3 Similarly the outbuilding has a maximum height of 2.5m and is 3.8m in depth. As such and due to the minimal height of the proposal and depth, the proposal is not considered harmful to neighbouring amenity.

7.4.4 The proposed dormer roof extension would provide views into the adjoining neighbours' rear gardens but no more than from the first floor rear windows. As such this element of the proposal is also considered acceptable in terms of amenity.

7.4.5 34 and 36 Clifton Park Avenue

As there is a large separation distance of approximately 24m from the rear wall of 36 Aston Road and the rear wall of these neighbouring properties, the single storey rear extension is not higher than 3.65m and the proposed outbuilding is no higher than 2.5m in height, the proposal is therefore not considered to cause a loss of privacy, daylight, sunlight or be visually intrusive and overbearing.

7.4.6 Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable to the amenity of these neighbouring properties in terms of loss of day light/sunlight, quality of living conditions, privacy, visual intrusion and noise.

7.5 Standard of accommodation: internal and external spaces

7.5.1 Internal

Policy 3.5 of the London Plan 2016 requires housing development to be of the highest quality internally and externally, and should satisfy the minimum internal space standards (specified as Gross Internal Areas –GIA) as set out in Table 3.3 of the London Plan. Table 3.3 provides comprehensive detail of minimum space standards for new development; which the proposal would be expected to comply with. Policy DMD2 of the Adopted Sites and Policies Plan (2014) also states that developments should provide suitable levels of sunlight and daylight and quality of living conditions for future occupants.

Flat No.	No.of beds	No. of persons	No. of storey's	Required GIA (sqm)	Proposed GIA (sqm)	Compliant
1	1	1	1	37*	43.81	Yes
2	1	1	2	58	59.03	Yes

* Where a one person dwelling has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m² to 37m², as shown bracketed.

The bedroom for Flat 1 would have a floor space of 9.02m² and the bedroom for Flat 2 would have a floorspace of 10.2m². Both these meet the Space Standards for one person dwellings in terms of bedroom size.

As demonstrated by the table above, both of the units meet the London Plan space standards.

7.5.2 External

In accordance with the London Housing SPG and Policy DMD2 of the Council's Sites and Policies Plan, it states that there should be 5sqm of external space provided for private outdoor space for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1sqm provided for each additional occupant.

- Flat 1 would provide outdoor amenity space with an area of 41.32sqm, this would satisfy the minimum requirements.
- Flat 2 does not have any amenity space and would therefore not satisfy the minimum requirements. However as Flat 2 would provide accommodation over two floors, the proposal is considered to provide a good standard of accommodation for a one bedroom unit. While the lack of amenity space is considered a shortfall with the scheme, on balance officers raise no objection to the proposal on these grounds.

7.6 Transport, parking and cycle storage

7.6.1 Core Strategy Policy CS20 requires that development would not adversely affect pedestrian or cycle movements, safety, the convenience of local residents, street parking or traffic management. Cycle storage is required for all new development in accordance with London Plan Policy 6.9 and Core Strategy Policy CS18. It should be secure, sheltered and adequately lit and Table 6.3 stipulates that one cycle parking space should be provided for a studio/1 bedroom unit and 2 spaces for all other dwellings.

7.6.2 As details have not yet been provided for dedicated storage, it will be conditioned below. In addition as this road is in a Controlled Parking Zone, it is therefore recommended to have a S106 agreement in place to ensure one of the flats is permit free in order to reduce demand for on street parking in the surrounding area.

7.7 Refuse

7.7.1 For the proposed two flats the following are the recommended bin capacity to avoid overflowing bins and residents leaving items on the floor by the bins:

- 1x 180L wheelie bin for refuse
- 1x 180L wheelie bin for paper and cardboard
- At least 1 x 55L box for all mixed recycling – residents can request more than one.
- 23L x Outdoor kitchen caddy

7.7.2 Based on the plans provided, it is considered there is sufficient space to store these bins at the front of the site as this is the most accessible way for waste

to be collected. However as details have not yet been provided for dedicated storage, it will be conditioned below.

7.8 Sustainability

- 7.8.1 All new developments comprising the creation of new dwellings should demonstrate how the development will comply with Merton's Core Planning Strategy (2011) Policy CS15 Climate Change (parts a-d) and the policies outlined in Chapter 5 of the London Plan (2016).
- 7.8.2 As a minor development proposal, the development should outline how it will achieve a 19% improvement on Buildings Regulations 2013 Part L and submit SAP output documentation to demonstrate this improvement. The development would also need to achieve internal water usage rates not in excess of 105 litres per person per day.
- 7.8.3 The applicants have been made aware of sustainability requirements and I therefore recommend that Merton's Standard Sustainable Design and Construction (New Build Residential- Minor) Pre-Occupation Condition is applied to any grant of permission.

7.9. Developer Contributions

- 7.9.1 The proposed development would be subject to payment of the Merton Community Infrastructure Levy and the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

8.0. CONCLUSION

- 8.1.1 Opportunity to provide additional residential accommodation should be creatively sought, and increasing the density on the existing site is a recognized route.
- 8.1.2 On balance, and taking into consideration the inherent constraints of the site, the proposed residential units would provide acceptable accommodation and the accompanying extension works to accommodate the conversion are considered appropriate in their layout, heights, scale, form and design and would not be incongruous additions to harm the character of the host dwelling, surrounding area or neighbouring amenity. The proposal would also not have a detrimental impact on highway safety or parking pressure.
- 8.1.3 Therefore, the scheme would adhere to the principles of the policies referred to above and it is recommended to grant planning permission, subject to the attachment of relevant conditions and S106 Agreement.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission

Subject to the following conditions:

1. A1 Commencement of Development
2. A7 Approved Plans

3. B3 External Materials (as submitted)
4. C02 No permitted development
5. C06 Refuse and Cycling
6. C08 No use of flat roof
7. D11 Construction times
8. E06 Ancillary residential accommodation
9. H06 Cycle parking
10. H09 Construction times
11. No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until evidence has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority confirming that the development has achieved CO2 reductions of not less than a 19% improvement on Part L regulations 2013, and internal water consumption rates of no greater than 105 litres per person per day.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: Policy 5.2 of the London Plan 2015 and Policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011.

Subject to S106 Agreement Securing the following:

1. Permits to park in the controlled parking zone will be restricted for the first floor flat only.

Informatives:

1. Carbon emissions evidence requirements for Post Construction stage assessments must provide:

Detailed documentary evidence confirming the Target Emission Rate (TER), Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) and compliance with the 19% improvement of DER over TER based on 'As Built' SAP 10 outputs (i.e. dated outputs with accredited energy assessor name; registration number, assessment status, plot number and development address); OR, where applicable:

-A copy of revised/final calculations as detailed in the assessment methodology based on 'As Built' SAP 10 outputs; ANID

Confirmation of Fabric Energy Efficiency (FEE) performance where SAP 10 section 16 allowances (i.e. CO2 emissions associated with appliances and

cooking, and site-wide electricity generation technologies) have been included in the calculation.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: Policy 5.2 of the London Plan 2015 and Policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011.

2. In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF, The London Borough of Merton (LBM) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. LBM works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - i) Offering a pre-application advice and duty desk service.
 - ii) Where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome.
 - iii) As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance:

- i) The application was amended during the application process and no further assistance was required.

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