

Reference: 24/00249/TBC	Site: Land And Buildings Keir Hardie House, Milford Road, Morrison House, Jesmond Road, Bevan House, Laird Avenue, Grays, Essex
Ward: Little Thurrock Blackshots	Proposal: Change of use of land for stationing of temporary office building for a period of two years.

Plan Number(s):		
Reference	Name	Received
(No Nos.)	Proposed Plans	29th February 2024
(No Nos.)	Location Plan	29th February 2024
(E0901A Rev A)	Proposed Elevations	8th March 2024

The application is also accompanied by: N/A	
Applicant: Kelly Myers (Senior Housing Development Project Manager) – on behalf of Thurrock Council	Validated: 8 March 2024 Date of expiry: 3 May 2024
Recommendation: Deemed to be granted, subject to conditions.	

This application is scheduled as a Committee item by reason of the applicant and landowner being the Council (in accordance with Part 3 (b) Section 2 2.1 (b) of the Council's constitution).

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application seeks to station a temporary office building on an area of space between Morrison House and Bevan House for a period of two years. The application form indicates that the office is required for a temporary period and would be occupied by Council staff and security for the duration of the 'decant programme' as part of the wider Blackshots redevelopment proposals. The temporary office building would act as a meeting space for local residents and staff to discuss the wider development works and any rehousing (please see planning history below).
- 1.2 The building would not contain any separate welfare facilities.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site lies to the south of Laird Avenue and between Morrison House and Bevan House and comprises an area of space with a small amount of planting which is enclosed on all sides by a public footpath.
- 2.2 Towards the western edge of this parcel of land is an electricity substation. The land to the south is designated Green Belt but the site itself lies outside of the Green Belt.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

Application Reference	Description of Proposal	Decision
20/00410/TBC	Replacement of the external wall coverings, replacement of windows, replacement of communal entrance canopies, replacement of roof guardrails and installation of new external lighting at Bevan House and Morrison House.	Approved

4.0 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Detailed below is a summary of the consultation responses received. The full version of each consultation response can be viewed on the Council’s website via public access at the following link: www.thurrock.gov.uk/planning

UK POWER NETWORKS:

No comments received.

PUBLICITY:

This application has been advertised by way of individual neighbour notification letters and public site notice which has been displayed nearby.

No comments have been received.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF was published on 27th March 2012 and has been updated several times, most recently in December 2023. Paragraph 11 of the Framework sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 2 of the Framework confirms the tests in s.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and s.70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and that the Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The following headings and content of the NPPF are relevant to the consideration of the current proposals:

- 4. Decision-making
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 12. Achieving well-designed places

5.2 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

In March 2014 the former Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (now DLUHC) launched its planning practice guidance web-based resource. This was accompanied by a Written Ministerial Statement which includes a list of the previous planning policy guidance documents cancelled when the NPPF was launched. NPPG contains a range of subject areas, with each area containing several sub-topics. Those of particular relevance to the determination of this planning application comprise:

- Design
- Determining a planning application
- Use of Planning Conditions

Local Planning Policy

5.3 Local Planning Policy Thurrock Local Development Framework

The “Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development” was adopted by Council on the 28 February 2015. The following policies apply to the proposals:

Thematic Policies:

- CSTP9 (Well-being: Leisure and Sports)
- CSTP20 (Open Space)
- CSTP22 (Thurrock Design)
- CSTP23 (Thurrock Character and Distinctiveness)

Policies for the Management of Development:

- PMD1 (Minimising Pollution and Impacts on Amenity)
- PMD2 (Design and Layout)

- PMD5 (Open Spaces, Outdoor Sports and Recreational Facilities)
- PMD8 (Parking Standards)

5.4 Thurrock Local Plan

In February 2014 the Council embarked on the preparation of a new Local Plan for the Borough. Between February and April 2016, the Council consulted formally on an Issues and Options (Stage 1) document and simultaneously undertook a 'Call for Sites' exercise. In December 2018 the Council began consultation on an Issues and Options (Stage 2 Spatial Options and Sites) document, this consultation has now closed, and the responses have been considered and reported to Council. On 23 October 2019 the Council agreed the publication of the Issues and Options 2 Report of Consultation on the Council's website and agreed the approach to preparing a new Local Plan. In December 2023 the Council began the Initial Proposals Consultation (Regulation 18) following agreement at Full Council.

5.5 Thurrock Design Strategy

In March 2017 the Council launched the Thurrock Design Strategy. The Design Strategy sets out the main design principles to be used by applicants for all new development in Thurrock. The Design Strategy is a supplementary planning document (SPD) which supports policies in the adopted Core Strategy.

6.0 **ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The assessment below covers the following areas:

- I. Principle of the Development
- II. Design and Layout
- III. Traffic Impact, Access and Car Parking
- IV. Other Matters

I. PRINCIPLE OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 6.2 The site is shown as 'white land' on the LDF Proposals Map, meaning that there are no specific land use designations for this site. Given this is the case, there would be no planning policy objections to the site being used for a temporary period of two years for the intended office use. As discussed in more detail below, a planning condition will be imposed to ensure the land is restored to its existing condition once the use ceases and the building is no longer required.
- 6.3 Policy PMD5 safeguards all existing open spaces, outdoor sports and recreational facilities and development proposals that would result in the loss of such provision will not be permitted unless conveniently located and accessible alternatives are

provided, and the proposals will not negatively affect the character of the area. Although the site forms part of an open area, it is not formally designated as Open Space on the Core Strategy proposals map and it is a particularly small parcel of land surrounded by footpaths on all sides and is not therefore useable for any outdoor games or activities. This is further emphasised by the fact there is currently a small planted area in the middle of the parcel and an adjacent substation. It contributes to the landscaping of the area, rather than being of use for recreation as such. Accordingly, siting the temporary building on the Land would not be unacceptable.

II. DESIGN AND LAYOUT

- 6.4 Policies CSTP22, CSTP23 and PMD2 are relevant along with the guidance within the NPPF/NPPG. In addition, the Thurrock Design Strategy was adopted as a supplementary planning document (SPD) and endorsed as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in March 2017.
- 6.5 The temporary building would have a somewhat utilitarian appearance in the streetscene but is modest in scale and appearance compared with the tower blocks on either side. Its limited height would not have any significant impacts upon views into or out of the open area to the south and its height would not be particularly incongruous in the context of the nearby rows of single storey garages.
- 6.6 The proposal is considered to have an acceptable appearance, given its functional use and requirement and temporary nature of its use.

III. TRAFFIC IMPACT, ACCESS AND CAR PARKING

- 6.7 The proposal would not have any material impacts upon the local highway network and there would be no implications for the access with Laird Avenue. The application is not explicit in stating how many members of staff would be on site at any one time but given the size and intended use by Council staff, there are likely to be a small number of people working from this unit. It is not therefore considered that there would be any significant implications for parking. On street parking is available along Laird Avenue and Jesmond Road.

IV. Other Matters

- 6.8 The proposal is not likely to have any material impact upon ecology. A small number of plants would need to be removed from the site to facilitate the temporary building, but these appear to be of very little amenity value. The use of a planning condition, as already mentioned above, will ensure that soft landscaping is replaced when the building is no longer required.
- 6.9 As shown on the plans, there would be a gap maintained between the temporary building and the substation. It is not considered that there would be any material impacts in this regard.

- 6.10 Given the nature of the proposals, which would likely only be occupied during typical working hours, and its single storey height, it is not considered that there would be any material impact upon nearby residential properties, either from its use or from its physical appearance.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR APPROVAL

- 7.1 The building would be located on a parcel of land that contributes very little to the public realm at present, given its small size and location between two existing tower blocks. The building is only required for a temporary period and is in the public interest given its intended use as a meeting place for local residents to raise any concerns regarding the works to the tower blocks that are to be carried out.
- 7.2 Officers conclude that there are no planning policy grounds to withhold planning permission in this case and therefore recommend approval of the application, subject to planning conditions.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended expressly for the purpose of Regulation 3(4) of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, permission be deemed to be granted for the above development, subject to compliance with the following:

Condition(s):

Standard Time Limit

- The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91(1) of The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Approved Plans

- The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Plan Number(s):		
Reference	Name	Received
(No Nos.)	Proposed Plans	29th February 2024
(No Nos.)	Location Plan	29th February 2024
(E0901A Rev A)	Proposed Elevations	8th March 2024

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

Temporary Permission

3. The stationing of the temporary building hereby permitted is limited to a period expiring two years from the date of implementation. The temporary building shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition, being that as it exists at the time of application, before the end of two years or once the structure is no longer required, whichever is the sooner.

Reason: In the interests of the character of the area with regard to policies PMD2 and CSTP22 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development [2015].

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online:

www.thurrock.gov.uk/planning

