

Name of Applicant Type of Certificate	Proposal	Map/Plan Policy	Plan Ref. Expiry Date
<b>Bromsgrove District Housing Trust 'A'</b>	Conversion of ten room hostel to six self contained affordable flats and two 2-storey side extensions - 166 and 168 New Road, Rubery	RES	<b>B/2007/0835</b> 19.09.2007

**RECOMMENDATION:** that planning permission be **GRANTED**.

### Consultations

WCC(HP)	<p>Consulted - view received 06.09.2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends that the permission be refused in the interest of Highway Safety.</li> <li>• The application proposes 6 flats that will be privately owned, despite being supported by a recognised social landlord. Each unit should be provided with 1 car parking space, the application site proposes 3 spaces, 1 of which is allocated for disabled persons. There is a short fall of car parking for the development which will result in cars being displaced onto nearby roads and this will result in obstruction or the abuse of the limited waiting bays.</li> <li>• It is therefore recommended that the application be refused due to inadequate car parking provision compared to the number of units proposed, which will result in displacement onto the Publicly Maintained Highway.</li> </ul>
Planning Policy	<p>Consulted - view received 21.08.2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application site is situated within an area identified as residential within the Bromsgrove Local Plan.</li> <li>• The proposal is for affordable housing, which is one of the exception criteria of SPG10.</li> <li>• Policies S6 Special Needs Housing, together with SPG1 Residential Design Guidelines are of relevance to this application.</li> <li>• It is suggested that if the application is approved, a condition should be imposed to ensure that the self contained flats are not subsequently sold on the open market.</li> <li>• It is noted that there will be an intensification of the property. The submitted Design and Access Statement states that the property is located in close proximity to Rubery shopping centre and access to public transport. The views of the Highway Engineer should be sought and Local Plan policies TR11 Access and Off-street parking and DS13 Sustainable Development are of relevance to this application.</li> </ul>
Drainage Engineer	<p>Consulted - view received 14.08.2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing domestic drains, both storm and foul, which serve this property, will accommodate the proposed internal alterations and usage of the building.</li> <li>• No floor risk assessment is required</li> </ul>

- It is important that any new connections are checked that they have the correct outfall; that is, foul to foul, storm to storm.
- Tree Officer      Consulted. Recommends the use of Conditions C13 to C19 to ensure the protection of the site's oak trees and existing hedge.
- Publicity          3 letters sent 26.07.2007 (expired 16.08.2007).  
10 letters sent 07.08.2007 (expired 28.08.2007).  
1 site notice posted 07.08.2007 (expired 28.08.2007).  
No response received.

### The site and its surroundings

This application relates to a 10 room hostel currently managed by Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT). The property is located to the south side of New Road to the rear of the Police Station and within the town centre of Rubery. The hostel is a 2-storey building originally built as a pair of semi-detached houses. To the left-hand-side is a small single storey extension. To the south east corner of the site are four small prefabricated stores and to the western boundary is a brick built air raid shelter. The site is accessed by a driveway, which runs along the eastern boundary of the Police Station. The site has parking spaces for 4 cars. To the east of the site is a row of shops with flats to the first floor. To the rear of this is a public car park. The application site is located approximately 0.8m above the level of the car park. To the west of the site are St. Chad's Church and the vicarage (160A New Road.) To the rear of the site is a public recreation ground. The site is substantially screened from the recreation ground by an ivy covered fence and oak trees.

### Proposal

This proposal relates to the conversion of the existing hostel into self contained flats and the erection of 2-storey extensions to either side of the building. The two extensions will extend out past the rear of the existing building.

The proposed flats are to comprise of:

- 1 no. one bedroom one person flat
- 1 no. one bedroom two person flat
- 4 no. two bedroom three person flats

The applicant's agent has stated that the flats will be for the general needs allocation in line with BDHT and Bromsgrove District Council's allocation Policy. The Trust expects that the flats will be let to lone parent families. The 2 no. one bedroom flats will be used as temporary accommodation for homeless people when required in line with Bromsgrove District Council's Homeless Policy.

The proposed scheme also includes the demolition of the existing stores and air raid shelter and the provision of cycle and bin stores. The existing driveway will be extended and three car parking spaces provided including one space to be allocated for disabled persons.

## Relevant Policies

WMSS	CF5, CF6, QE1, QE3, T1
WCSP	CTC.1, D.1, D.3, D.4, D.5, D.9, D.11, SD.2, SD.3, SD.4, SD.4, SD.5, SD.6, SD.7, T.1
BDLP	DS3, DS13, S6, S7, S15, C17, TR1, TR11
Others	PPS1, PPS3, PPG13, SPG1, SPG10

## Relevant Planning History

B18500	Statement of intent under Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 1976. Conversion of two former Police Authority Houses into short stay hostel for homeless persons: submitted 1989.
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## Notes

The main issues of this application relate to the provision of additional residential units in the district and the impact of the development on the surrounding area. Policy S7 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan states that proposals involving development of new dwellings outside the Green Belt will be considered favourably and sets out the criteria against which such proposals should be assessed.

The application site is located in a residential area and falls within the definition of previously development land as defined in Appendix B of PPS3. As such, the use of the site for residential development is acceptable in principle.

## **SPG10 and Affordable Housing Provision**

The proposed development comprises of 100% affordable housing and is to be managed by BDHT. As such, the proposal falls under exception criterion (ii) of SPG10. Local Plan Policy S15, which relates to affordable housing in urban areas, requires satisfactory arrangements to be made to ensure that that the units are maintained within the definition of affordable housing. As the Council is involved (via BDHT), a legal agreement is not required. However, a suitably worded condition will be added to overcome any potential concerns.

