

Design and Access Statement

Full application for the proposed raising of roof to create a 2nd and 3rd floor following removal of existing roof and second floor with additional 4 storey front extension to Create a Residence Gym and 29 no. new dwellings over the approved applications 242785 and 213975, plus cycle and refuse storage at

Indigo House
Mulberry Business Park
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG41 2GY



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1. Introduction

The following Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the removal of the existing roof structure and the additional of a new second and third floor providing an additional 29 No. 1, 2 & 3 bedroom apartments over the current approved applications,

A survey has been undertaken to establish the site conditions and identify the relevant constraints. Further to this survey a thorough photographic survey has been undertaken to establish the context of the site and its surroundings. An analysis of these findings has been undertaken and used to ensure that the development of the project is not only consistent with policy but combines to form a coherent scheme.

The principle of providing new housing within this part of the borough is generally considered acceptable at a local, regional and national level. Subject to the assessment of other considerations.

The surrounding area was originally developed as a business park, with a mix of offices and industrial units.

The existing property already benefits from a Prior Approval Consent, for the conversion of the ground and first floors into 32 No. studios, 1 & 2 bedroom apartments.

A substantial amount of work has gone into the design of the building to ensure that it fits well within the context of the surrounding area, neighbours and also that the design is compatible with the prevailing design and form of buildings in the area.

2. Description of the Proposed Scheme

Character of the area

The surrounding area was originally developed as the Mulberry Business Park, with a mix of 2 storey offices and industrial units. Following the introduction of Class O of the General Permitted Development Order, a significant number of buildings in the immediate area have been subject to applications for conversion to residential use, together with further applications for the addition of new second floors. Once they completed, the Mulberry Business Park will become almost entirely residential.

Other Developments

The following schemes are either proposed, or under construction.

Alba House, Fishponds Road	22 No. Apartments	Consented
Ilex House, Fishponds Road	46 No. Apartments	Under construction
Ilex House, Fishponds Road (SF)	14 No. Apartments*	Under construction
Nigra Building, Fishponds Road	43 Apartments	Consented
Nigra Building, Fishponds Road (SF).	14 No. Apartments	Consented
Quoin House, Fishponds Road	23 No. Apartments	Retained as office
Rosa, Fishponds Road	34 No. Apartments	Consented
Rosa, Fishponds Road (SF)	11 No. Apartments	Planning Application
Rubra 1, Fishponds Road	22 No. Apartments	Consented
Rubra 2, Fishponds Road	26 No. Apartments	Consented
Sorbus House, Fishponds Road	38 No. apartments	Consented
Cyber House, Molly Millars Lane	65 No. Apartments	Completed
12 Oaklands Park	20 No. Apartments	Completed
12 Oaklands Park (SF)	5 No. Apartments	Completed

* Granted at appeal



Impact on Neighbours

Ensuring a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land & buildings is one of the core principles of the NPPF, whilst Policy CP3 requires that development is - without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

To the North East of the site is the Nigra Building, a 2 storey office building of a similar design. The building is currently vacant, however, it has consent for the conversion of the ground & first floors into 43 No. apartments, together with a new second floor providing an additional 14 No. apartments. The separation distance between Indigo House and the Nigra Building is a minimum of 29.2m.

To the South East of the site is a occupied by Sorbus House. The site has been completed and now provides a 4 storey building consisting of 38 No. apartments.

To the South West of the site is Ilex & Rosa. Ilex was a 2 storey office building of a similar design. It is currently being converted into 46 No. apartments, together with a new second floor providing an additional 14 No. apartments. The separation distance between Indigo House and Ilex is a minimum of 26.1m. Rosa is a 2 storey office building of a similar design. It has consent for 34 No. apartments. There is a current planning application (reference 211508) for a new second floor providing an additional 11 No. apartments. The separation distance between Indigo House and the Rosa is a minimum of 21.6m. It should be noted that the aforementioned application does not includes any second floor, overlooking Indigo House.

To the North West of the site are a number of industrial units. These are separated from the Mulberry Business Park by Fishponds Road and a number of mature trees. The separation distance between Indigo House and the industrial units is a minimum of 51.1m.

The closest established residentially dwellings are located on Reeves Way to the South East of the site. The separation distance between Indigo House and the nearest dwelling is a minimum of 71.9m.

Design

The proposed scheme is a contemporary addition to an existing 1980's 2 storey office building.

The new extension has been carefully designed to ensure that its overall scale and mass would respect the proportions of the existing building and the adjacent properties.

The design features a flat roof, which results in a minor roof height increase of 1.5m, compared to the existing fully hipped roof.

The additional floors would be constructed from brickwork to match existing, together with zinc cladding and a single ply membrane roof.

Housing mix

Due to the type of accommodation it is difficult to provide a mix of house types. Nonetheless, the scheme includes a range of apartment sizes, which are similar to those that are proposed on the ground & first floors.

The proposal is to create 29 No. residential apartments over the approved applications 242785 and 213975. The accommodation schedule would comprise of:

- 43 No. 1 Bedroom Apartments
- 28 No. 2 Bedrooms Apartments
- 1 No. 3 Bedroom Apartment

The apartments have been designed to comply with the National Space Standards. All apartments would feature large areas of glazing to provide natural daylight & ventilation, together with an area of private amenity space.

