

APPLICATION NUMBER: **FUL/2019/0925**

ADDRESS: **Unit 6 Edison Buildings Electric Wharf**

PROPOSAL: Erection of an additional storey on existing building to create new office space

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to consider the above application

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **refused** for the reasons outlined in the attached schedule.

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION SITE

Unit 6 Edison Buildings is a single storey office building at the far end of the site near the multi storey car park. The Electric Wharf is located off Sandy Lane and comprises of other business and some residential units. It houses the gate to the wharf compound which resides in the Coventry Canal Conservation Area. The application unit backs on to residential units on Widdrington Road.

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The application seeks permission to erect an additional storey on top of the existing building to create two additional office spaces with small kitchen units and a shared W/C. The ground floor layout is also to be altered to include a meeting area. The creation of the first floor will result in a pitched roof at a maximum height of circa 7.2 metres and eaves height of 5.6 metres. The extension is to be designed in brick walls and brown clay roof tiles, which are in keeping with the existing building.

The floor space would be increased circa 53 sqm. The proposed development is to create office space for two different businesses. The openings hours will be 9am-5pm on weekdays and no working on weekends. There will be no clients or customers visiting the office.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

R/2001/2846-Cov-Ref.-49212 Erection of eco-houses and eco-apartments with associated off-site highways works (Outline application discharging siting, design and means of access)- Approved 03/09/2001

R/2001/2852-Cov-Ref.-49213 Erection of apartment buildings (Site 1) and conversion, alteration and extension of existing buildings to provide offices and apartments, new car park and associated off site highway works (Site 2)- Approved 08/10/2001

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

As required by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the proposed development must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Statutory Development Plan for the area relevant to this application site comprises of the Coventry City Council Local Plan 2016. Relevant policies are outlined below.

Policy AC2- Road Network

Policy AC3- Demand Management

Policy DE1- Ensuring High Quality of Design

Policy HE2- Conservation and Heritage Assets

Policy JE4- Location of Office Development

SPD Delivering a More Sustainable City 2009

SPD Coventry Connected (Transport and Accessibility) 2019

The Coventry Canal Conservation Area- Management Plan 2012

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Planning Policy- Objection no sequential assessment submitted

Conservation- Objection no heritage assessment submitted

Highways- Objection no parking survey/ assessment submitted

Urban Design- Objection

Environmental Protection- No objections subject to conditions

PUBLIC RESPONSES

- Neighbour notification was sent in accordance with the Communications Record and a site notice was posted on 10th June 2019.
- One response has been received commenting on the existing car parking arrangement, the impact of the proposal on the existing arrangement and concerns over damage to vehicles during construction

ISSUES AND APPRAISAL

The application is sought for office development. Policy JE4 states that new office development should normally be sited within Coventry City Centre or other defined centres. Proposals for new office development in other locations will only be permitted if the following criteria are satisfied having regard to locational factors, there are no suitable sequentially preferable sites available within the city centre, another defined centre or in an edge-of-centre location (if no Defined Centre sites are suitable and available); or the proposal is for small scale rural offices.

The Agent has not submitted a sequential assessment. A sequential assessment which covers the city centre, Radford Road Local Centre, Barker's Butts Lane Local Centre, Hillfields Local Centre along with their edge-of-centre localities should have been submitted. Thus, it has not been demonstrated that there are suitably sequentially preferable sites. Although the use is compatible with the existing use of the site and surrounding businesses which are also mainly office base, insufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the principle of this new office space is acceptable contrary to Policy JE4 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016. Planning Policy officers have objected on this basis.

Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), specifically paragraph 124 states in part that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'. This is echoed by policy DE1 and H5 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 which seeks to ensure that development complements or enhances

the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features.

Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 states that all development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area.

The proposed first floor element is to be in line 1-5 Edison Building in regard to scale and design, thus is to be in keeping with this units. The materials of the proposed development are also to match the existing buildings. The proposed first floor element is considered to have an acceptable impact upon the visual amenity of the Electric Wharf.

No 36 and 38 Widdrington Road back on to this unit. There is a separation unit of circa 6.9 metres between the rear end of these properties and the application site. The first-floor extension is considered to have a detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of these occupants in regard to overbearing and loss of light/overshadowing. There are also windows to the rear of this properties that will be looking straight up at a large brick wall. Thus, the proposal is considered to cause a loss of outlook for these properties especially when viewed from the rear windows of the properties. The proposal is considered to have a detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of these occupants contrary to Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016. The urban design officer object to the proposal.

The conservation officer has made the following comments; The application has provided little in the way of analysis in terms of the contribution of the building to the conservation area and whether the one storey element has any particular significance in its architectural setup. Secondly, adding a second storey will inherently remove architectural detailing such as the banding. No heritage assessment or information has been submitted as part of the application.

Policy AC2 of CLP 2016 recognises that the provision of car parking for a new development can influence the traffic generation congestion. It goes on stating that the occurrences of inappropriate on-street parking can block access routes for emergency, refuse and delivery vehicles, block footways preventing pedestrians' access, affect the street scene and could reduce visibility for motorists and pedestrians causing safety issues. The new development will therefore be expected to provide appropriate levels of car parking in order to address the above issues.

Policy AC3 of the CLP 2016 states that proposals for the provision of car parking associated with new development will be assessed on the basis of parking standards set out in Appendix 5 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.

The Highway Authority considers the impact of the development to be severe and therefore, raises objections to the current proposal. There is no provision for on-site parking within the development. Highway officers requested a parking survey to be submitted. As part of the application the applicant has failed to provide evidence demonstrating that the development is not contrary to the Local Plan Policies and would not have unreasonable impact on the highways. It is therefore, considered the proposal fails to comply with CLP 2016 Policies AC2 and AC3 and objectives of the NPPF.

Environmental Protection officer have no objections to the proposal subject to conditions in relation to air quality.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

There are no equality implications.

CONCLUSION

I therefore recommend that permission be refused.

REASON FOR REFUSAL

1. The first-floor extension would be contrary to Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the overriding principles of the National Planning Policy Framework due to its siting, massing, scale and increased height in close proximity to the rear garden (the primary amenity areas of the affected properties) No 36 and 38 Widdrington Road. The proposal would result in demonstrable harm and an overbearing impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 36 and 38 Widdrington Road from increased visual intrusion, overshadowing/ loss of light and loss of outlook.
2. Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that there are no suitable sequentially preferable sites available within the city centre, another defined centre or in an edge-of-centre location. Insufficient information has been submitted in relation to a heritage statement to assess the impact upon the Conservation Area. The proposal is contrary Policies JE4 and HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.
3. The proposal is contrary to Policies AC2 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, in particular 'the Car and Cycle Parking for New Development (Appendix 5)' and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework as the proposal has failed to either include on-site parking provision, or if this cannot be achieved, provide any evidence to demonstrate the proposal would not result in the Intensification of demand for on street parking in the locality in the absence of on-site parking provision. It is considered the proposal would result in an increase of demand for on-street parking in the locality, which would be to the detriment of highway safety, the free flow of traffic and to the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.