

## **APPLICATION REPORT – 21/00013/FULMAJ**

**Validation Date: 8 January 2021**

**Ward: Adlington And Anderton**

**Type of Application: Major Full Planning**

**Proposal: Erection of 4no. industrial buildings for occupation within Use Classes E(g), B2 and/or B8, including car parking and delivery areas, access, remedial and associated works.**

**Location: Fairport Engineering Adlington Mill Market Place Adlington Chorley PR7 4EZ**

**Case Officer: Mr Iain Crossland**

**Applicant: Mr A Porter**

**Agent: Mr Chris Smith, Plan A (North West) Limited**

**Consultation expiry: 22 April 2021**

**Decision due by: 30 April 2021**

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

2. The application site is located within the settlement area of Adlington. Part of the site to the south has been allocated for mixed use housing and employment in the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026, whilst the remaining area is designated as a part of the District and Local Centre.
3. The site is occupied by a mixture of industrial uses and associated administrative functions that have been established for some considerable time. The buildings consist of 7no. industrial warehouse bays adjoined to a buff brick entrance and administration office frontage. The premises are primarily occupied by businesses operated by the Applicant, which include the manufacture and refurbishment of large waste containers and an associated transport operation, with part of the office accommodation being tenanted by an engineering design company.
4. The industrial site is situated on Market Place, one of the major transportation routes through the town centre, which comprises a number of commercial sites. The site is located approximately 150m away from Adlington Rail Station and no more than 100m from bus stops that travel in both a northern and southerly direction to other local neighbourhoods and towns.
5. The building was severely damaged by a fire in February 2019 that completely destroyed a significant part of the complex and left other buildings in a dangerous and unusable state, necessitating their subsequent demolition. The brick administrative offices and other bays have survived for the most part. The external areas that surround the site, such as the workplace car park to the front of the building and the goods delivery and loading areas to the rear of the site are undamaged and can be re-utilised.

6. It is noted that planning permission was granted in January 2020 for the reconstruction of the industrial building at bays 1-5 and bays 1A-3A following demolition of the fire damaged structure, with composite cladding to be applied to all external elevations. However, since that time, the Applicant has re-assessed the scope of the redevelopment scheme and concluded that an alternative scheme format would more suitably meet the needs of modern businesses, resulting in the current application.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

7. This application seeks planning permission for the erection of 4no. industrial buildings for occupation within Use Classes E(g), B2 and/or B8, including car parking and delivery areas, access, remedial and associated works. The buildings would be located either side of a central access road, with a central HGV turning facility and dedicated car parking and external areas to support the use of each unit. Overall, 97no. parking spaces are proposed, to include 6no. accessible spaces.
8. The proposed buildings would provide employment accommodation of modern appearance that offers flexibility to meet a range of occupier needs. Accordingly, three of the four buildings (Buildings B, C and D) have been designed to provide accommodation that can be sub-divided, with each smaller unit being served by roller shutter access.
9. Access to the site would be taken from the existing point of access from Railway Road via Railway View/Back Railway View, which served as the main point of access to the site before the fire. A new point of access leading to the new units would be provided off Back Railway View, with the carriageway widened to assist its function.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

10. One representation has been received in objection relating to the noise and disturbance from operations currently and historically carried out from the site impacting on the amenity of nearby residential occupiers.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

11. Adlington Town Council: Have confirmed that this application was considered at its meeting of 15 February 2021. The Town Council is supportive of this application and the investment that this will bring to the business/this site/and towards retaining employment in Adlington. Having read comments from neighbouring residential properties the concern that the Town Council noted was in respect of noise nuisance due to HGV deliveries taking place at 10.45pm. The Town Council is not aware of more general concerns of this nature. The business use is established. However, the Town Council would ask that every effort should be made by the business to maintain an appropriate balance between the needs of the business and the respect for the rights of the residents who live close by.
12. Environment Agency: Have no objection subject to condition
13. CSTEP: Comment that this application reaches the threshold for an employment and skills plan.
14. Waste & Contaminated Land: Have no objection.
15. Lancashire County Council Highway Services: Have no objection subject to conditions.
16. Lead Local Flood Authority: Have no objection.
17. Lancashire Police: Advice provided as derived from the Secured by Design 2015 Commercial guidance document.
18. United Utilities: Conditions are recommended.

