DELEGATED REPORT / CASE OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT

Ref No: ST/1120/18/FUL
Proposal: Single storey extension to rear and external staircase.
Location: 2 St Bedes
East Boldon
NE36 0LE

Site Visit Made: 05/02/19

Relevant policies/SPDs

1 DM1 - Management of Development (A & B)

2 DM6 - Heritage Assets and Archaeology (B; iii)

3 SPD15 - East Boldon Conservation Area Management Plan - Adopted April 2009

Description of the site and of the proposals

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a single storey rear extension and an external staircase to the rear of 2 St Bedes, East Boldon. The application site is a commercial property, with an established use as a restaurant at ground floor level, situated within a cluster of mainly commercial premises, with a mix of commercial and residential uses at first floor level, but mainly commercial ones.

The proposed extension would have a matching brick exterior and a 6.3 metre projection from the rear of the property, the same as the existing single storey rear structure that would be replaced, with the proposed extension both replacing this and infilling the space between the existing extension and the boundary with 1 St Bedes. The extension would have a flat roof (finished with dark grey fibreglass), which is lower than the height of the existing rear extension, but higher than the existing eaves. The floor plans indicate that this extension would be proposed in order to relocate exiting WCs to the rear, providing additional space within the front of house restaurant area.

The proposed external staircase would replace an existing external staircase, which is currently located where the proposed rear extension would be built. The proposed staircase would be a black metallic staircase and handrail, 1.1 metres higher than the height of the roof and would provide a means of escape from the first floor unit to over the proposed extension. The proposed staircase would extend further to the rear than the existing staircase, but would have no roof or frame higher than 1.1 metres, as opposed to the 2.4 metre high frame and corrugated metal sheet roofing on the existing structure.

The application plans have been amended during the course of the consideration of the application following discussion with the applicant's planning agent. Initially a staircase with a 2.4 metre high frame and a roof (initially corrugated sheeting, then amended to a matt grey fibreglass roof) was proposed as the application had been made on the understanding that this was required to meet Building Regulations; however, following discussions with the STC Building Control Team, it transpired that this was not necessary in order to meet Building Regulations requirements. A revision to the roofing materials has been proposed for the rear extension (felt was initially proposed, now matt grey fibreglass).

The site is situated close to 'Black's Corner', and is located within the East Boldon Conservation Area, with the rear of the application site situated on the edge of this Conservation Area. The rear of the property faces onto Sunderland Road, which is one of the main vehicular routes into East Boldon, which

connects East Boldon to the A19 (to the west) and Sunderland (to the south-east). The rear of the terrace is visible from Sunderland Road, although views are partially obscured by a high brick boundary wall adjacent to Sunderland Road.

1-4 St Bedes is a small row of commercial premises (some converted from houses). It is understood that all of the upper and lower floors of premises in that block are in retail or similar uses, with only the upper floor flat of 1 St Bedes (48 Sunderland Road) in residential use. This short red brick terrace follows the basic architectural themes of the other terraces on the south side of Station Road, but has lost some front gardens to concrete parking over time. The rear elevations and detailed brick boundary wall are prominent at the top of Sunderland Road and are relatively intact, but security bars, the escape stair at the application site (in particular its roof), and signage are also visually prominent in this location.

A previous planning application was granted for a single storey rear extension and a staircase to the rear (ST/2707/05/FUL), which was not implemented.

Publicity / Consultations (Expiry date – 27/02/2019)

1) **Neighbour notification/press/site notice responses –** None received

The East Boldon Neighbourhood Forum was also notified of the proposals (response provided on the plans originally submitted). Comments summarised below:

- Although the proposed extension is at the rear of the property, this elevation (particularly at 1st floor level), is visually prominent from Sunderland Road, one of the main access routes into the Village.

- The proposed ground floor extension and rebuilding of the existing ground floor offshoot, is on the same line as the existing offshoot, although the new external wall will be slightly higher, and more visible from Sunderland Road. However, in the circumstances, this is not considered to be significant.

