

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P07/0132

Type of approval sought	Full Planning Permission
Ward	Belle Vale
Applicant	James Grove & Sons Properties Ltd
Location:	JAMES GROVE & SONS LTD, BLOOMFIELD WORKS, STOURBRIDGE ROAD, HALESOWEN, B63 3UW
Proposal	DEMOLITION OF REMAINDER OF THE FACTORY OFFICE AND ERECTION OF A BLOCK OF 5 NO. TERRACE DWELLINGS.
Recommendation Summary:	APPROVE SUBJECT TO A 106 AGREEMENT

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 1 The application site comprises an existing 2 storey office block, which was part of a larger industrial site, also fronting Bloomfield Street West. That wider site is currently being redeveloped for a replacement factory, new B1/B8 units and housing (refer to planning history).
- 2 The housing comprises 8 terraced houses fronting Bloomfield Street West and two blocks, with a total of 15 apartments. One of those blocks is at the rear of that terrace fronting a shared car park, accessed off Bloomfield Street West. The other block is shown as a continuation of the terrace, on the corner of Stourbridge Road and Bloomfield Street West.
- 3 The replacement factory unit is being constructed at the rear of the larger site, accessed off Stourbridge Road with 3 no. B1/B8 units in front of it. Two of those units adjoin the application site – at the back of pavement line onto Stourbridge Road.
- 4 The character of the surrounding area is mixed, with terraced houses in Bloomfield Street West and houses and a petrol filling station opposite the site in Stourbridge Road. Further west along Stourbridge Road, there is a parade of shops.

PROPOSAL

- 5 The proposal is a full application for the erection of 5 no. 2 bedroom terraced dwellings. The proposed terrace is shown as 2 storey with a standard pitched roof, canopies above the doorways and soldier courses in contrasting brick for the cills and lintels. The dwellings are shown set back from the highway by 1.5 metres, behind a 1.2 metre high screen wall. 7 no. parking spaces are proposed for the dwellings, as part of the shared car park at the rear, accessed off Bloomfield Street West. The density of developments is 100 dwellings per hectare.

HISTORY

- 6 The relevant planning history is summarised in the table below:-

APPLICATION No.	PROPOSAL	DECISION	DATE
P03/2429	Erection of 8 houses and 15 flats	Approved (with a S106)	11/10/2005
P05/0115	Erection of new factory and 3 industrial units	Approved	14.03.05

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 7 No representations received.

OTHER CONSULTATION

- 8 **Group Engineer (Development)** – no objections.
- 9 **Head of Environmental Protection (HEP)** – no objections subject to conditions relating to contaminated land, ground gases and road traffic noise.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 10 Adopted Unitary Development Plan (2005)
- DD1 (Urban Design);
 - DD4 (Urban Design in residential areas);
 - DD6 (access and transport infrastructure);
 - DD7 – (planning obligations)
 - EE3 – (existing employment uses)
 - AM14 (parking).

11 Supplementary Planning Guidance

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing).

ASSESSMENT

12 The key issues are

- ❖ The principle of the development;
- ❖ The loss of the building;
- ❖ Provision of open space
- ❖ Design of the dwellings
- ❖ Access and parking;
- ❖ Amenity considerations.

13 *Principle of the development*

This proposal is part of a wider scheme, which has seen permission granted for a replacement factory for an old established button making factory, with associated residential development helping to make the scheme viable. The current proposal can therefore be seen as part of this wider scheme, which has led to a continued industrial presence on the larger site. There is therefore no conflict with the relevant policies which seek to retain an employment use on the site.

14 In addition, generally speaking, the proposal represents the re-use of previously developed land in the urban area for housing in a relatively sustainable location (close to a bus route/ local shops).

15 *Loss of the existing building*

Arguably, the re-use of this existing building, and its potential conversion to flats, would have provided for a more sustainable development. However, the applicants have stated that the building is not big enough, and the internal layout not appropriate, for offices or apartments. This view is concurred with.

16 While the building has a degree of conservation merit, in terms of its local character and distinctiveness, specifically its heightened presence within the public realm and the interesting architectural features on its frontage, including rams' heads, this is not considered of such significance to warrant withholding permission.

17 However, with respect to this, conditions have been recommended to enable the building to be recorded, and to ensure that the building's distinct architectural features are used elsewhere on the larger site.

18 Open space

Under the provisions of UDP policies DD7 and DD8, the proposal is of such a scale (5 dwellings) as to require a Section 106 Obligation for a commuted sum payment for monies for off site open space enhancement, in lieu of on site provision. This is notwithstanding that an Obligation has already been entered into with regard to the other new housing on the wider site.

19 Design

The proposed dwellings are the same design as those already approved on the larger site, with a frontage onto Bloomfield Street West. The proposed shallow set back of the front building line from the back of pavement, with the façades behind dwarf walls and railings, and the entrances onto the street, providing an active frontage are considered positive elements of the scheme, reflecting the manner in which the existing terraced dwellings within the vicinity of the site are articulated, and, to a degree, the existing office building which is proposed to be demolished.

