

Design and Access Statement

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 V1.3

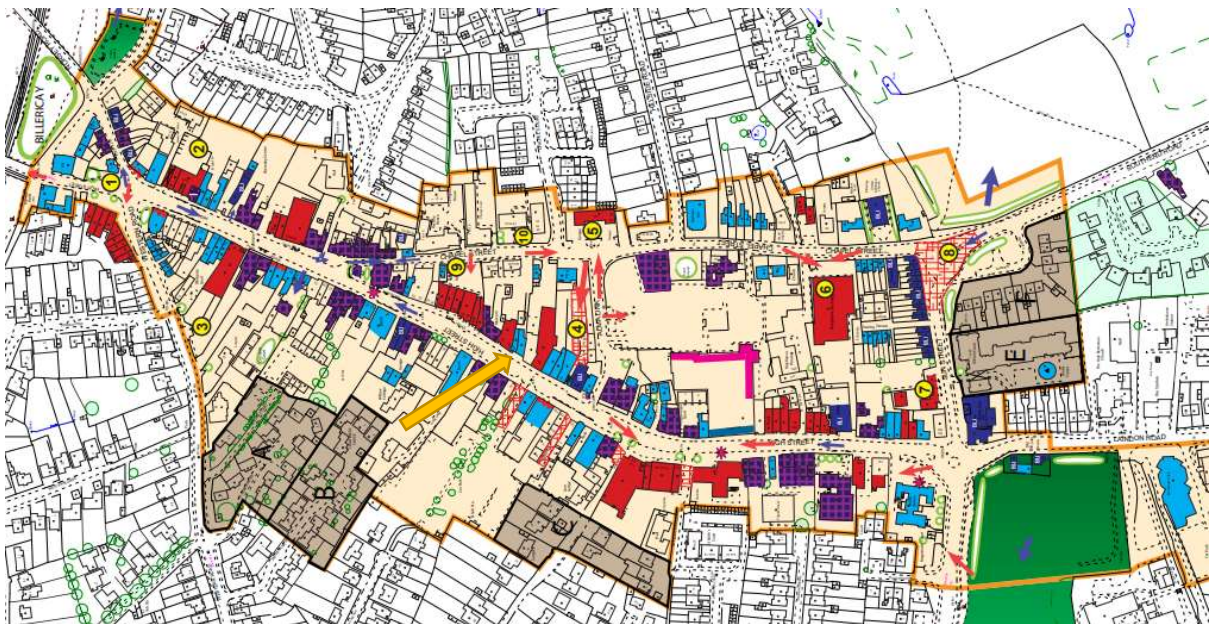
Introduction

The ground floor retail units no longer require any accommodation at first floor and so this has now become redundant.

National Planning Policy now encourage change of use within town centre locations, and have streamlined planning applications where a residential change of use is proposed. This approach has been utilised to the neighbouring building at 76-78 High Street, which has benefitted from a substantial redevelopment of the upper and rear parts to form 7 new flats.

Site and Surroundings

The property is located midway along Billericay High Street and was constructed in the 1990s with all new accommodation behind a retained façade.



Billericay High Street is a busy town centre with all of the normal uses.

There are a wide range of differing retail provisions, with a high proportion of independent businesses. Within 200m of the site is a large Waitrose Supermarket, and further afield there is a large Co-Op supermarket.

The property has a very sustainable location being approximately 500m from Billericay Railway Station. Within around a 1km walk from the site is Lake Meadows park and First Strokes swimming pool. The Queen Elizabeth playing fields are approximately 400m away, and the historic Norsey Woods is just over a km walk from the property. There are also a number of gym facilities within a short walk of the building.

There are a variety of schools in Billericay, both state run and private. There are also numerous places of worship.

Appearance

The front elevation is original with pitched roof, brick and stone detailing, timber sliding sash windows and a lead roofed oriel window. The rear of the property is flat roofed, both to the ground and first floor areas. Buildings on either side and the rear have undergone extensive redevelopment and the area to the rear is now predominantly residential.

To both sides of the site the neighbouring buildings are 3 storeys high, and the rear flat roofs are fully enclosed by these units, along with the new building to the rear (part of the development at 76-78, High Street).

The ground floor shop units are accessed from the High Street and they are serviced from the rear off of Chapel Street.

There are three allocated parking spaces and a bin storage area within the demise of the premises at the rear of the site as shown on the block plan.