- Noted that the rear access door seems to have been missed from the elevation, and the direction arrow to the staircase shown at first floor also appears incorrect.

- Main concern relates to the re-design of the external fire escape from the 1st floor. The new fire escape will project a further 1.8m approximately from the rear of the building (towards Sunderland Road) and is now positioned across the rear elevation, increasing its visual impact. The main problem relates to the roof cladding, which is supported by an open steel framework. Questions whether a simple handrail and balustrade may suffice unless weather protection is required for Building Regulations.

2) **Other Consultee responses**

STC Historic Environment Officer (response provided on plans originally submitted)

The application relates to a property situated within East Boldon Conservation Area.

Proposals that affect the significance of any heritage asset, including any contribution made by their setting, should be accompanied by a statement describing their significance (NPPF para 189). The application does not include a heritage statement so it is difficult to understand the thought process that has gone into the proposed design and materials.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places an obligation on decision makers to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal notes that the existing fire escape stair is visually prominent. I would therefore expect any alterations to seek to enhance the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. Black corrugated metal sheeting is not, in my view, an appropriate material. Nor is felt roofing. There are alternative, more visually appealing materials that could be explored such as fibreglass and single ply membranes.

This is a prominent part of the conservation area and I would not be willing to support this application in its current form.

(Case officer note re: revised plans): Revised proposals were subsequently received following receipt of the consultation responses, which involved a revision the materials to be used in the roof of the proposed extension and external staircase, but and clarification that the door accidentally omitted from the rear elevation was to be included. It was not considered that additional publicity, renotification, or reconsultation on the proposals was required in this instance, having regard to South Tyneside Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Assessment

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that in the exercise (with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area) of any functions special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. If the impact of the proposal on the Conservation Area would be neutral this would be acceptable.

The main issues for consideration in the determination of this planning application are:

- Design of the proposal and its effect on visual amenity & heritage assets; and
- Effect on residential amenity

Design & impact on the host property, street scene & heritage assets

The design and heritage issues are interlinked and are both considered in this section of the report.

Policy DM1 (A) requires that extensions and alterations to existing buildings are designed to convey sensitive consideration of their surroundings. Policy DM6 supports development proposals that protect, preserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character and heritage, visual appearance and contextual importance heritage assets and their settings, including East Boldon Conservation Area.

Supplementary Planning Document 15 provides a framework for managing the Conservation Area, and is informed by the East Boldon Conservation Area Character Appraisal (February 2006). Policy CA-EB3 relates specifically to extensions and alterations to buildings within the Conservation Area. It states that proposals involving the alteration of buildings within the Conservation Area must be appropriate in terms of scale and design. Materials should respect the age and character of the building. Proposals that are considered detrimental to the character and appearance of the building or the wider Conservation Area will be resisted.

The proposed rear extension would have a flat roof, with a similar height to the existing lean-to extension (lower overall height, higher eaves), the same rear projection as the existing, with an increased width infill the gap between the existing extension and the boundary with 1 St Bedes. A matching brick and a matt grey fibreglass roofing material would be used in the construction of the exterior. The extension would be visible from a prominent route, Sunderland Road, but would be largely screened behind the high brick boundary wall at the rear of the property. It is considered that the scale, location, design and materials of the extension would be acceptable on balance and would adequately preserve the character and appearance of the East Boldon Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal notes that the existing fire escape stair at the rear of 2 St Bedes is visually prominent. It is considered that the existing corrugated metal sheeting is not an appropriate material and causes harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is considered that the originally proposed addition of further corrugated sheeting on the proposed rear staircase would have caused additional harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The revised proposals seek permission for an external staircase at the rear which has a larger rear projection than the existing structure. The overall visual impact of the staircase is, however, considered to be reduced compared with the existing situation, as a black frame with 1.1 metre handrail would have a lesser impact on the character and appearance of the East Boldon Conservation Area than the existing structure's 2.4 metre high frame and corrugated sheet roof. It is considered that the proposed rear staircase can also be supported, as it is considered to adequately preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and would enhance this character through the removal of the existing corrugated sheet roofing.

