

**Committee Report
Planning Committee on 30 November,
2005**

**Item No.
Case No.**

**1/03
05/2065**

RECEIVED: 19 October, 2005

WARD: Kenton

PLANNING AREA: Kingsbury & Kenton Consultative Forum

LOCATION: 85 Draycott Avenue, Harrow, HA3 0DD

PROPOSAL: Conversion of dwellinghouse into two self-contained maisonettes, comprising a 3-bedroom maisonette on the ground, first and second floors, and a 2-bedroom maisonette on the ground and first floors, including alterations to the forecourt with vehicular access and hardstanding for 2 vehicles and a new front boundary wall (as per revised plans received 18 November 2005)

APPLICANT: J. Patel

CONTACT: Consultract Design Partnership Ltd

PLAN NO'S: CON/DA/0508/P2/01C

RECOMMENDATION

Approval

EXISTING

The subject site is a detached dwellinghouse located on the northern side of Draycott Avenue.

PROPOSAL

Conversion of the dwellinghouse into two self contained maisonettes, one 3 bedroom on ground, first and second floors, and one two bedroom on the ground and first floors. This includes alterations to the forecourt with provision for 2 parking spaces and a new front boundary wall.

The scheme proposes one entrance to the communal hall for both flats, which then leads into the respective entrance lobbies. The combined entrance avoids two entrance points on the front elevation, thus maintaining the existing street character. The communal entrance hall then leads onto individual lobbies for each unit.

85A is spread over ground, first and second floor. There is an entrance lobby to the lounge, located on the ground floor to the front elevation, with kitchen to the ground floor rear. The first floor consists of two bathrooms, with one bedroom to the front elevation, and the remaining two bedrooms are located within the loft space.

No. 85 Draycott Avenue is proposed with two bedrooms located at first floor level. The lounge, dining room and kitchen are contained within the ground floor. There are double opening doors connecting the dining room to the lounge, which should provide adequate natural light to this room.

Both proposed units have access to the rear garden and amenity space, and the proposal itself does not include any exterior modifications.

HISTORY

On 3 March 2005 the planning committee approved the erection of a two storey side extension, part single storey, part two storey rear extension, installation of a rear dormer window, one front and two side rooflights to dwellinghouse, alterations to front garden area to provide vehicular access and hardstanding with additional landscaping. There were many representations received in relation to this proposal, however the development complied with SPG 5 and Brent's UDP 2004 and was therefore approved.

Following this was a further application for the erection of first floor rear extension to dwellinghouse - an amendment to the abovementioned permission. This too was approved by the Council on 11 July 2005, through delegated powers.

A further application went to committee on 11 October 2005 for the conversion of dwellinghouse into two self contained maisonettes, comprising of a 3 bedroom maisonette on the ground, first and second floors, and a two bedroom maisonette on the ground and first floors. This included alterations to the forecourt with vehicular access and hardstanding for 2 vehicles and a new front boundary wall. The planning committee refused this application for the following reason:

The proposed flat conversion by reason of a poor access arrangement, being directly into the main front room of No. 85A Draycott Avenue would result in a substandard form of accommodation out of keeping with the character of properties in the area, leading to noise intrusion and loss of internal heating. As such this would be contrary to policies H18, H19 and BE12 of Brent's Unitary Development Plan 2004.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Brent UDP 2004

H12 - Residential Quality

H17 - Flat Conversions

H18 - Quality of Flat Conversions

H19 - Flat Conversions - Access & parking

PS14 - Residential parking standards

SPG 17 - Design Guide for New Development

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

Not required.

CONSULTATION

Letters of consultation were sent to:

- 34 Aston Avenue
- 83 Draycott Avenue
- 87 Draycott Avenue
- Northwick Park Residents Association
- Brent's Transportation Unit
- Brent's Landscape Design Unit
- Cllr Colwill
- Cllr Fernandes
- Cllr Steele

Two letters of objection received.

The following concerns were raised:

- Loss of privacy in relation to previously approved application
- Loss of Local Character
- Noise, disturbance and debris related to multiple occupancy
- Increased congestion and on street parking

REMARKS

Revisions to previous proposal

Proposal previously refused by members as there was no entrance lobby proposed to No. 85A, raising concerns of noise intrusion and loss of heating. Thus the revised internal layout shows entrance lobbies for both maisonettes.

The entrance door to 85A is now to a lobby, measuring 1250mm x 1250mm. The internal layout of the lounge has been revised, now showing a larger lounge area, with a dividing screen separating the lounge from the stair well area. The stairs have also been revised, to incorporate a spiral staircase in order to utilise the available space much more effectively. The agent was advised of building control regulations in regards to the staircase.

Thus the revised layout improves the usable space within the ground floor of 85A, whilst providing an entrance lobby as was previously identified as an issue at committee.

Quality of Flat Conversions

Policies H17 and H18 of Brent's UDP 2004 refer specifically to the quality of flat conversions within the Borough. These policies coupled with SPG 17 "Design Guide for New Development" determine acceptable forms of flat conversion.

