

Item 5 **12/00043/OUT**

Case Officer **Adrian Morgan**

Ward **Chorley North East**

Proposal **Outline application for demolition of the existing church building and redevelopment of the site for residential use (seven houses).**

Location **Park Road Methodist Church Park Road Chorley
LancashirePR7 1QN**

Applicant **Chorley Methodist Church**

Consultation expiry: **22 February 2012**

Application expiry: **16 March 2012**

Proposal

1. Outline application for the demolition of the existing church building and redevelopment of the site for residential use (seven houses).
2. The application seeks only outline permission, with all matters other than means of access and siting of houses to be reserved.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that this application is granted outline planning approval.

Main Issues

4. The main issues for consideration in respect of this planning application are:
Principle of the development
Impact on the neighbours
Traffic and Transport
Loss of Community Facility

Consultations

5. **Chorley's Conservation Officer** - Subject to design details to be submitted at Reserved Matters, the significance of the heritage asset, 12 – 16 Park Road and the St Laurence's Conservation Area, will be enhanced as a result of the proposed development. The application is therefore acceptable.
6. **Director People and Places** – It is recommended that due to the sensitive end-use of the development, the applicant submits to the Local Planning Authority a report to identify any potential sources of contamination on the site and where appropriate, necessary remediation measures. The development shall thereafter only be carried out following the remediation of the site in full accordance with the measures stipulated in the approved report.

Representations

7. Three representations have been received from neighbours saying that they have no objections to the principle of housing on the site.

8. Two letters of objection have been received from neighbours as follows; -.
9. A resident of Parker Street is concerned about disruption during demolition and construction works; the change in the view from her home; the potential for the new buildings having what would be, in her opinion, an inappropriate appearance for the location, and; future car parking problems. She is also concerned about potential devaluation of her home and suggests adapting the church for re-use or recycling the stone in the new buildings.
10. A resident of Park Road is concerned about existing traffic and car parking problems being exacerbated if the site were used for housing, especially in the day and at peak morning & afternoon school run times; loss of privacy and loss of light to his house which is situated facing the site across Park Road; the vehicular entrance of the site being blocked by lorries delivering to nearby businesses, and; abuse and criminal damage caused by drunks passing the site.

Assessment

Background Information

11. The proposed development involves the demolition of the current buildings and the redevelopment of the site for housing. It is understood from pre-application consultations regarding this proposal that redevelopment of the site is being considered because of the poor structural and decorative condition of the buildings and the fact that the church congregation has diminished to such a level that it is now proposed to merge with that at Trinity Methodist Church, Gillibrand Walks, Chorley.

The Site

12. The site is located on Park Road in Chorley, close to the Town Centre and adjacent to St Lawrence Conservation Area. The site forms part of a block which is bounded by Park Road to the west, Nichol Street to the north, Parker Street to the east and a path to the south. Park Road comprises mainly two storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings although there are some three storey buildings to the south within the Conservation Area. To the rear along Parker Street are modest two storey terraced dwellings. Dwellings around the site are mainly constructed out of facing red brick or grey stone. The existing site contains a Methodist Church and an attached Sunday school and mainly hardstanding.
13. Immediately south of the application site is St Lawrence's Conservation Area, which contains a number of designated heritage assets, including the grade II listed buildings at 12 to 16 Park Road. The existing church building dates from the late 1960s and, in the view of the Council's Conservation Officer, is considered to be of little historic, architectural or aesthetic value and, furthermore, to be beginning to cause visual blight to the appearance of the adjacent conservation area and the setting of the grade II listed 12 - 16 Park Road.

Principle of the development

14. The principle of residential development on the site complies with the provisions of policies HS4 and HS6 of the Chorley Local Plan Review. The site is highly accessible, being situated close to the town centre and public transport facilities; the scheme layout plan submitted demonstrates that sufficient car parking could be provided on site for the seven houses proposed, and that the houses could be situated so as to comply with the criteria set down in the Council's Design Guidance SPG in terms of interface distances. Detailed design issues would be considered should a Reserved Matters application be submitted, but it is clear that there is potential for a satisfactory scheme to be drawn up.