The floor areas for each apartments are detailed on the submitted plans:

- JEA-COU-001b
- JEA-COU-002b
- JEA-COU-003b
- JEA-COU-004b

Amenity Space

Each 3rd floor apartment will benefit from a private roof terrace, which will be separated by 1.8m high privacy screens.

Highway

The site is located on the Mulberry Business Park, to the South West of Wokingham Town Centre.

The site is located in a sustainable location within walking distance of the centre of Wokingham whilst the larger towns of Bracknell, Camberley & Reading High Wycombe and Marlow are all within 10 miles of the site.

The site is located approximately 1 mile from Wokingham train station and close to a number of bus stops providing access to the train station and Crowthorne, Reading & Wokingham.

The site is accessed via Fishponds Road, a 7m wide single carriageway with a 30mph

speed limit. There is no dedicated cycle lane along Fishpond Road. The site retains its existing access road which extends around the perimeter of Indigo House, together with the established parking areas.

Parking

The site has a total of 72 parking spaces, which would be shared between the apartments on the ground and first floor & the proposed apartments on the second and third floor.

Given the town & fringe location of the site, the proposed dwellings would require no more than 1 parking space per unit. The provision of 72 parking spaces would therefore meet the requirements of the maximum parking standards for studios and 1 & 2 bedroom apartments.

Cycle Storage

The proposal has been designed to meet sustainable transport objectives and includes the provision of secure cycle storage. Each apartment will be provided with a dedicated cycle space and this can be seen on plan JEA-COU-007.

Refuse Storage

The proposal has been designed to comply with the Waste Management Facilities in New Developments guidance. Wokingham Borough Council require 120l per apartment for general waste & 160l per apartment for recycling waste.

The proposed bin store provides two bins stores and the details can be seen on plan JEA-COU-007b.

The site currently features a number of mature trees along the North Western boundary, together with several planting areas around the building & parking spaces. No trees will be removed as part of the proposal. The planting areas will be retained as existing.

Flood Risk

The site is not located in either Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3. Sustainable Drainage

The new apartments will utilize the existing surface and foul water connections.

There will be no change to the existing access road and parking areas, whilst all construction work, other than the cycle and refuse stores, will be carried out above ground.

Thames Basin Heaths SPA

The site falls within 7km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

The existing consent for the ground and first floors provides 32 No. Apartments, whilst the approved second floor would provide an additional 11 No. apartments. The overall scheme, if approved, would provide 72 No. apartments, which falls below the 50 unit threshold for mitigation measures within the 7km zone.

Community Involvement

The site is located on the mulberry Business Park. Whilst there are a number of buildings which have consent for, or are in the process of being converted to residential use, the surrounding area is predominantly offices and industrial units. Given the modest nature of the proposal, the context of the site and the precedents set by surrounding applications, no community involvement has been undertaken.

Affordable Housing

The applicant accepts that the proposed development triggers the consideration of the delivery of affordable housing, on the basis that the proposal is for more than 5 dwellings and the site area being more than 0.16h.

The applicant is therefore prepared to enter into negotiations for a commuted sum payment in lieu of on-site affordable housing, subject to an industry recognised viability report.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The new second and third floors provides an additional 2,305m² of gross internal floor space. A completed CIL Form 1 has been submitted as part of this application.

Energy Efficiency

The proposed development will accord with the requirements of Part L 2024.

Recycling of construction waste will be encouraged in the construction phase with recycling bins provided for such materials on site.

All apartments would feature large areas of glazing to provide natural daylight & ventilation.

In relation to energy efficiency measures and the conservation of fuel and power, the proposed apartments would be highly insulated and would incorporate other measures, including smart heating controls, low energy light fittings and low water use WC's.

3. Planning Policy Framework

The planning policy framework against which this application would need to be assessed is as follows:

Wokingham LDF Core Strategy DPD (Adopted 2010):

- CP1 – Sustainable Development
- CP2 – Inclusive Communities
- CP3 – General Principles for Development
- CP5 – Housing Mix, Density & Affordability
- CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
- CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths SPA
- CP9 – Scale & Location of Development Proposals
- CP15 – Employment Development
- CP17 – Housing Delivery

Wokingham Management Development Delivery Plan (Adopted 2014):

- CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC06 – Noise
- CC07 – Parking
- CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
- TB05 – Housing Mix
- TB07 – Internal Space standards
- TB08 – Open Space, sport & recreation facilities standards for residential development

Supplementary Planning Documents:

- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document
- Borough Design Guide
- Sustainable Design & Construction Supplementary Planning Document
- Waste Management Facilities In New Developments

4. Conclusion

The application site lies within the urban area of Wokingham, where the principles of new housing are considered acceptable.

The application accords with the policies set down in the NPPF, the LDF Core Strategy DPD and the Management Development Delivery Plan.

The development results in the effective use of under-utilised land and buildings. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF sets out 5 points that planning policies and decisions should do to promote the effective use of land. One such point is to give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs. There is also support for “upward extensions” to utilise airspace above existing residential and commercial premises where this is consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties.

The proposed development accords with the principles of sustainable development and would provide high quality apartments which exceed the National Space Standards.

The alterations to the existing building are considered acceptable in terms of scale & mass, whilst the overall design would not result in a detrimental impact to the character & appearance of the surrounding area. Furthermore the proposal would not result in loss of amenity to the adjacent buildings.