20 Access and parking

The proposed parking spaces (7 in total) are shown at the rear of the plots within a communal parking area accessed off Bloomfield Street West. A footpath around the side and rear of the plots links the entrance to those plots with the spaces. The spaces are shown adequately dimensioned with sufficient manoeuvring space. This proposed arrangement is considered acceptable, reflecting the views of the Group Engineer.

21 Amenity considerations

The proposed rear gardens are shown as 6 metres in length. While this length is below that which would usually be advised to afford adequate amenity, planning guidance allows flexibility to be shown in the application of standards to secure the redevelopment of previously developed land in the urban area for housing, and that length is consistent with the garden length for the other approved dwellings in Bloomfield Street West. Notwithstanding this, a condition has been recommended

taking away permitted development rights, as the impact of any extension to the rear of these plots will have a heightened impact given the space available there.

- 22 The separation distance between the side elevation of Plot 1 and habitable room windows on the facing rear elevation of the approved apartment block on the corner of Stourbridge Road and Bloomfield Street West is 12.5 metres. This is below that which is advised to afford adequate outlook. However, that distance is the same as that which would have existed if the office building were to be retained. As both the apartment block and the plot are new buildings, it would also be a case of the future occupiers buying into this situation.

CONCLUSION

- 23 This proposal is part of a wider scheme. That wider scheme gives the context for the principle of the proposal development to be considered acceptable and an approved design framework which this proposal reflects. Based on this and subject to the terms and conditions set out, the proposal is considered acceptable in the light of all material considerations, including access, parking and amenity issues. There is therefore concurrence with the development plan, in particular policies DD1, DD4 and EE3 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

- 24 It is recommended that permission be granted, subject to:-
- a) the owners entering into a Section 106 Obligation for a contribution to off-site recreational public open space enhancement;
 - b) In the event that that an Obligation is not entered into / completed within a two month period of the resolution to grant approval, the application may be refused if appropriate;
 - c) the following conditions, with delegated powers to the Director of the Urban Environment to make amendments to these as necessary;

Reason for approval

This proposal is part of a wider scheme. That wider scheme gives the context for the principle of the proposal development to be considered acceptable and an approved design framework which this proposal reflects. Based on this and subject

to the terms and conditions set out, the proposal is considered acceptable in the light of all material considerations, including access, parking and amenity issues. There is therefore concurrence with the development plan, in particular policies DD1, DD4 and EE3 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. Development shall not begin until a scheme for protecting the proposed dwellings from noise from road traffic has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, and all works which form part of the scheme shall be completed before any of the permitted dwellings is occupied and retained throughout the life of the development.
3. None of the dwellings shall be occupied until works for the disposal of foul and surface water drainage have been provided on the site to serve the development hereby permitted, in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
4. All foul drainage and contaminated surface water must be discharged to a main sewerage system.
5. Development shall not begin until a comprehensive written site investigation strategy (in a form to be agreed by the local planning authority), has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Such a strategy shall facilitate the identification of contaminants and permit the risk based assessment of the development site. Where the investigations identify the presence of contamination, development shall not begin until a scheme to protect the development from the effects of such contamination has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Such a scheme shall: include provisions for validation monitoring & sampling; be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first occupied; and be retained throughout the lifetime of the development.
6. Development shall not begin until a comprehensive written site investigation strategy (in a form to be agreed by the local planning authority), has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Such a strategy shall facilitate the identification of methane & carbon dioxide. Where the investigations identify the presence of methane and/or carbon dioxide the development shall not begin until a scheme to protect the development from the effects of such gases has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Such a scheme shall: include provisions for validation monitoring & sampling; be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first occupied; and be retained throughout the lifetime of the development.

7. Development shall not begin until details of the type, texture and colour of materials to be used in the external elevations have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details.
8. No development shall commence until details of the proposed boundary treatment for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, with the approved details installed prior to the first occupation of the approved housing on the site.
9. Before any dwelling hereby approved is first occupied the parking areas and accesses thereto shall be paved with a suitable hard, impervious material, and drained.
10. Development shall not begin until details of the existing and proposed levels of the site, which should be related to those of adjoining land and highways, have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority and retained for the life of the development.
11. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order), no development referred to in Part 1 Classes A,B,C,E of Schedule 2 to that order shall be carried out.
12. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no development, including demolition works, shall commence until details as to how architectural features on the office building to be demolished are to be incorporated within the development (on this site and/or the wider development site) have been submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and development carried out in strict accordance with details approved.
13. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no development, including demolition works, shall commence, until the Local Planning Authority is contacted and provided with an opportunity for themselves or representatives nominated by them, to record the office building to be demolished.