

Unrestricted Report

ITEM NO: 10

Application No.
14/00822/FUL
Site Address:

Ward:
Wildridings And Central

Date Registered:
18 July 2014

Target Decision Date:
12 September 2014

Station House Market Street Bracknell Berkshire RG12 1HX

Proposal:

Alterations to existing facades including replacement of fixed windows with opening windows, the addition of windows and the incorporation of vent panels

Applicant:

Bracknell Investments, Lda

Agent:

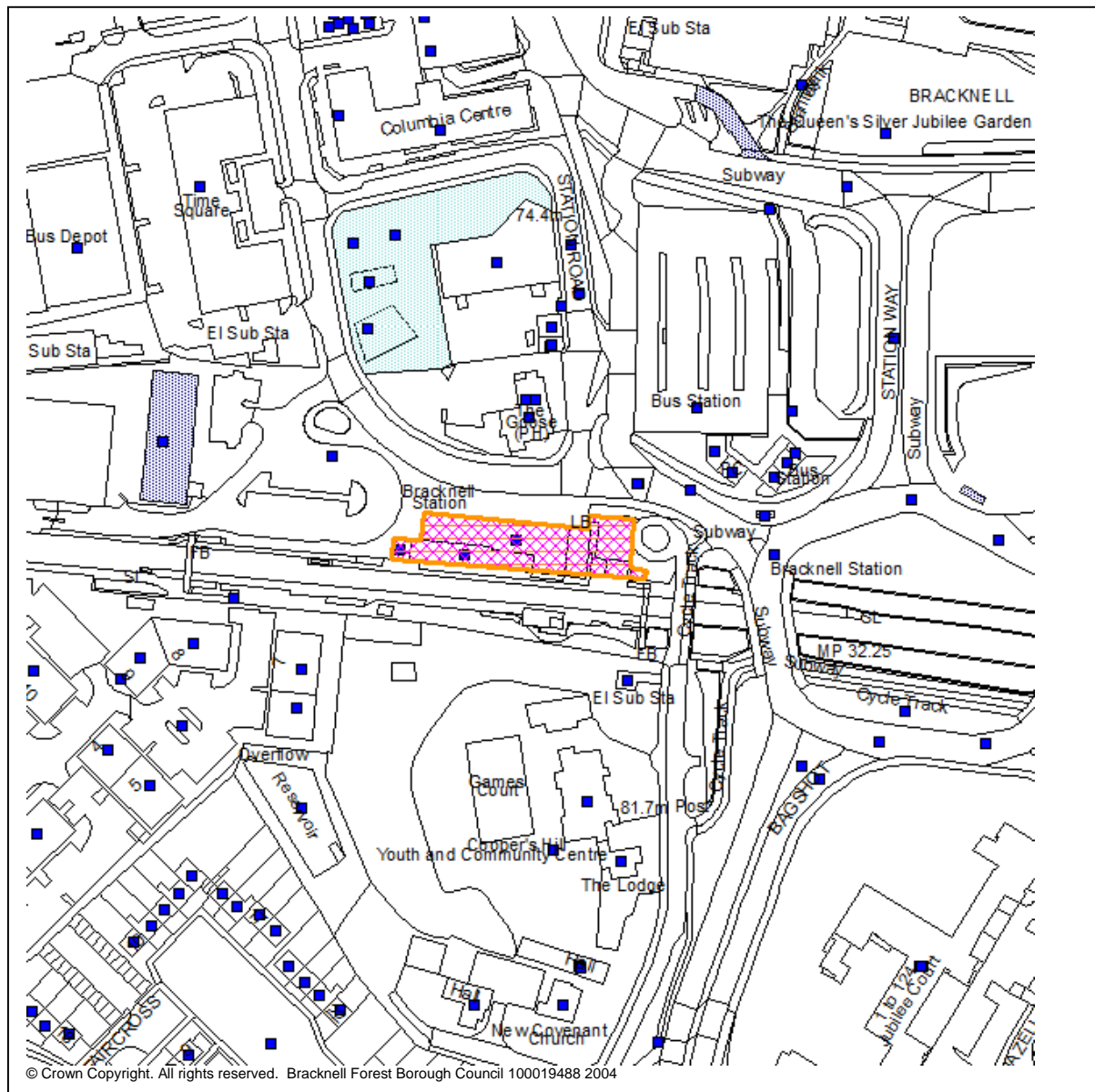
Mr Daniel Rose

Case Officer:

Michael Ruddock, 01344 352000

Development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Site Location Plan (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



OFFICER REPORT

1. REASON FOR REPORTING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

The application is reported to the Planning Committee as more than four objections have been received.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Station House is a large eight storey building located adjacent to Bracknell Railway Station. Floors 1-7 and the ground floor entrance formerly has B1 (a) office use however prior approval has recently been granted to change the office areas to residential (C3) use. The majority of the ground floor is used by the railway station. The applicant has access to 127 car park spaces located within the station car park that are currently used by the office use on a 250 year lease.

3. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

14/00010/PAC - Application for Prior Approval for the change of use from offices (Class B1(a)) to residential (Class C3) consisting of 96 no. 1 bedroom flats and 12 no. 2 bedroom flats - PRIOR APPROVAL GRANTED

14/00684/PAC - Application for Prior Approval for the change of use of ground floor (part) to 7th floor from offices (Class B1(a)) to residential (Class C3) consisting of 88 flats (9 no. studio flats, 46 no. 1 bedroom flats and 33 no. 2 bedroom flats) - PRIOR APPROVAL GRANTED

4. THE PROPOSAL

The proposed development is for alterations to the existing facades in connection with the change of use from office to residential for which Prior Approval has been granted. The alterations would consist of the replacement of fixed shut windows with openable windows, and the incorporation of vent panels in spandrel panels for servicing purposes. The windows to be replaced are on all four elevations of the building and are required for the purposes of providing habitable accommodation.

5. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Bracknell Town Council have provided comments on the proposal and have no objection to the development.

Eight letters of objection have been received from seven different addresses on The Ridgeway and Woodridge Close. The reasons for objection can be summarised as follows:

- Proposed alterations would be out of character and inappropriate to the design and setting of the existing building.
- Provision of opening windows over the railway station and pedestrian walkways would be unsafe and a danger to members of the public visiting these facilities.
- Sufficient car motor cycle and bicycle parking would not be provided for the residential use. The developer has previously claimed that 127 spaces are tied to the building however this would be a shortfall of twelve spaces therefore parking requirements have not been properly addressed. The spaces are not shown within the red line on the location plan.

[OFFICER COMMENT: As the spaces are leased by the office they are not within the applicants ownership and therefore not shown within the red line.]

6. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The Environmental Health Officer was consulted on the application, and recommends conditional approval.

7. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Development Plan for this Borough includes the following:

Site Allocations Local Plan 2013 (SALP)
'Retained' Policies of the South East Plan 2009 (SEP)
Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2008 (CSDPD)
'Saved' Policies of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan 2002 (BFBLP)
Bracknell Forest Borough Policies Map 2013

8. PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Policy CP1 of the Site Allocations Local Plan sets out that a positive approach to considering development proposals which reflect in the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF should be taken, and that planning applications that accord with the development plan for Bracknell Forest should be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is in conformity with the NPPF.

Station House is located within a defined settlement as designated by the Bracknell Forest Borough Policies Map. Due to the location and nature of the proposal it is considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CS1 (Sustainable Development), CS2 (Locational Principles) and the NPPF subject to no adverse impacts upon residential amenities of neighbouring properties, character and appearance of surrounding area, highway safety implications, etc. These matters are assessed below.

9. IMPACT ON CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF AREA

CSDPD Policy CS7 states that development will be permitted which builds upon the local character of the area, provides safe communities and enhances the local landscape where possible. BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 states that development should be in sympathy with the appearance and character of the local area.

These policies are considered to be consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF. In addition paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people to live.

It is considered that the provision of openable windows would be a minor alteration to the building that would not be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the existing building. In any case it is considered that the existing office building has little architectural merit and the alterations would improve its existing character. The site is located close to Bracknell Town Centre, and it is not considered that the alterations would result in a building that it out of keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

No volume would be added to the building, and as such the building would be as prominent a feature in the streetscene as it is as existing. As such it is not considered that the development would result in an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and would not therefore be contrary to CSDPD Policy CS7, BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 or the NPPF.

10. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 refers to the need to not adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding properties and adjoining areas. In addition to this, part of the requirement for a development to provide a satisfactory design as stated in BFBLP Policy 'Saved' EN20 is for the development to be sympathetic to the visual amenity of neighbouring properties through its design implications. This is considered to be consistent with the core principle relating to design in paragraph 17 of the NPPF, which states that LPAs should seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings, and consistent with the general design principles laid out in paragraphs 56 to 66 of the NPPF.