On entering the building from the rear access, there is a small lobby with a doorway straight ahead leading to 82 High Street and a doorway to the right leading to 80 High Street. Additionally, leading straight off the lobby is a staircase providing access to the upper storey, with a landing/corridor around 1.2m in width leading from the staircase to the main first floor element of the building.

It should be noted that the second floor window to rear facing building and the roof line/rainwater goods on the flank wall of the next door building are not in accordance with the recent approved planning permissions. This work has been carried out without approval together with the installation of TV aerials and satellite dishes.

The proposed scheme currently submitted takes account of these matters and has been designed to remove any negative impacts.

Planning Considerations

The following matters and references have all been made by the council in respect of the planning application on 76 - 78 High Street and are material planning considerations in the application that is being submitted for 80 – 82 High Street.

Relevant Policy

- National National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Local Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies September 2007
- Basildon Council Development Control Guidelines Basildon Borough Revised Publication Local Plan 2014-2034 (Emerging Local Plan)
- Billericay Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan Billericay Design Statement Billericay Conservation Area Shopfront and Design Guide
- Essex Design Guide
- Development Plan Billericay Conservation Area

The property is within the Primary Shopping Frontage of Billericay

NPPF

The NPPF was published on 19th February 2019. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 47 of the NPPF reaffirms that planning law requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is an important material consideration.

The following parts of the NPPF are relevant to the consideration of the current proposals:

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places.

Paragraph 127(f) states that planning decisions should achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.

The NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and requires high quality design.

Paragraph 130 states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans of supplementary planning documents.

Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The NPPF advises that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.

In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local authorities to seek to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas within their respective areas. Whilst the NPPF emphasises the need to ensure that new development conserves the significance of heritage assets.

Principal of residential development

Within a town centre Policy BAS TC6 (Residential Development in the Town Centres) states that planning permission for new residential development within the town centres will normally be allowed where it forms part of a mixed-use scheme.

Design Aesthetics

Planning Applications in this location should avoid concrete tiles, artificial slate, panels of concrete, plate glass or stretcher bond brickwork. Windows should be timber framed, and where sashes are intended they should have narrow vertical glazing bars and be set in sufficient reveals. Windows should have a vertical emphasis. Dormer windows should be appropriately detailed with a vertical emphasis, in scale with the dormer and the rest of the building. Rooflights should be kept to a minimum and avoided to the front elevations.

When considering new or extended buildings the Council will take into account the impact of the proposal on the setting of all heritage assets.

A three storey building in this location is appropriate if presented as a two storey building with accommodation in the roof space. Any proposals on the site should have a roof pitch at around 40° to match the adjacent buildings.

It was seen that the chimney stack incorporated into the flank elevation provided a positive contribution to the streetscene.

This has been considered for 80 – 82 but is not deemed to be architecturally correct or pleasing.

The Management Plan advises that traditional buildings in Billericay have a shallow plan form with additional depth provided by crosswings and extensions, usually to the rear. This enables good penetration of daylight and permits natural through ventilation which are key aspects of sustainability. Roof depths are also minimised. New buildings should minimise the plan depth to avoid bulky roofs and large and uninteresting gable ends.

When viewed from the street the roof remains the same as the existing and a ridge tile detail is seen. At the rear of the property flat roofed extensions are proposed and this is a similar feature to the current building. These cannot be seen from the street, do not affect the Conservation Area and ensure that there is effective use of the land in accordance with Paragraphs 117 – 123 of the NPPF.

Impact upon the private amenity of neighbouring properties

76 – 78 was set a minimum of 10m from adjoining boundaries where overlooking may have been an issue, was seen as an acceptable distance.

1.5m high obscure glazed side screens were also seen as appropriate to minimise overlooking from balconies.

80 – 82 is carefully designed to avoid all over and interlooking. One facing window in the rear building at second floor level serves a kitchen and is not shown on the approved planning drawings.

Parking

The Council's adopted parking standards require 1 parking space for a 1 bedroom dwelling, and 2 parking spaces for a 2 bedroom property, 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 town centre locations that have good links to sustainable transport.

76-78 High Street was deemed to be in a very sustainable location and the council allowed a reduction in parking provision. The scheme was allowed a 5 parking space provision for the 7 flats that were part of the development. This gives a ratio of 0.7 spaces per flat.

Given the town centre location where alternative modes of travel and car parks are available, the shortfall in parking spaces was regarded as acceptable.

The current proposal for 80 – 82 High Street has 3 spaces for 3 flats – a ratio of 1.

