



TO: Planning Committee North

BY: Head of Development

DATE: 05 September 2017

DEVELOPMENT: Demolition of existing B1 (Business) / B8 (Storage) use building and erection of 2 No. semi-detached two storey dwellings (with rooms in roof) with associated parking.

SITE: Trinity Hall Rushams Road Horsham West Sussex, RH12 2NU

WARD: Trafalgar

APPLICATION: DC/17/0786

APPLICANT: Brix Ltd, Unit 11, Bramley Business Park, Bramley, Guildford

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: Referred to Planning Committee (Representations). More than 8 letters of representation contrary to the Officer's recommendation have been received.

RECOMMENDATION: Application Permitted, subject to conditions.

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

- 1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and the erection of 2 x semi-detached dwellings.
- 1.2 The proposed dwellings would be positioned centrally within the site, and would be accessed from the public footpath. The dwellings would include separate vehicle access with parking provided adjacent to the boundary, with the entrance to the properties provided on the front elevation.
- 1.3 The built form would measure to a total width of 13.2m and a total depth of 10.4m, with an overall ground floor footprint of approximately 130sqm. The proposed dwellings would extend over three storeys, incorporating a hipped roof extending to a total height of 8.2m. Each dwelling would incorporate a ground floor bay window, with Plot 1 including a dormer window within the roof, and Plot 2 including a gable feature to the front.
- 1.4 Each dwelling would provide a kitchen/dining room, living room, and w.c to the ground floor, with 4 x bedrooms (3 with ensembles) spread across the first and second floor.

- 1.5 Amenity space would be provided to the rear of each dwelling, with Plot 1 comprising an area of approximately 54sqm, and Plot 2 measuring approximately 60sqm. Tandem parking for 2 vehicles would be provided to the side of each dwelling adjacent to the boundary, with these spaces measuring to a width of between 2.6m and 2.9m.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.6 The application site consists of a single storey red brick building which has been extended to the east to incorporate a flat roof addition and pitched roof extension. The site lies to the south of Rushams Road within the designated built up area of Horsham, and is surrounded by a number of properties, primarily of residential use.
- 1.7 The application site is bound by a three storey dwelling to the west which includes an external staircase positioned directly adjacent to the shared boundary. This provides external access to the flat above, with a first floor side door serving as the primary access. The neighbouring property to the east is oriented at 90 degrees to the site and consists of a single storey detached bungalow, and includes a number of window openings along the western elevation.
- 1.8 The wider street scene is characterised by residential dwellings of semi-detached and terraced properties, most of which extend to two and three storeys.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The following Policies are considered to be relevant to the assessment of this application:

2.2 **National Planning Policy Framework:**

- NPPF1 - Building a strong, competitive economy
- NPPF4 - Promoting sustainable transport
- NPPF6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- NPPF7 - Requiring good design
- NPPF14 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

2.3 **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015)**

- HDPF1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
- HDPF2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
- HDPF3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
- HDPF7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
- HDPF9 - Employment Development
- HDPF15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
- HDPF16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
- HDPF25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- HDPF32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
- HDPF33 - Development Principles
- HDPF41 - Parking

RELEVANT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.4 *Horsham Blueprint Neighbourhood Forum* - Designated (Regulation 10) – June 2015

PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS

HU/137/65	Nursery school (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 25.05.1965
HU/41/74	Change of use to red cross society (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 19.12.1974
HU/225/85	Extension to form entrance hall (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 30.10.1985

3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

- 3.2 N/A

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

- 3.3 **West Sussex County Council (WSCC) – Highways:** No objection, but request further information in respect of pedestrian visibility splays.
- 3.4 **Southern Water:** No objection.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- 3.5 **Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council:** Object on the following grounds:
- Design of the proposed development is out of keeping with the surrounding properties
 - The building is too high
 - Insufficient parking
 - Overdevelopment of the site
- 3.6 **The Horsham Society:** Object to the scheme on the grounds that the proposal would result in overdevelopment of the site; increased parking pressure; and the scale and mass which would be overbearing in the context of the surroundings.
- 3.7 A total of 20 objections have been received from 12 households, and these can be summarised as follows:
- Height of proposed development not in keeping with neighbouring properties
 - Parking provision on site and its impact upon the restricted parking situation
 - Scale and massing in context of neighbouring property to west
 - Inadequate visibility from proposed driveway entrances
 - Overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring properties
 - Overdevelopment of the site
 - Out of keeping with the character of the surrounding properties
 - Loss of light to neighbouring residents
 - Loss of a distinctive building
 - Loss of community facility