Impact on the neighbours

15. The site is on a main road in predominantly residential area and seven houses would be likely to generate less pedestrian and vehicular traffic than the existing use, therefore, it is considered unlikely that the use of the site for housing would have any detrimental impact on neighbouring residents. The scheme submitted shows vehicular access for four houses being made from Parker Street, and for three houses from Nichol Street. There is already a vehicular access to the existing church car park from Parker Street and it is considered that any net increase in vehicular movements would be minimal and well within acceptable levels for these roads. Details of the appearance, height, materials and landscaping of any houses to be built would be considered separately should a Reserved Matters application be submitted.
16. The change in appearance of the site that one objector from Parker Street was concerned about, would be likely to be either neutral or beneficial for the neighbouring occupiers. From Parker Street, the scheme submitted would provide a view that would be more open than at present and include residential gardens and car parking rather than a back-of-pavement wall and car park than at present.
17. Any houses fronting onto Park Road would have no effect on light reaching existing houses on the far side of Park Road as a resident of a house opposite the site has objected to. They would be at least 22 metres away from facing homes and, though the details would be the subject of a further application, probably be no higher than the existing church and other buildings adjacent to the site.
18. Any potential impact on property values is impossible to quantify and is, anyway, not a material planning consideration.

Loss of a community facility

19. In order to comply with Policy PS3 of our Local Plan, which relates to community centres, village halls and similar facilities, it would need to be demonstrated that either alternative provision of a similar standard and in a suitable location would be made available or that redevelopment would lead to an improvement in the overall quality and availability of existing facilities.
20. It is understood from pre-application discussion that it is the applicant's intention to sell the site to raise funds to enable the Trinity Methodist Church, Gillibrand Walks, Chorley site to be refurbished or re-developed. Further details of how Policy PS3 would be complied with would need to be provided should any Reserved matters application be submitted.

Traffic and Transport

21. The indicative scheme layout provides for each of the seven proposed houses to have off-road two car parking spaces, which would be sufficient to meet the Council's requirements for houses with up to three bedrooms.
22. Given the fact that each proposed new house would have designated off-road parking facilities and that seven houses would be likely to generate fewer journeys to the site than the present use, it is considered unlikely that the proposed development would generate additional traffic or car-parking problems in the vicinity.

Section 106 Agreement

23. Any future reserved matters application may be subject to a legal agreement requiring the payment of a commuted sum towards the provision of play-space.

Overall Conclusion

24. The outline proposal complies with Council policies and the use of the site for residential development is acceptable in principle.

Planning Policies

National Planning Policies:

Planning Policy Statement 5 Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)

Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing (PPS3)

Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review

Policies:

HS4 – Design and layout of residential developments

HS6 – Housing windfall sites

TR4 – Highway Development Control criteria

PS3 – Protection of community centres and village halls

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Design Guidance SPD

Also; St Laurence's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' document, which was adopted by the Council's Executive Cabinet as a supporting document for use in the Development Management process on 1 October 2009.

Site History

The site history of the property is as follows:

Ref: 12/00043/OUT **Decision:** PCO **Decision Date:**

Description: Outline application for demolition of the existing church building and redevelopment of the site for residential use.

Ref: 03/01269/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 15 March 2004

Description: Replacement of existing concrete slab and post fence with steel railings 1.52m high,

Ref: 12/00043/OUT **Decision:** PCO **Decision Date:**

Description: Outline application for demolition of the existing church building and redevelopment of the site for residential use.

Recommendation: Permit Outline Planning Permission Conditions

1. The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission. *Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.*

2. The approved plans are:

Plan Ref.	Received On:	Title:
1150 02	18/01/2012	Site Layout as Proposed

Reason: To define the permission and in the interests of the proper development of the site.