Amenity Space

Council guidelines require 15m² of amenity space for each purpose built flat. Only three of the flats in the development were provided with balconies (a total of 23m² between them) with the remaining flats having little or no amenity space. Juliet balconies to the first and second floor flats within the rear building provided good ventilation. Due to the town centre location of the building, the level of amenity space was not considered unreasonable on 76 - 78.

All proposed flats in 80 – 82 have private balconies/terraces totalling 80m² which equates to 26.6m² for each flat. This will be landscaped and with the use of privacy glass screens and planting it will ensure that the spaces are useable and do not cause over or interlooking.

Refuse

Two separate and enclosed commercial and residential bin stores are provided to the rear of 76 and as these were no further from Chapel Street than the previous refuse stores this provision was accepted, albeit with the caveat that on bin collection days the Euro bins might need to be wheeled closer to the edge of the development site.

The existing bin store that is allocated to 80 – 82 is being re used and a contract set up with Biffa for the removal of bins from bot commercial ground floor and residential upper floors as and when necessary.

Daylight

All new flats are dual aspect with windows facing to the East and West and the windows are larger than 25% of the floor area.

Over and Interlooking

There is no over or interlooking formed by the proposed flats.

Design

The proposal is for a new roof with accommodation, two new front roof dormers, rear first floor extension, rear second floor extension.

There are no alterations proposed to the front ground and first floor elevations and the central feature gable and eaves are being retained. The front slope of the existing pitched roof will be repeated in the new scheme.

The new rear facing elevations are all pitched to suit the front and surrounding properties and flat roofs are hidden behind extended ridge lines. External finishes match the existing building and other buildings in close proximity.

Access

To the shops for pedestrians will not change. Access at the rear will generally remain the same but the existing path between buildings that leads to this area will be covered with a glass structure and new doors will be added in a more inviting location for staff of the ground floor units and for residents of the new flats. Access to the flats will still be via the internal staircase but DDA regulations are not retrospective. The staircase is however to “ambulant” design standards.

Amount

There are no alterations to the ground floor retail space. The flats will have to comply with the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards and a comparison table is set out below.

Technical Space Standards					
Unit 1	2B4P 1 Storey				
	GIA (m ²)	Storage (m ²)	Bedroom 1 Width (m)	GIA Bedroom (m ²)	Min. Ceiling Height (m)
Required	70	2	2.75	11.5	2.3
Provided	70	2.1	3.4	14.7	2.5
			Bedroom 2 Width (m)	GIA Bedroom (m ²)	
			2.75	11.5	
			2.75	11.5	
Unit 2	1B2P 1 Storey				
	GIA (m ²)	Storage (m ²)	Bedroom Width (m)	GIA Bedroom (m ²)	Min. Ceiling Height (m)
Required	50	1.5	2.75	11.5	2.3
Provided	50	1.5	2.77	12.6	2.5
Unit 3	2B4P 1 Storey				
	GIA (m ²)	Storage (m ²)	Bedroom Width (m)	GIA Bedroom (m ²)	Min. Ceiling Height (m)
Required	70	2	2.75	11.5	2.3
Provided	87	6	3.1	14.2	2.35
			Bedroom 2 Width (m)	GIA Bedroom (m ²)	
			2.75	11.5	
			3.5	11.9	

Heritage

The Billericay Conservation Area Character Appraisal (Nov 2011) identifies this particular site as a building of Townscape Value. The character appraisal states that the Council will not permit development in the Conservation Area which detracts from its character or appearance in terms of height, bulk, scale, form, detailing and materials.

The Billericay Conservation Area Management Plan (Nov 2011) states that whenever the opportunity arises, the Council will encourage and support schemes which improve the appearance of buildings in the Conservation Area.



The application seeks only to add two dormer windows to the roof of the front elevation and this is in common with surrounding buildings. The proportions and design of the dormers are in keeping with policy.