## **Density**

The proposed development would result in a housing density of some 66.6 dwellings per hectare. This figure is well in excess of the 30 dwellings per hectare minimum standard as set out in PPS3. Policy D.9 of the WCSP states that low densities should be avoided and recommends that sites within urban areas should be developed at densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare. Higher densities are advocated in Town Centres or where there is good public transport.

The proposed scheme would result in a density on the site which is well above the minimum figures and also above the general advice guideline figures set out in policy D.9. This is perhaps largely explained through the scheme relating to the sole provision of flats. The site is located within Rubery town centre.. The majority of residential units in the immediate locality are in the form of flats above shops or in separate buildings. I am

therefore of the view that the density of the proposed development would not be out of keeping with the character of surrounding area.

### **Street scene**

The majority of the application site is screened from the New Road by the Police Station, which lies directly to the front. However, the site will be clearly visible from the public car park from which it occupies an elevated position. The extensions to the building have been designed to reflect the existing form of the building with the use of hip-ended roofs and a bay window to the rear elevation. I note the extensions will not appear visually subordinate to the existing building. However, the exiting front elevation is broken by a step in the building line and this repeated with regard to the left-hand-side extension. I am therefore of the opinion that the extensions will not harm the appearance of the existing property or the amenity of the surrounding area.

### **Tree issues**

To the rear boundary of the site are 4 oak trees of varying sizes and to the east and west boundaries are a number of ash trees. The Tree Officer has raised no objection the proposed extensions subject to the use of appropriate conditions to ensure the trees and the boundary hedges are retained and protected.

### **Amenities of neighbouring properties**

The application site is neighboured by two residential properties, to the north east is number 170A, which is a flat above a shop, and to the south west is number 160A (the vicarage). The rear elevation to 170A is angled away from the application site. Taking account the difference in levels between the two properties, I am of the opinion that the proposed left-hand-side extension will not cause loss of light to the rear windows of this property or result in a loss of privacy.

To the common boundary with number 160A is a hawthorn and holly hedge approximately 3 metres in height. The windows to number 160A are located away from the application site and I am therefore of the opinion that the right-hand-side extension will not harm the level of light received by this property. The west facing elevation of the extension will be located just 1.2 metres from the common boundary with the church and number 160A. To this elevation will be a ground floor bedroom window and first floor shower room window. These openings will look out onto the driveway to number 160A and an unused space to the rear of the church. I do not consider these areas can be classed as private and therefore do not consider that the side windows will cause a loss of privacy to the occupiers of number 160A.

### **Amenity space**

Paragraph 9.2 of SPG1 sets out a minimum requirement of 30 square metres of private and amenity space to be provided for each unit in a development. It is proposed to retain the grassed area to the rear of the building, which has an area of approximately 160 square metres. This falls approximately 20 square metres below the required amount. However, I am of the view that this shortfall is not to an extent that would warrant the refusal of the application.

## Highway safety

Criterion (h) of policy S7 states that new dwellings must not have an unacceptable traffic implication or perpetuate a traffic hazard. The Highways Engineer has objected to the proposed scheme on grounds of insufficient parking spaces. It is considered that the shortfall of 3 spaces will result in the displacement of cars onto nearby roads thereby causing an obstruction or the abuse of limited waiting bays. Due to the site's town centre location, the flats will be in easy access to local bus routes and a variety of shops. Whilst I acknowledge the views of the Highway Engineer, I am of the opinion that given the sites town centre location, the three proposed car parking spaces would provide adequate parking for the flats.

## Conclusion

Therefore, I find no reason to refuse permission and recommend approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that planning permission be **GRANTED**

1. C99
2. C38
3. Prior to the commencement of the development full details of the occupancy criteria which are to be used to select occupants of the dwellings shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. Subsequently the occupation of these units shall only be taken up by persons meeting the approved occupancy criteria, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.
4. Notwithstanding the approved plans, full details of the proposed cycle store and bin store shown on Drawing Number D10 including scaled elevations shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the approved development.
5. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a fence or wall of a design and height to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority shall be erected along the western boundary of the site in place of the existing brick built structure to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.
6. H12F - modified to 3 spaces
7. H13
8. C13
9. C14
10. C15
11. C16
12. C17
13. C18
14. C19

## Reasons

3. To ensure the proposed dwellings are provided at an affordable level and to meet local housing need in accordance with policy S15 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan.
4. To protect the visual amenity of the area in accordance with policy DS13 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan January 2004 and policy CTC.1 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan 2001.

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#### Notes

This decision has been taken having regard to the policies within the Worcestershire County Structure Plan (WCSP) June 2001 and the Bromsgrove District Local Plan January 2004 (BDLP) and other material considerations as summarised below:

WMSS	CF5, CF6, QE1, QE3, T1
WCSP	CTC.1, D.1, D.3, D.4, D.5, D.9, D.11, SD.2, SD.3, SD.4, SD.4, SD.5, SD.6, SD.7, T.1
BDLP	DS3, DS13, S6, S7, S15, C17, TR1, TR11
Others	PPS1, PPS3, PPG13, SPG1, SPG10

It is the Council's view that the proposed development complies with the provisions of the development plan and that, on balance, there are no justifiable reasons to refuse planning permission.