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### Principle of the development

19. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) is strongly in support of proposals that sustain and enhance economic growth. It states in paragraph 80 that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. The proposed development would enable the redevelopment of an established industrial site to provide improved modernised facilities following on from the recent fire. This would enable the existing businesses to continue operating, and would support future employment provision from the site.
20. This is complemented by Central Lancashire Core Strategy Policy 10, which seeks to protect existing employment premises and sites.
21. It is noted that Adlington is identified as an Urban Local Service Centre in Policy 1(d) of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, where some growth and investment is encouraged.
22. Part of the site is allocated for mixed use housing and employment under Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 policy EP1.14/HS1.26, whilst the remaining area is designated as a part of the District and Local Centre under policy EP7. The proposed development does not, however, seek to deviate from the existing, and well established, use of the land and therefore these policy designations are not applied to the assessment of this application.
23. The Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 policy EP3 provides guidance for the development of new industrial units and extensions to existing industrial units. This policy sets out a number of criterion to be satisfied by such proposals. An assessment against these criteria is set out as follows:
24. *a) they are of a scale and character that is commensurate with the size of the settlement;*  
The proposed development is of a scale that is commensurate with the area of the application site and size of the settlement, with the scale of the development (floorspace) in fact being reduced in comparison to what existed on site previous to the fire, and is less than was approved through the recent planning permission. The redevelopment of this part of the site has enabled a reconfiguration of the facilities to provide an improved and more effective layout that provides greater flexibility to change. The design and character of the development would be that of modern industrial and office buildings faced in mainly grey cladding with some areas of brick to break this up. Such a design response is suitable and appropriate in the context of an existing industrial site within which it would be located, in consideration of the larger utilitarian structures that are already in situ.
25. *b) the site is planned and laid out on a comprehensive basis;*  
The proposed development has been designed on a comprehensive basis to provide modern facilities within a wider industrial site and makes an efficient and effective use of the available space.
26. *c) the proposal will not prejudice future, or current economic activities within nearby areas;*  
The proposed development would enable the present businesses to continue operating from the site and would future proof the site to some extent through the provision of more modern flexible facilities. There is no evidence to suggest that the development would be in anyway harmful to economic activity in other areas, particularly since it replaces previous facilities on an existing industrial site.
27. *d) the proposal will not cause unacceptable harm e.g. noise, smells to surrounding uses;*  
The proposed development would not result in any greater impact on noise than was previously the case prior to the buildings being damaged by fire. Indeed the inclusion of light industrial uses, which specifically allows for any industrial process, which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area would potentially introduce businesses that have less impact than previously. Furthermore the applicant has agreed to set the operating hours of any general industrial use (class B2) that may occupy the new units to between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 hours Mondays to Saturdays and at

no time on Sundays or bank holidays. Together this would result in a net improvement in comparison with the previous situation and that approved through planning permission 19/01035/FULMAJ, which was effectively like for like replacement.

28. *e) the site has an adequate access that would not create a traffic hazard or have an undue environmental impact;*

A new access point would be developed with the closure of the existing access nearest to the properties on Railway View, which is currently at a rather congested corner of the site, close to the load bay of another business to the north. The new access would improve this situation and some additional off site highway works would facilitate improved access arrangements further. It is noted that LCC Highways raise no objection to the proposed development.

29. *f) the proposal will be served by public transport and provide pedestrian and cycle links to adjacent areas;*

The application site is well served by public transport with a railway station within 150m. The site is also accessible to a reasonably large catchment by walking or cycling.

30. *g) open storage areas should be designed to minimise visual intrusion;*

The application site has historically operated with widespread open storage, which would remain a feature of the proposed redevelopment scheme. It is noted, however, that the configuration of the proposed buildings would provide an improved level of screen to the outdoor storage areas.

31. *h) adequate screening is provided where necessary to any unsightly feature of the development and security fencing is located to the internal edge of any perimeter landscaping;*

The existing boundary wall between the site and Railway View/Back Railway View would be retained as existing, with the height of the wall providing effective screening at ground floor level. The proposed areas of car parking directly opposite the dwellings on Railway View/Back Railway View would be fully screened from view. It is noted that the neighbouring dwellings also have a boundary wall to Railway View/Back Railway View, which serves to enclose the outlook from the dwellings, whilst the buildings themselves have been configured so as to act as affective screens.

32. *i) on the edges of industrial areas, where sites adjoin residential areas or open countryside, developers will be required to provide substantial peripheral landscaping;*

The industrial site is already well established and has limited space for landscaping. There is an established strip of landscaping between the car park and Market Place that softens the frontage of the site and would be maintained. Although the development would be visible and industrial in appearance it would not be out of character in the context of the existing industrial site.

33. *j) the development makes safe and convenient access provision for people with disabilities;*

The application site is level and is accessible for people of all levels of mobility. Accessible car parking spaces would be conveniently located across the site in accordance with the Council's parking standards. Access to each of the proposed units would be DDA compliant.

34. *k) the buildings are designed, laid out and landscaped to maximise the energy conservation potential of any development, and to minimise the risk of crime;*

The proposed buildings would be constructed in accordance with current Building Regulation requirements and would, therefore, improve upon the older buildings that existed on site previously in terms of their energy efficiency.

35. *l) the proposal will not result in surface water, drainage or sewerage related pollution problems; and*

There would be no greater impact on surface water, drainage or sewerage related pollution problems than existed previously.

36. *m) the proposal incorporates measures which help to prevent crime and promote community safety.*

The proposed development would provide a single point of access at the northern end of the site from Railway View/Back Railway View. The use of the access would be controlled by a sliding gate over the vehicular access and separate pedestrian gates. The access route would also be overlooked, with the arrangement of the proposed buildings also providing natural surveillance over each other and the car park and shared areas. The existing boundary walls would be retained to prevent unauthorised access being gained from the site boundary. The proposals have, therefore, been designed to reduce the opportunity for crime and would create a secure environment for businesses to operate within.

#### Impact on neighbour amenity from the proposed buildings

37. The proposed development would be located close to properties on Railway View and Meadow Street, although it has been designed so that it would not directly face windows to habitable rooms of dwellings at these addresses. Proposed building A would be positioned approximately 11m corner to corner with no.1 Railway View. It would be positioned to the west of this property and would have an eaves height of approximately 7m. As no.1 Railway View would not directly face this building there would be no detrimental impact on outlook and no harmful loss of light. Other properties would be further from this building and would be less affected.
38. Proposed building B would be positioned approximately 11m corner to corner with no.9 Railway View. It would be positioned to the south of this property and would have an eaves height of approximately 7m. As no.9 Railway View would not directly face this building there would be no detrimental impact on outlook. Although there would be some impact on light levels to the front windows of this property during the middle of day in wintertime there would be no harmful loss of light. Other properties would be further from this building and would be less affected.
39. Proposed building C would be positioned approximately 16m from the gable end elevation of no.3 Meadow Street and its associated garden. It would be positioned to the south west of this property and would have an eaves height of approximately 7m. Given the scale of the building and degree of separation there would be no detrimental impact on outlook. Although there may be some impact on light levels to the garden of this property during the late afternoon in wintertime there would be no harmful loss of light. Other properties are further from this building and are less affected.
40. It is noted that there is a very close relationship between the industrial and residential uses in this area that is not generally desirable. However, such a relationship is not uncommon in more historic employment areas dating back to the times when residential buildings were positioned in amongst factory buildings as a way of accommodating the workforce close to the employer. In this particular situation the industrial site has been in situ for some considerable time and the buildings that did exist have been irreparably damaged by a recent fire. The proposed development seeks to redevelop this part of the site for similar such uses, with some improvement made through the layout of the buildings. As such the proposed development would have no greater impact on the amenity of the nearby residents over and above that of the historic arrangement and is considered to be in accordance with policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026.

#### Highway safety

41. An assessment of highway impact was carried out in 2019 following the submission of planning application 19/01035/FULMAJ to replace the fire damaged structures on site with new industrial buildings of scale, 7,923m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area for Class B2 use. The application was subsequently approved the following year. As stated above, the applicant has since re-assessed the approved development and is now proposing an alternative development. The current application proposes the erection of 4no. separate buildings with a total gross floor area of 5,562m<sup>2</sup> for Class E(g), B2 and/or B8 uses with parking and associated infrastructure.