It is considered that a planning condition requiring materials to be as stated in the application proposals would be necessary in order to achieve a scheme that ensures that unacceptable damage to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is prevented, due to the prominent location facing onto Sunderland Road.

It is considered that the proposal would not cause harm amounting to 'less than substantial harm' (as referenced in NPPF paragraph 196) or greater to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the East Boldon Conservation Area. It is judged that the proposed extension would not cause an unacceptable negative impact on the visual amenity of the area, over and above the existing situation. It is considered that the proposed development would adequately preserve the character and significance of the East Boldon Conservation Area. Accordingly, the development would sufficiently convey sensitive consideration of the surroundings and would not undermine the local setting and identity. The proposals are considered to accord with LDF Policy DM1 criterion A, LDF Policy DM6 criterion B (iii) and the objectives of SPD15.

Residential amenity

The ground floor of the adjacent property at 1 St Bedes, which the proposed single storey extension adjoins, is in use as a café/deli. The development therefore would not impact on residential occupiers in this property.

It is understood that the first floor of 1 St Bedes is a residential property (48 Sunderland Road). Both the existing and proposed rear staircases could allow fleeting views towards the rear windows, but given the fleeting nature that use of this staircase would have, it is not considered that the either the existing or proposed staircase would have any significant harmful impact on amenity, or that any existing impacts would be made significantly worse by the proposed development. It is not considered that the proposed staircase would also not have any significant increase impact on neighbouring amenity, compared with the presence of the existing one, in respect of potential overlooking, outlook, overshadowing or dominance.

It is considered that the proposed development would have a neutral impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

It is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in relation to the impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties, and would be in accordance with LDF Policy DM1 criterion B in this respect.

Summary

As has been concluded above, the proposed single storey extension and external staircase at the rear of the property are considered, on balance, to be acceptable in respect of its effects on the visual amenity of the area, as the development would preserve the character and significance of the East Boldon Conservation Area and its setting. The application is recommended for approval, subject to conditions, for the reasons detailed in the report.

In assessing this application due regard has been had to the requirement of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Recommendation

Grant Permission with Conditions

Conditions

1 The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to ensure that the development is carried out within a reasonable time.

2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) as detailed below

Dwg No. S262 received 01/03/2019
Dwg No. S262A received 01/03/2019

Any minor material changes to the approved plans will require a formal planning application under S73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary this condition and substitute alternative plans.

In order to provide a procedure to seek approval of proposed minor material change which is not substantially different from that which has been approved.

3 The external surfaces of the proposed development hereby permitted shall be as stated below:

- Facing materials of the proposed rear extension to be brickwork of similar appearance to that used in the construction of the exterior of the existing building on which the extension will form part; as stated on Dwg No. S262A received 01/03/2019.
- Roof materials of the proposed rear extension to be dark grey matt finish fibreglass roof, as stated on Dwg No. S262 received 01/03/2019.
- Rear external staircase to be black metal staircase as stated on Dwg No. S262A received 01/03/2019.

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority pursuant to this condition.

To ensure a satisfactory standard and quality of development in terms of materials and detailing, in the interests of visual amenity and preservation of the character and appearance of the East Boldon Conservation Area, in accordance with South Tyneside Local Development Framework Development Management Policies DM1 and DM6.

Informatives

1 In dealing with this application the Council has implemented the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework to seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

2 The proposed development lies within a coal mining area which may contain unrecorded coal mining related hazards. If any coal mining feature is encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Coal Authority on 0345 762 6848.

Further information is also available on the Coal Authority website at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-coal-authority

Case officer: Chris Stanworth
Signed:
Date: 04/03/19

Authorised Signatory:
Date:

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