

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEE DATE: 27th August 2008**

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<b>APPLICATION REF. NO:</b>	<b>08/00510/DC</b>
<b>STATUTORY DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>21st August 2008</b>
<b>WARD/PARISH:</b>	<b>PARK EAST</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>1-3 Hammond Drive, Skerne Park, Darlington</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	<b>Conversion of Existing Neighbourhood Housing Office into 2 No. Residential Dwelling Houses (including change of use from B1 to C3)</b>
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	<b>Darlington Borough Council, Director of Corporate Services</b>

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**APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application site is located in the Skerne Park area of town and has been operated since the early 1990's as a Community Housing Office. Initially 1 Hammond Drive was granted permission for a change of use from a dwelling to an office in 1991 then in 1995 permission was granted to extend the office into 3 Hammond Drive. It is now proposed to convert the properties back to semi-detached housing as per its original function.

The application site is located on a corner plot on the junction of Coleridge Gardens and Hammond Drive. The property and its curtilage has undergone significant modification from when it was last in use as a residential property, the front and rear garden areas have been converted to hard standing car park and the rear car parking area has been enclosed with paleadin security fencing. The proposed works will see the buildings and curtilage returned to a domestic usage with hard standing areas removed.

**PLANNING HISTORY**

91/00718/MISC – 1 Hammond Drive, Change of use from dwellinghouse to neighbourhood house.

94/00790/MISC - 3 Hammond Drive, Change of use from dwellinghouse to form extension to neighbourhood office.

**PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND**

The following policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan are relevant: -

H3- Locations for New Housing Developments

The following national policy guidance is relevant: -

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2005)

## **RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY**

Following submission of this formal application for planning permission, the Council undertook a neighbour consultation exercise together with site notices. No objections were received within the statutory consultation period.

The Council's Highway's Officer has been consulted and has raised no objections to the proposed development.

## **PLANNING ISSUES**

The main planning issues to be considered in the determination of this application are: -

- Planning Policy
- Residential Amenity

### **Planning Policy**

1-3 Hammond Drive is located within an existing well established housing development. The properties are within development limits and therefore the principle of its use for housing are established. In order to ensure compliance with policy H3 it is important to undertake an assessment of potential impacts on residential amenity.

### **Residential Amenity**

As mentioned previously in the report prior to being a housing office the properties at 1-3 Hammond Drive were semi-detached dwellings. The works to convert the building into an office have resulted in a number of alterations to the exterior of the property but essentially the fabric of the residential dwellings have been retained. This should enable a relatively straight forward conversion back into habitable standards. Substantial works will be needed to the interior of the building in order to restore services and facilities required in a domestic property.

The rear gardens are currently hard surfaced and used as a secure parking area. The proposed conversion works will result in the removal of this tarmac and fencing and replacement with a patio and grassed area. A 2m high timber fencing is proposed to replace the existing powder coated mesh security fencing surrounding the rear of the site. The hard standing forecourt to the front of the building is also hard standing and open to the highway. Again, it is proposed to remove the concrete and return the area to a use more in keeping with the requirements and aesthetics of a residential property. A block paved parking area is to be provided for a single vehicle and the remainder is to be grassed over. 0.95m fencing will be erected to provide demarcation from the highway and neighbouring properties.

A return to residential use will not result in loss of residential amenity to neighbouring properties. No additional window openings are proposed in sensitive locations. However, there is potential for the first floor windows at 1 Hammond Drive to overlook the rear garden of 78

Coleridge Gardens, but it should be noted that the nearest two windows to this neighbouring property will be to a bathroom and WC and will consequently be obscure glazed. Overall it is considered that the properties proposed will be afforded sufficient amenity space around the dwelling. Use of the properties for residential purposes will not result in a loss of amenity of existing residential properties in the area.

### **SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

The proposed development has been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. Security provision at the properties are to be relaxed however the requirements for a residential property are different to that of an office that is unoccupied for large periods of time. Overall the proposed development does not give rise to crime and disorder issues.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, there are no planning policy or material planning objections to the proposed change of use of the properties.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

- A3 - Implementation Limit (3 years)
- B5 – Implementation in accordance with approved plans.
- G4 – Parking (Private Dwelling)

### **SUGGESTED SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION**

It is considered the proposed change of use is considered to be acceptable in this location by virtue of the fact that it would not have an adverse impact on the character or amenity of the area. The proposal does not raise any issues in respect of highway safety or crime prevention. The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies in the development plan set out below:

- H3 – Locations for new housing developments