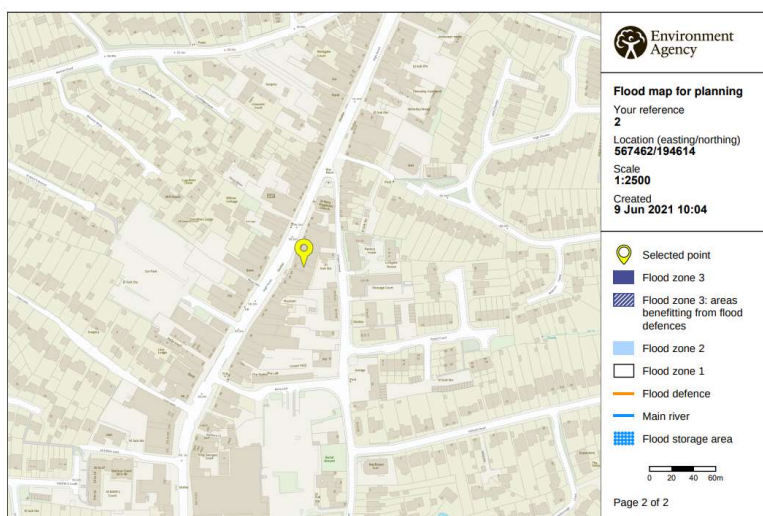
The application proposals represent an opportunity to enhance the appearance of the site from the rear. The remodelling of the existing building to provide matching tiled pitched roofs to the street is considered justified.

The whole of the rear of the existing building is modern and not historic. Using new external finishes would represent an improvement on the existing render and expansive flat roofs. Having regard to the above it is considered that the development would not have an adverse impact on the visual amenities of the conservation area and would be in accordance with the objectives of Council Saved Policy BAS BE12, the Billericay Conservation Area Management Plan and the conservation objectives of the NPPF and emerging Local Plan.

The rear of the building is almost fully obscured by other buildings around as shown in the imagery below.

Flooding

The property is in Flood Zone 1 and less than 1 hectare so a flood risk assessment is not required.



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Conclusion

Planning policy requires the best use to be made of buildings and given the high street location, current scale and mass of this and surrounding buildings we feel that the proposed extensions will be a valuable addition to the area.

Apart from new roof dormers to the front the proposed extensions will not be visible from the High Street or have an effect on the conservation area.

Plans show the rear extension but it is also important to take into account of the fact that the building is almost entirely hidden from view by surrounding buildings limiting the impact of the proposed works again.

All spaces are fully in accordance with the technical standards and the retail units at ground floor are unaffected by the works apart from having enhanced access from the rear.

Existing bin storage and parking is unaffected by the works.

Billericay High Street contains a varying mix of commercial and residential units. The use of unused parts of the building for residential use would not be out of keeping with the character of this area.

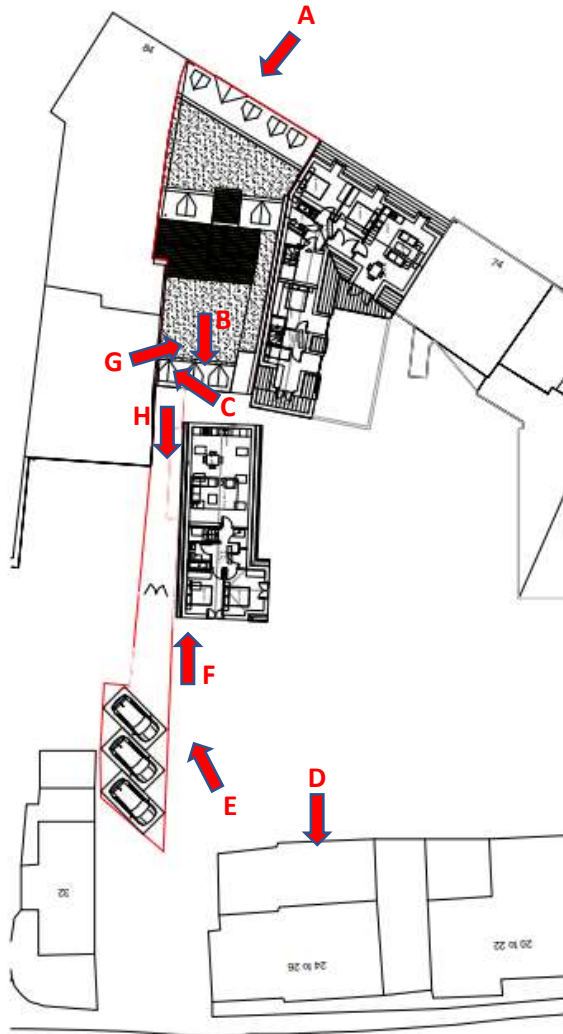
The proposals in this case would create three additional residential units in a sustainable location, which would contribute to the Borough's housing supply. It is not considered that material harm to the character of the area would result from the proposed residential use.

IMAGES OF SITE

A



H



B



C



D



G



F



E

