

Planning Statement – Policy Assessment

Property	80-82 High Street, Billericay CM12 9BS
Proposal	New roof, first and second floor extensions, alterations to ground floor to form 2 x 2b2p flats and 1 x 1b2p flat
Date	23 rd January 2024
Applicant	Vard Duggan Retirement Plan
Agent	Stephensons
Reference	21-062 V1.2

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the residential development of 80 – 82 High Street, Billericay.

This Planning Statement provides a general description and an evaluation of the Proposed Development against relevant national, strategic and local planning policy guidance. It should be read in conjunction with the plans and Design and Access Statement

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Site

The Site comprises a two storey flat roofed commercial building comprising two retail units at ground floor with storage/offices above, located on the east side of Billericay High Street. The property was rebuilt in 1990 and the original façade was retained. There is a small pitched roof at the front.

The Site area is circa 324 sq.m. of which the existing building has a footprint of 231 sq.m.

Surrounding Area

The Site is within Billericay Town Centre and falls within the Billericay Conservation Area.

The property is mid terraced. 76 High Street has been redeveloped. Beyond this is a row of offices fronting onto Chapel Street and the vehicular access into the site. A pair of Grade II listed two storey commercial premises are seen directly opposite the site at 91 to 95 High Street.

The Site enjoys a good level of accessibility by public transport. It is located circa seven minutes from Billericay Railway Station which is circa 0.4 miles north of the Site.

Servicing currently takes place at the rear of the Site, which is accessed from Chapel Street.

Planning History

The demolition of the previous buildings and construction of the current building on the Site were granted in the 90's

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The scheme is: New roof, first and second floor extensions, alterations to ground floor to form 2 x 2b2p flats and 1 x 1b2p flat

The proposal is to retain all of the extant building and undertake the following work:

- Reconfiguration of the rear entrance.
- New dormers to front facing roof
- New second floor extension
- New first floor extension
- New rear entrance
- Formation of 3 flats with terraces and balconies
- Retention of parking and refuse store

Policy Evaluation

This section provides an evaluation of the Proposed Development against the current planning policy framework.

National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was updated on 19 February 2019. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied to achieve sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) states that the determination of planning applications should be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The current relevant statutory development plan for the Site includes the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies (2007). Work started in December 2014 on a new Local Plan that will provide the planning framework for the future growth and development of the Basildon Borough area until 2034. The new Local Plan will identify land for housing, businesses, shops and leisure, as well as areas for protection, such as open space and sites important for wildlife.

In addition to the Local Plan policies, due regard has been given to supplementary planning guidance and other relevant documents, including the Council's Development Control Guidelines, the Billericay Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, Billericay Design Statement, Billericay Conservation Area Shopfront and Design Guide SPD and the Essex County Council Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice 2009.

Assessment of Conformity with Planning Policy

Principle of Development

Paragraph 117 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (paragraph 118).

Chapter 5 of the NPPF concerns delivering a wide choice of high quality homes, with paragraph 59 stating that “it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay”.

Policy BAS TC1 of the Local Plan states that within the town centres, development appropriate to a town centre, including retailing and residential (where it forms an ancillary part of a mixed use scheme) will be encouraged. The policy goes on to state:

- i. “The proposal should not result in a significant net loss of retailing floorspace;
- ii. Car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's Car Parking Standards in Appendix Three(viii)
- iii. The surrounding roads should be adequate to accommodate the increase in vehicle traffic generation. A Traffic Impact Assessment may be required;
- iv. Servicing and turning areas should be provided on the site so that the development is able to function properly, and traffic danger and congestion are avoided;
- v. The design, form, scale and materials used in any development are sympathetic and appropriate to the area;
- vi. In the case of Billericay Town Centre, regard will be given to the Conservation Area status of the town centre and the concentration of Listed Buildings;
- vii. The development should not result in the loss of any public open space or amenity area.”

Policy BAS BE12 states:

“Planning permission for new residential development and for the alteration and extension of existing dwellings will be reduced if it causes material harm in any of the following ways:

1. Harm to the character of the surrounding area, including the street scene
2. Overlooking
3. Noise or disturbance to the occupants of neighbouring dwellings
4. Overshadowing or over-dominance; and
5. Traffic danger or congestion”

As set out in this Chapter, it is considered that the application accords with the above policy and is appropriate development in the town centre. We consider the proposals against the criteria of BAS BE12 below. Harm to the Character of the Surrounding Area & Over Dominance

Heritage matters have been dealt with in the DAS which demonstrates how the adjoining heritage assets and the general street context will be respected by the new development. This assessment concludes that the development would constitute an improvement to the current frontage of the site onto the High Street and that the rear elevation would be more in keeping with the historic character of the conservation area.

The accompanying Design and Access Statement provides a thorough explanation of the design rationale for the Site and includes visuals demonstrating how the proposals will fit sensitively into the street scene.

It is considered therefore that the Proposed Development will improve the character of the street scene and conservation area, and will not result in an overly dominant development of the Site.

Overlooking & Disturbance to Neighbouring Dwellings

The Proposed Development has been designed to minimize disturbance to neighbouring dwellings and occupiers.

Council Guidelines advocate 15 sqm of private amenity space for purpose-built flats. The design and positioning of these has had regard to the neighbouring building and incorporated obscured balustrading to minimize overlooking into the neighbouring site.

In relation to noise, the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should aim to:

- avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development; and
- mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from noise from new development, including through the use of conditions.

It is considered therefore that the Proposed Development will not cause material harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupants. Traffic Danger or Congestion

Paragraph 103 of the NPPF states that “development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health”.

Residential development should provide private car parking in accordance with the Council's Car Parking Standards. The Council's adopted parking standards advise that 1 parking space would be sought for a 1 bedroom dwelling, and 2 parking spaces would be sought for a 2 or more bedroom dwelling, plus one secure cycle space per dwelling. The standards further advise that a reduction of the vehicle standard may be considered if there is development within an urban area (including town centre locations) that have good links to sustainable transport. In this instance, reflecting the sustainable location of the Site and the constraints for additional provision, it is considered that the provision of five car parking spaces is appropriate.

Waste associated with the existing shops is stored within two-euro bins close to the rear entrance of the unit facing the parking yard. Following the redevelopment of the Site, bins would be stored adjacent to the new rear elevation. Although both the commercial and residential waste storage areas would be more than 12 metres from the highway as normally required by Council Guideline DC22 (30 to 50 metres), the ability for refuse operatives to collect waste from the premises would be little different to the existing situation. It is noted that this arrangement is extant.

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states clearly that: Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The car parking is accessed from the rear of the Site and is extant.

Summary

4.27. As demonstrated above, the Proposed Development is in conformity with national and local planning policy.

CONCLUSION

This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application at the 80 – 82 High Street, Billericay.

It has assessed the proposals against the current provisions of the Development Plan, supplementary planning guidance and national planning policy. It is considered that overall, the proposal accords in all material respects with the relevant policies.

The Proposed Development will result in a significant number of economic, social and environmental benefits and the rear will be more in keeping with the character of the conservation area. The scheme will provide four new residential units, comprising an appropriate mix of units, making a contribution towards housing need in the Borough.

In conclusion the proposal is considered to be in accordance with national and local planning policies, and therefore represents an appropriate development for this Site.