



Planning Committee

21 July 2015

Planning application no.	15/00144/FUL
Site	11 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton
Proposal	Change of use of lower ground floor from gym to small apartments with communal living/dining areas (House in Multiple Occupation)
Ward	St Peters
Applicant	Mr Nick Sanghera
Agent	Mr John Mason
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Peter Bilson Economic Regeneration and Prosperity
Accountable director	Nick Edwards, Service Director, City Assets
Planning officer	Name Ragbir Sahota Tel 01902 555616 Email Ragbir.sahota@wolverhampton.gov.uk

1. Summary Recommendation

1.1 Grant.

2. Application site

2.1 The application site is a Victorian property with distinctive detailing. The property is situated within the Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area and is within the Waterloo Road/Darlington Street Quarter as identified within the Councils Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

2.2 The street scene is predominantly commercial in character and comprises a mix of historic and modern buildings.

3. Application Details

3.1 The proposal is to convert the lower ground floor formerly a gym, into nine small apartments which all have individual kitchens and bathrooms with communal dining/living areas. The communal dining and living areas are situated to the rear of the building fronting Clarence Road.

3.2 There is provision for four parking spaces to the rear and an external bin store.

3.3 The proposal primarily comprises internal alterations with minimal external alterations which include rooflights and changes to the rear elevation to reconfigure door and window arrangements fronting Clarence Road.

4. Constraints

4.1 Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area

5. Relevant Policy Documents

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 The Development Plan:
Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan (UDP)
Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS)

6. Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations

6.1 This development proposal is not included in the definition of Projects that requires a “screening opinion” as to whether or not a formal Environmental Impact Assessment as defined by the above regulations is required.

7. Publicity

7.1 Three letters of objection have been received. The main concerns are the inappropriate use of HMOs in an office/commercial environment, the density of the development, poor light and ventilation for occupants of the residential units, risk of fire, inadequate amenity space and lack of parking.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 S55(2)(f) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that planning permission be obtained for the development of land, including the making of the material change in the use of any building or land. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 prescribes a number of classes of use. A use not falling within a specific class is a sui generis use. The existing use for a gymnasium falls under Class D2 (Assembly and leisure) and the proposed use for apartments is a sui generis use.

8.2 When an application is situate in or affects the setting of a Conservation Area by virtue of Section 72 and Section 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in considering the application and exercising their powers in relation to any buildings or other land in or adjacent to a Conservation Area the Local Planning Authority must ensure that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and further should have regard to any representations ensuing from the publicity required under Section 73 of the Act.
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9. Appraisal

- 9.1 The application site is within the Waterloo Road/Darlington Street Quarter of the Councils Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which seeks to encourage high quality mixed use development along Darlington Street and to encourage Waterloo Road as a focus for office development. The policy primarily relates to offices on ground and upper floors fronting Waterloo Road and as this proposal seeks to convert the lower ground floor of this property to nine small apartments, the proposal is considered acceptable. Furthermore it is anticipated that the revenue of the lower floor as residential would contribute to bringing back into use the vacant upper floors of the building and thus providing a mixed use development contributing to the vitality and viability of the area.
- 9.2 The proposal has been designed to include a communal living room, dining room and kitchen to the rear of the building fronting Clarence Road to offer occupants communal living areas with natural light and views. The nine small apartments primarily have rooflights for natural light and therefore the communal areas offer an alternative for residents to enjoy which is considered to be acceptable in respect of housing standards. Concerns were also raised in respect of an internal bin store which has now been relocated to the rear of the building on Clarence Road.
- 9.3 The location of the bin store to the rear of the building and the rendering to the elevation fronting Clarence Road makes a positive contribution to the street scene and is considered to have no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and overall the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 The proposal brings back into use part of this redundant building, results in a mixed use development adding to the vitality and viability of the area. The number of units is considered to be appropriate and the proposal has no adverse impact on the Conservation Area. As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with UDP and BCCS policies.

11. Detailed Recommendation

- 11.1 That planning application 15/00144/FUL be granted, subject to any appropriate conditions including:
- Submission of materials
 - Details of bins stores



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