4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

- 4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

- 5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

- 6.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing building currently under B1/B8 (office/storage) use, and the erection of a pair of semi-detached dwellings.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that development will be permitted within towns and villages that have defined built-up areas. Any infilling will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. In addition, Policy 9 of the HDPF states that redevelopment of employment sites and premises outside of Key Employment Areas must demonstrate that the site is no longer needed, and/or viable for employment use.
- 6.3 The building is currently under B1/B8 Use following the relocation of the main Red Cross services to other parts of the county. The planning history of the site indicates that the building was previously used as a Dial-a-Ride Office (permitted under planning approval HU/16/99) with approximately 22sqm used for office floor space, and approximately 20sqm used for storage purposes.
- 6.4 A number of representations have queried the use of the building, with evidence submitted that the building has also been used historically as a community hall. However, the planning history of the site indicates that the authorised use of the building has been for office and storage (B1/B8), with the applicant submitting the deeds of the building, which includes a covenant which specifies that the building should not be used for community events. It is therefore considered that whilst the building may have been used as a community hall, this was not the primary use of the building, and was more than likely undertaken on an informal and irregular basis. For this reason, the authorised use of the building is considered to be B1/B8, as suggested by the planning history and evidence submitted by the applicant.
- 6.5 The applicant has provided marketing details stating that the property provides a mixture of open plan and cellular accommodation across a reception area, two offices, and a lock-up garage with further storage space. The property was indicated as having a floor area of 166.11sqm, and was offered for sale with the benefit of vacant possession. The site was bought by the applicant in May 2017 following a number of unsuccessful offers, all of which were conditional on planning approval for non-office use.
- 6.6 The applicant states that the existing layout is unsatisfactory for office use, with the building requiring substantial improvement works in order to provide a satisfactory working environment. The existing building has little insulation and poor energy performance, with

areas of the building, including the main hall and garage unsuitable for habitable accommodation.

- 6.7 Whilst the proposal would result in the loss of employment space, it is noted that the current state of the building and accommodation provided is limited, with substantive works required to improve the quality of the building. It is therefore considered that the applicant has appropriately demonstrated that the building is no longer viable for employment use, in accordance with Policy 9 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.
- 6.8 The application site is located within the built-up area of Horsham which is categorised as a “Main Town” within the settlement hierarchy. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the defined built-up area, and as such residential development on the site is considered acceptable in principle.
- 6.9 Whilst the proposed re-development would result in the loss of employment space, the proposed residential development is considered to be of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain the characteristics and function of the settlement, in accordance with Policies 3 and 9 of the HDPF.

Character of the dwellings and visual amenities of the street scene

- 6.10 Policies 32 and 33 promote development which is of high quality and design, and is sympathetic to the distinctiveness of the dwelling and surroundings.
- 6.11 The total built form of the dwellings would measure 10.4m (depth) and 13.2m (width), with each individual dwelling extending to a width of approximately 6m and a depth of between 9.3m and 10.5m. The proposed dwellings would incorporate a hipped roof extending to an overall height of 8.2m, with a pitched roof dormer to the front elevation of Plot 1 and a gable feature to Plot 2. The dwellings would be finished in facing brick and vertical tile hanging, with residential amenity space positioned to the south of the dwellings.
- 6.12 The surrounding area is characterised by residential dwellings of predominantly two storeys (with additional accommodation within the roof), most of which are semi-detached or terraced, with examples of detached properties within the wider street scene. The built pattern is predominantly narrow, rectangular, elongated plots, with larger dwellings in wider plots positioned to the south-east of the site. The majority of the dwellings are finished in red brick, with examples of render and tile hanging within the wider street scene.
- 6.13 The proposed dwellings would extend to a height of 8.2m, approximately 0.5m higher than the neighbouring dwelling to the west, and 3.5m above the single storey dwelling to the east. The proposed dwellings would form the end of a continuous line of residential dwellings built along Rushams Road, with the layout of the proposed development reflecting this. Whilst the proposed dwellings would extend above the single storey bungalow to the east, given this property’s siting and orientation at the corner of Blunts Way, it is not considered to read in the context of the linear development to the west. Although the scale and massing of the proposed development would juxtapose the adjacent property to the west, given the context and built pattern of the majority of surrounding properties, the proposal is considered to reasonably reflect the prevailing character and pattern of the built surroundings.
- 6.14 It is noted that a number of objections have been raised to the scale and appearance of the proposed development, which is considered to be out of keeping with the character of the wider street scene. Following amendments the proposed built form would consist of a pair of semi-detached dwellings, with a gable feature to the front and a hipped roof form. The proposed development would sit at a similar height to the surrounding buildings, and is considered to be of a form and vernacular that would reflect the character and appearance of surrounding properties.

- 6.15 The dwellings would provide 4 x bedrooms, and would measure to a total floor area of between 139sqm and 153sqm, with rear amenity space of between 54sqm and 60sqm. Whilst the surrounding properties include narrow, elongated rear gardens, it is noted that the properties to the north, particularly along Blunts Way, include rear gardens of similar size and extent to that proposed. The plot size of each dwelling is therefore considered to provide a sufficient amount of amenity space that would be reflective of the built surroundings and pattern of development. In addition, the position of the built form centrally within the site would retain a level of openness between the surrounding properties, allowing a form of visual relief when viewed from the street.
- 6.16 The proposed layout of the site is considered to reflect the pattern of the built surroundings, with the proposed form and appearance considered to reflect the overall character and vernacular of the surrounding properties. The proposed plot size and layout are considered to be reflective of similar development within the area, with the proposal considered to maintain the characteristics of the surrounding built pattern, in accordance with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties

- 6.17 Policy 33 states that development should consider the scale, massing and orientation between buildings, respecting the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties.
- 6.18 The application site is surrounded by properties of both single and two storeys, most of which are built along a continuous build line adjacent to the public highway. The neighbouring property to the west consists of a single storey property oriented at 90 degrees to the proposed development, with a number of window openings within the western elevation. The neighbouring property to the east is a three storey dwelling which includes a side first floor opening to the flat above.
- 6.19 It is noted that a number of objections have been raised on the grounds of residential amenity, and in particular the loss of light and privacy to the neighbouring property to the east. Following initial concerns raised, the development has been amended to increase the physical gap to the shared boundary, with the provision of a single opening to a non-habitable room to the eastern elevation.
- 6.20 The neighbouring property to the east consists of a single storey bungalow, oriented at 90 degrees to the application site so that the dwelling faces east/west. The residential amenity space of the bungalow is positioned to the north and south of the dwelling, with a number of windows positioned along the western elevation opening to habitable rooms. The site is bound by a 1.8m high fence to all boundaries.
- 6.21 The existing garage on the application site forms part of the shared boundary, with the proposed development seeking to offset the built form on the site so that the parking area for Plot 1 would be positioned directly adjacent to the shared boundary with the bungalow to the east. The built form of the semi-detached dwellings would be built along the frontage of the site, so that the rear elevation of the proposed dwellings would be approximately 4.5m from the northern elevation of the neighbouring property.
- 6.22 Whilst noted that the scale and massing of the built form would visually compete with the neighbouring bungalow, it is considered that the proposed development, set at a distance of approximately 7.6m from the neighbouring bungalow to the east, would be positioned at sufficient distance from this property to limit potential amenity impact. The existing bungalow would be offset from direct view, with any potential views from the first and second floor limited. Therefore, whilst the proposal would increase the perception of overlooking, it is considered that the angle of degree would provide limited views into the neighbouring site.

- 6.23 The position of the proposed dwellings along the site frontage is considered to negate the prominence of the dwellings when viewed from the neighbouring bungalow, with the limited opening to habitable rooms along the eastern elevation considered to restrict potential overlooking. Given the relationship between the proposed development and the existing bungalow it is considered that only oblique views of this neighbouring property would be possible. As such, it is considered that the impact upon the neighbouring properties through overshadowing, loss of light and privacy would be limited. As such, it is not considered that material harm would be caused by the development, in accordance with policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Existing Parking and Traffic Conditions

- 6.24 Policy 41 states that development should provide safe and adequate access and parking, suitable for all users.
- 6.25 Each dwelling would incorporate tandem parking for 2 x vehicles positioned to the side of the dwelling, with access provided directly from Rushams Road. Each parking area would measure to a total width of 2.6m and a depth of 9.6m.
- 6.26 A number of objections have been raised on the grounds that the development would result in an increased pressure on the already restricted parking in the locality, with the access into the site potentially causing harm to the function and safety of Rushams Road.
- 6.27 It is noted from comments provided by WSCC Highways that there would be a shortfall of 1 parking space for the proposed dwellings. However, given the proximity to and frequency of local public transport links, the level of parking provided is considered acceptable. In addition, whilst noted that further information in the form of pedestrian visibility splays would be beneficial, these could be provided as part of an appropriately worded condition.
- 6.28 It is considered that the proposed development would provide sufficient parking, with the proposed access considered reasonable, subject to condition. It is therefore considered that the proposal is considered to provide adequate parking, and is not considered to result in harm to the function or public safety of the highway, in accordance with policy 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Conclusion

- 6.29 The proposed dwellings are considered to be of a scale, design and form that would be sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the site and wider townscape, whilst of a siting and orientation that would not materially harm the amenities of neighbouring properties. In addition, the proposal is considered to provide sufficient parking and turning space on site, with the increased level of activity not considered to result in 'severe' harm to the function of the public highway network. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with policies 3, 9, 25, 32, 33, and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:
- 1 Approved Plan
 - 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 3 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** No development shall commence until a drainage strategy detailing the proposed means of foul and surface water disposal has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure that the development is properly drained and to comply with Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a schedule of materials and finishes and colours to be used for external walls, windows and roofs of the approved building(s) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing and all materials used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall conform to those approved.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity by endeavouring to achieve a building of visual quality in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until confirmation has been submitted, in writing, to the Local Planning Authority that the relevant Building Control body shall be requiring the optional standard for water usage across the development. The dwellings hereby permitted shall meet the optional requirement of building regulation G2 to limit the water usage of each dwelling to 110 litres per person per day. The subsequently approved water limiting measures shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to limit water use in order to improve the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 7 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation (or use) of any part of the development hereby permitted, full details of the hard and soft landscaping works shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The approved landscape scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following the first occupation of any part of the development. Any plants, which within a period of 5 years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 8 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation (or use) of any part of the development hereby permitted, details of the parking turning and access facilities shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The building/dwelling shall not be occupied until the approved parking, turning and access facilities have been fully implemented. The parking turning and access facilities shall thereafter be retained as such.

Reason: To ensure adequate parking, turning and access facilities are available to serve the development in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 9 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied (or use hereby permitted commenced) unless and until provision for the storage of refuse/recycling has been made for that dwelling (or use) in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of recycling facilities in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 10 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation (or use) of any part of the development hereby permitted, details of secure (and covered) cycle parking facilities for the occupants of, and visitors to, the development shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied or use hereby permitted commenced until the approved cycle parking facilities associated with that dwelling or use have been fully implemented and made available for use. The provision for cycle parking shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for the parking of cycles in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

A formal application for connection to the public sewerage system is required in order to service this development. Please contact Southern Water, Sparrowgrove House, Sparrowgrove, Otterbourne, Hampshire SO21 2SW (Tel: 0330 303 0119) or www.southernwater.co.uk.