'Saved' Policy EN25 of the BFBLP also makes reference to residential amenity which is consistent with paragraph 123 the NPPF which refers to noise. The National Planning Practice Guidance builds on paragraph 123 of the NPPF and states that 'noise needs to be considered...when new developments would be sensitive to the prevailing acoustic environment.' This is also consistent with 'Saved' Policy EN25.

There are no residential properties immediately adjacent to the site, and given that no volume would be added to the building there would be no issues in respect of loss of light or overbearing. Although the new windows would be clear glazed and openable, given the building is located over 100m from the nearest residential property it is not considered that there would be any loss of privacy to any residential properties as a result of the development.

Concerns have been raised with regard to the safety of members of the public using the railway station as a result of the provision of openable windows. However it is not considered that the effect of the proposal would be any different to that of any residential flats that overlook public areas, which is a common relationship. The letters of objection have not specified exactly what safety aspects the residents are concerned about, so it is difficult to address this point in any greater detail. However the safety of residents in public areas as a result of the proposed development is not considered by the Local Planning Authority to be an issue that would warrant refusal of the application.

The Environmental Health Officer has made comments advising the applicant that regard should be had of all relevant planning guidance, codes of practice and British Standards in respect of noise, and that the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines should be referred to for night-time noise levels and sleep disturbance. Habitable rooms on the first floor are required to have at least 18 dB of noise control. Although this can be achieved through standard glazing, residents should be able to expect to sleep with their windows open sufficiently to provide ventilation. A partially open window may be expected to provide around 10 dB. Therefore, if the required noise control is achieved through closed windows, some form of alternative ventilation would be required. This advice is consistent with that given within the National Planning Practice Guidance and is included as an informative.

The main concern at the onset of this application from an environmental health point of view is the adverse impact of noise from the train station on potential residents of the

above proposed flats. The primary sources of noise expected to impact on the proposed residential accommodation are train and people noise. As such the Environmental Health Officer has recommended that a condition be imposed on any permission given requiring a method statement setting out mitigating and management factors in respect of the control of noise. However the principle of residential development in this location has already been accepted through the Prior Approval that has already been granted. Such a condition is therefore not considered to be appropriate in this instance and the advice contained within the informative referred to above is considered to be sufficient. A further condition regarding hours of construction has also been recommended by the Environmental Health Officer, however as the site is not within close proximity of neighbouring properties this condition is not considered to be necessary.

It is therefore not considered that the development would result in a detrimental effect on the amenities of the residents of the neighbouring properties. An informative will be included as advice to the applicant to safeguard the future occupiers of these properties. As such the development would not be contrary to BFBLP 'Saved' Policies EN20 and EN25, the National Planning Practice Guidance or the NPPF.

11. TRANSPORT IMPLICATIONS

Concerns have been raised by residents with regard to parking provision, however this issue was considered under the Prior Approval procedure. Prior Approval has already been granted for the change of use from office to residential. The application currently under consideration is for changes to the external appearance only, and there would be no transport implications as a result of such development.

12. CONCLUSIONS

It is not considered that the development would result in an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area or the amenities of the residents of the neighbouring properties. An informative will be included as advice to the applicant to safeguard the future occupiers of these properties, however a condition requiring a method statement is not considered to be appropriate in this case as the principle of residential development has already been accepted through the Prior Approval that has already been granted. As the proposal under consideration is for changes to the external appearance of the building only, there would be no transport implications as a result of the proposed development. As such the development would not be contrary to CSDPD Policy CS23, BFBLP 'Saved' Policies EN20 and EN25, the National Planning Practice Guidance or the NPPF.

13. RECOMMENDATION

The application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:-

01. 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.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 18th July 2014:

153_PLN_01
153_SKE_140702_01
153_SKE_140702_02
153_SKE_140702_03

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Informative(s):

01. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission subject to conditions, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.
02. No details are required to be submitted in relation to the following conditions; however they are required to be complied with:
01. Time Limit
02. Approved Plans
03. The applicant is advised to have regard to all relevant planning guidance (such as the National Planning Practice Guidance), codes of practice and British Standards with reference to noise, and are particularly advised to refer to the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines for night-time noise levels and sleep disturbance. Habitable rooms on the first floor are required at least 18 dB of noise control. Although this can be achieved through standard glazing, residents should be able to expect to sleep with their windows open sufficiently to provide ventilation. A partially open window may be expected to provide around 10 dB. Therefore, if the required noise control is achieved through closed windows, some form of alternative ventilation is required.

Doc. Ref: Uniform 7/DC/Agenda

The application file to which this report relates can be viewed at the Council's Time Square office during office hours or online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk