

Application Ref: 14/02078/FUL

Proposal: Alterations to elevations of existing two storey block of flats and creation of lobby

Site: Guthrie House, Rightwell East, Bretton, Peterborough
Applicant: Bretton Green Ltd

Agent: Jefferson Sheard Architects

Referred by: **Parish Council**
Reason: Building uses different materials and will look out of place
Site visit: 05.02.2015

Case officer: Mr L Collins
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Recommendation: **GRANT** subject to relevant conditions

1 Description of the site and surroundings and Summary of the proposal

Site and Surroundings

The application site is located within the development known as Bretton Green. This was formerly a small cul-de-sac of 5 blocks of B1 office employment uses granted permission and built by the Peterborough Development Corporation. However under application references 13/00846/PRIOR and 13/01484/PRIOR, it was deemed that prior approval was not required for the change of use of the office buildings to C3 residential flats (under the provisions of Part 3 Class J of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended)). Accordingly, the existing blocks are currently undergoing conversion and renovation to residential flats.

The site is located within the identified Bretton District Centre, albeit outside of the identified Primary Retail Area. The surrounding area is predominantly retail with the Cresset Theatre and television studios immediately opposite the site. To the south, is the A47 Trunk Road with an intervening shelter belt of mature trees. Vehicular access to the site is off Rightwell East and there is an adopted highway turning head within the north-eastern corner of the site.

Proposal

Permission is sought for the erection of a lobby extension and alterations to the appearance of the building.

This application is being considered in tandem with application reference 14/01781/FUL which seeks permission to construct three new storeys above the existing building and a 4 storey extension to the front to create 13no. 1-bed residential apartments. The scheme also includes associated hard surfacing to create car parking and would result in the 'stopping-up' of a small section of adopted highway.

2 Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
13/01484/PRIOR	Prior approval for change of use from B1a office to C3 residential	Prior Approval Permitted	21/11/2013
14/01781/FUL	Extension to building	Pending Decision	

3 Planning Policy

Decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011)

CS16 - Urban Design and the Public Realm

Design should be of high quality, appropriate to the site and area, improve the public realm, address vulnerability to crime, be accessible to all users and not result in any unacceptable impact upon the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012)

PP02 - Design Quality

Permission will only be granted for development which makes a positive contribution to the built and natural environment; does not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area; is sufficiently robust to withstand/adapt to climate change; and is designed for longevity.

PP03 - Impacts of New Development

Permission will not be granted for development which would result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, public and/or private green space or natural daylight; be overbearing or cause noise or other disturbance, odour or other pollution; fail to minimise opportunities for crime and disorder.

4 Consultations/Representations

Bretton Parish Council (28.01.15)

The Applicant had applied for flats with two bedrooms but this had now changed to one bedroom. The height of the building is still out of context with the area. To the right of the building is Nu Vets which was a single storey building. To the left are two storey buildings. The Cresset in front of the building is some distance away, which is not five storey's high. The extension would be very close to the cycleway which only goes to accentuate the height of the building. We would once again repeat our original objections which I once again set out below

1. The building is out of character with the other buildings in the area. The other buildings on the site are offices and not domestic dwellings.
2. The building is 5 stories high and of a different material to the other buildings
3. There will be a lack of parking spaces
4. There is concern about the increase in the volume of traffic in that area
5. There is also concern about the fact that there is no crossing on Rightwell East and there would be a danger to pedestrians crossing the road from the site to get to Bretton Centre.
6. Originally an application for 4 flats was allowed and we believe in hindsight this was submitted in the knowledge that once approved an application such as the one which has been lodged would be submitted knowing it would be very difficult to object to.

Local Residents/Interested Parties

Initial consultations: 1
Total number of responses: 0
Total number of objections: 0
Total number in support: 0

No representations have been received in relation to the proposal. The representation referred to is from the Parish Council.

5 Assessment of the planning issues

The main considerations are

- The impact of the proposal on the character of the area
- The impact of the proposal on the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings

The impact of the proposal on the character of the area

The appearance of the other buildings within the business park (which have been converted to residential use under prior approval) has been altered to give them a more contemporary appearance. It is considered that this has worked well and the already altered buildings are attractive, sit well within their surroundings and do not appear incongruous.

This proposal introduces some of the elements used on the other buildings, whilst introducing render in order to disguise the joins between this building and the proposed extensions. It is unhelpful to view this proposal in isolation as it is part of a larger development proposed under 14/01781/FUL. Plans submitted under that application allow for a better understanding of the overall proposal. The wider scheme features cladding boards vertically linking windows within the areas of white render, with the top floor being clad in a grey material. These design features successfully break up the bulk of the building. Whilst this will result in a building that differs from the other buildings in the estate, the overall effect of the changes is to create an attractive, contemporary building which is of high enough quality to stand alone within the street scene. The building will still feature materials used within the other buildings within the estate which will help all buildings integrate with their surroundings.

A condition will be added to the permission requiring approval of all materials prior to their erection upon the building to ensure that all materials either match those used within the other buildings or are of sufficient quality as to create an acceptable appearance.

The impact of the proposal on the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings

The extension to the lobby is very small and there are no nearby residential properties except for those within the small group of buildings that have been converted to residential accommodation. No overshadowing or overbearing to the occupiers of these flats will result from the proposal.

Other matters

The Parish Council have objected to the proposal on 6 grounds. 5 of the 6 objections are not relevant to this application as they concern the wider development of the building, its use and its extension which will be addressed under the report for that scheme. The relevant objection states that building will be constructed of a different materials to the other building. Whilst this is partly the case the Local Planning Authority does not consider that this will unacceptably harm the character of the area for the reasons stated above.

6 Conclusions

Subject to the imposition of the attached conditions, the proposal is acceptable having been assessed in the light of all material considerations, including weighing against relevant policies of the development plan and specifically:

- The proposal will not unacceptably harm the character of the area or the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings; in accordance with policy CS16 of the Peterborough Core Strategy (DPD) 2011 and policies PP2 and PP3 of the Peterborough Planning Policies (DPD) 2012.

7 Recommendation

The Director of Growth and Regeneration recommends that Planning Permission is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

C 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

C 2 No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used on the external surfaces of the building and the lobby extension have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details submitted for approval shall include the name of the manufacturer, the product type, colour (using BS4800) and reference number. Samples shall be placed on site for evaluation. The development shall not be carried out except in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: For the Local Planning Authority to ensure a satisfactory external appearance, in accordance with Policy CS16 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) and Policy PP2 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012).