Policy H17 requires that dwellinghouses for flat conversion have an unextended original floor area of at least 110 square metres. 85 Draycott has an original unextended floor area of approximately 117.13 square metres (being 60.78 at ground level and 56.35 at first floor level).

H17 also refers to trunk or distributor roads, of which Draycott Avenue is neither. However it is a classified road, which is addressed in remarks from Brent's Transportation Unit.

Policy H18 sets out requirements for the quality of flat conversions, in that the accommodation should not be over-intensive in terms of the number and size of proposed units, and should have acceptable visual impact from the street. No 85 Draycott Avenue meets these requirements, with a proposal that avoids stacking of rooms of different uses above each other, and provides for one 2 bed and one 3 bed flat with adequate amenity space to the rear.

SPG 17 guidance provides a basis for acceptable standards of accommodation within the Borough.

Unit size/Floor Area

The minimum floor area required for a 3 bedroom maisonette accommodating 5 to 6 people is 82 square metres. The proposed maisonette at 85A has a proposed floor area of 134.7 square metres. The minimum floor area for a 2 bedroom maisonette accommodating 3 to 4 people is 60 to 70 square metres. The proposed flat at No. 85 is 109.9 square metres.

Hence the proposed maisonettes themselves are considered acceptable in terms of unit size.

Stacking

SPG 17 requires that when residential units are placed above one another that bedrooms should not be placed above living areas. In this case the bedrooms of No 85A (within loft space) are above the bedrooms of No 85 (first floor). The third bedroom within 85A is located on the first floor above the lounge of 85A, hence it is acceptable as they are within the same residential unit.

Amenity Space

Both 85 and 85A Draycott Avenue have access to rear amenity space, to be separated with a chain link fence and landscaped to include two conifer trees and one apple tree. No. 85A Draycott Avenue is proposed to have access to approximately 98 square metres of amenity space, and No. 85 to approximately 90 square metres.

Parking

Two parking spaces are included within the scheme.

Transportation

Brent's Transportation Unit assessed the proposal based on 50/50 landscaping providing for 2 parking spaces. Transportation Unit raised objection to the layout of the parking spaces. The arrangement of these spaces, with a strip of soft surfacing in between the two spaces, is to ensure there is minimal light and noise intrusion to the lounge of No. 85A when the residents of No. 85 are maneuvering within the forecourt. Thus, they are considered acceptable in terms of planning.

Landscaping

50% soft surfacing has been provided in the forecourt area allowing for two parking spaces. This is considered acceptable in terms of SPG 5 guidance and Brent's Landscape Team, however a further condition is attached to ensure low level planting in the front garden.

Response to Objections

Two letters of objection was received for the revised scheme. Given the extent of public interest in the previous application, the issues raised previously are also addressed below.

Main issues raised:

- Loss of light and privacy in relation to previously approved application.
- Loss of Local Character
- Noise, disturbance and debris related to multiple occupancy.
- Increased congestion and on street parking.
- Unacceptable demand on sewerage systems, schools and surgeries.
- Loss of privacy for adjoining neighbours
- Loss of Character to dwelling through additional front entrance

Loss of light and privacy in relation to previously approved application

It appears as if there has been some confusion regarding the context of this application. The two storey side and single storey rear extension were previously approved under planning references No. 05/1558 and 04/4058. The effects of this extension to neighbouring properties was taken into account in the assessment of these applications, and as such these points can not be considered in determining the present application.

Local Character

There were concerns raised regarding the loss of a single family dwellinghouse within the area and the fact that the conversion would be out of character with the surrounding dwellinghouses. The flat conversion itself will not alter the exterior of the house, and as such the character of the dwelling itself will be retained.

In terms of the loss of a single family dwellinghouse, there is a need within the Borough to provide different forms of accommodation, provided there is no undue loss of 'family' accommodation, for which there is a need. Given that 85 Draycott Avenue and the proposed scheme meets the requirements for flat conversions as set out in SPG 17 and Brent's UDP 2004 the property is considered acceptable for such a development.

Noise, disturbance and debris related to multiple occupancy

Residents raised concerns regarding multiple occupancy and problems they have had in the past in relation to 85 Draycott Avenue.

The applicant has advised that between June 2004 and June 2005 the property was let to 5 people on a single tenancy contract. If the total number of occupants does not exceed 6 people and rooms are not rented individually, the use is not considered multiple occupation.

Within the proposal there is nothing to suggest the property will be used for anything other than two single residential units, and to change the maisonettes to multiple occupancy would require further planning permission.

Increased congestion and on street parking.

Brent's transportation unit considered the application in terms of effects to on street parking and requirements for the flat itself. It was considered 2 parking spaces were adequate for the flat conversion and surrounding area.

Unacceptable demand on sewerage systems, schools and surgeries.

The first issue is not a planning issue and as such can not be considered in determine this application; the latter issues are unlikely to raise concerns given the scale of development..

Loss of privacy for adjoining neighbours

There will be no further alterations to the external appearance of the dwellinghouse. As such, all issues regarding privacy have been previously addressed.

It is not considered the conversion to two flats would further affect the privacy of neighbours.

CONCLUSION

The scale and layout of the proposed flat conversion meets Councils requirements, and as such the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of SPG 17 'Design Guide for New Development' and policies H12, H17, H18, H19 and PS 14 of Brent's UDP 2004.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant Consent

REASON FOR GRANTING

(1) The proposed development is in general accordance with policies contained in the:-

Brent's Unitary Development Plan 2004

Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 17 - Design Guide for New Development

Relevant policies in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan are those in the following chapters:-

Built Environment: in terms of the protection and enhancement of the environment

Housing: in terms of protecting residential amenities and guiding new development

CONDITIONS/REASONS:

(1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

(2) Before the development hereby permitted is brought into use, the existing access and crossover shall be filled in and made good to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority at the applicants expense.

Reason: in the interest of pedestrian and highway safety.

(3) Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, further plans shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing details of all proposed trees and shrubs, materials for hardsurfacing, and details of boundary treatment and bin enclosure.

Reason: To ensure the visual amenities of the forecourt are retained and enhanced.

INFORMATIVES:

None Specified

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

CON/DA/0508/P2/01D

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Amy Cooper, The Planning Service, Brent

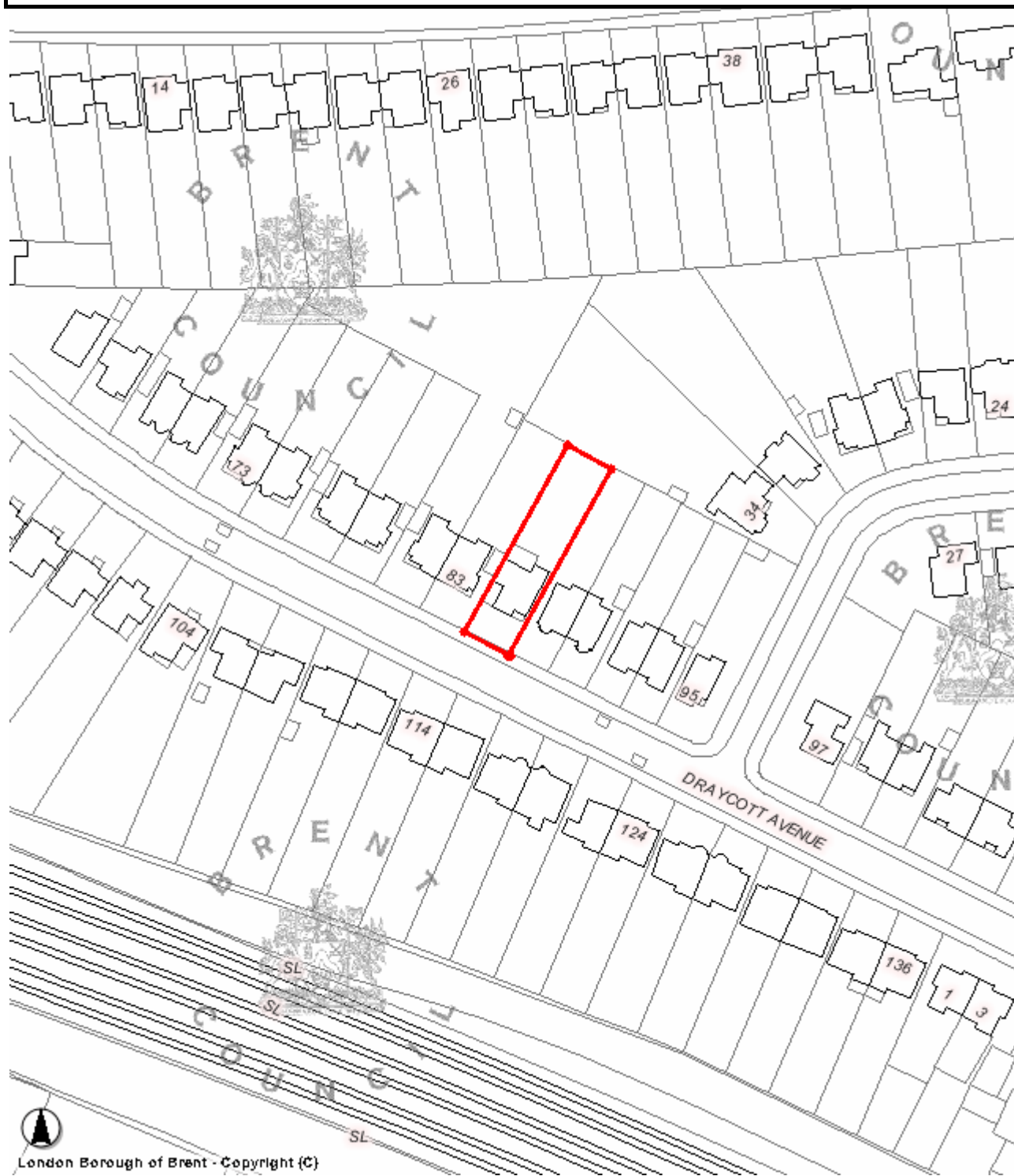
House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5345



Planning Committee Map

Site address: 85 Draycott Avenue, Harrow, HA3 0DD

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