42. The application submission includes a Transport Statement. The existing site is accessed from three points, Railway Road via Railway View/Back Railway View, Market Place and Market Street via Water Street. All three accesses would be retained, but from Railway Road, the proposed development would be accessed from a new entrance to be formed to Railway View. As proposed, the first corner of Railway View from its junction with Railway Road is to be widened and marked with yellow hatchings to facilitate access into the site. A pedestrian walkway linked to the existing footway on the south side of Railway View is to be extended into the site and across the proposed site entrance to incorporate a 'zebra' crossing. It is noted that Railway View is not an adopted highway.
43. The proposed development has a Class B8 use component, which requires less parking provision than a Class B2 use, however, if as worst case scenario it is assumed the entire proposed development is used for Class B2 use, based on the proposed scale of development, a total of 110no. parking spaces would be required in order to accord with the Local Authority (LA) parking standards. The applicant proposes a total of 108no. spaces mostly within the courtyard of the proposed buildings, including 6no. for disabled people, with some spaces to be allocated within the existing car park in front of the site. This arrangement reflects the historic parking at the site with some improvement through the addition of parking within and around the new units, which results in a good balance of parking, manoeuvring areas and scale of buildings. This is considered to be acceptable given the sustainable location of the site.
44. In the response from LCC Highway Services in respect of the approved application, 19/01035/FULMAJ, the need to provide improvements at the access from Market Place to the existing car park to ensure pedestrian safety was highlighted. The access appears to have been altered in the past, but without making sure the vehicle crossing is properly aligned to the driveway into the car park. As a result, the width of the vehicle crossing currently exceeds that of the driveway on the south side of the access and is obstructed by an existing brick wall, whilst on the north side the width of the driveway into the site extends beyond the vehicle crossing leading to vehicles going into the site being driven over the brick-paved section of the footway at the risk of pedestrians. This is a highway safety concern, which has been accepted by the Applicant and, therefore, a scheme of works to enhance the safety of this access has been proposed.
45. Overall LCC Highway Services consider that the proposal is acceptable from a highway safety perspective, and it is considered that the proposed development would not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site.

#### Employment and skills provision

47. The Central Lancashire Employment Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in September 2017. The SPD introduces Employment Skills Statements and provides clarity as to how this requirement relates to the relevant policies set out in the Core Strategy and Local Plan as well as the guidance set out in the Framework. The SPD goes on to state that one of Central Lancashire's priorities is to encourage economic growth within Central Lancashire that benefits the people and businesses in the three boroughs. The SPD seeks to;
- increase employment opportunities by helping local businesses to improve, grow and take on more staff
  - help businesses to find suitable staff and suppliers, especially local ones
  - improve the skills of local people to enable them to take advantage of the resulting employment opportunities
  - help businesses already located in Central Lancashire to grow and attract new businesses into the area
48. The SPD requires development over certain thresholds to be accompanied by an Employment and Skills Statement to ensure the right skills and employment opportunities are provided at the right time. This is to the benefit of both the developer and local population and covers the following areas:

- Creation of apprenticeships/new entrants/graduates/traineeships
- Recruitment through Job Hub and Jobcentre plus and other local employment vehicles.
- Work trials and interview guarantees
- Vocational training (NVQ)
- Work experience (14-16 years, 16-19 years and 19+ years) (5 working days minimum)
- Links with schools, colleges and university
- Use of local suppliers
- Supervisor Training
- Management and Leadership Training
- In house training schemes
- Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Cards
- Support with transport, childcare and work equipment
- Community based projects

49. A condition is recommended requiring an employment and skills plan.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

50. The Chorley CIL Infrastructure Charging Schedule provides a specific amount for development. The CIL Charging Schedule was adopted on 16 July 2013 and charging commenced on 1 September 2013. The proposed development would be a CIL liable development and any charge would be subject to indexation in accordance with the Council's Charging Schedule.

### **CONCLUSION**

51. The proposed development would improve the appearance of the site in that it would address recent fire damage and result in the redevelopment of this part of the site in a more adaptable manner, thereby helping to protect the future of this employment site. There would be no unacceptable detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers over and above the historic situation. In addition, the highway impacts would remain constant, whilst the proposal would secure the functions of the business and contribute to economic development within the Borough. On the basis of the above, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

### **RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE**

**Ref:** 00/00038/FUL                      **Decision:** PERFPP                      **Decision Date:** 23 February 2000  
**Description:** Three extraction chimneys

**Ref:** 01/00298/FUL                      **Decision:** PERFPP                      **Decision Date:** 20 June 2001  
**Description:** Single storey dock leveller extension

**Ref:** 19/01035/FULMAJ                      **Decision:** PERFPP                      **Decision Date:** 17 January 2020  
**Description:** Reconstruction of industrial building at bays 1-5 and bays 1A-3A following demolition of existing fire damaged structure, with composite cladding to be applied to all external elevations

**Ref:** 19/01036/FULMAJ                      **Decision:** PERFPP                      **Decision Date:** 17 January 2020  
**Description:** Erection of temporary warehouse building (retrospective)

**Ref:** 21/00196/FUL                      **Decision:** PERFPP                      **Decision Date:** 16 April 2021  
**Description:** Erection of infill extension to south west side of existing industrial buildings for use within Use Classes E(g), B2 and/or B8

**RELEVANT POLICIES:** In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan (the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, the Adopted Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Consideration of the proposal has had regard to guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the development plan. The specific policies/ guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.

Suggested conditions

To follow