

Item 4a **13/00168/FUL**

Case Officer **Caron Taylor**

Ward **Adlington And Anderton**

Proposal **Change of use of an existing vacant office building to a Bed & Breakfast Guest House (Use Class C1) with proprietor's accommodation.**

Location **Naylor & Walkden Hatton House 15 Hatton Street Adlington Chorley**

Applicant **Shutter Doors Services Property Ltd**

Consultation expiry: **8 April 2013**

Application expiry: **24 April 2013**

Proposal

1. Change of use of an existing vacant office building to a Bed & Breakfast Guest House (Use Class C1) with proprietor's accommodation.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that this application is granted planning approval subject to conditions.

Main Issues

3. The main issues for consideration in respect of this planning application are:
 - Background information
 - Principle of the development
 - Impact on the neighbours
 - Design
 - Trees and Landscape
 - Flood Risk

Representations

4. 58 letters of objection have been received on the following grounds:
 - Very concerned about the potential impact that this may have on what is a very quiet residential area;
 - Who is it anticipated will use this facility? This is effectively an industrial site. Not an ideal location for a bed and breakfast. Will it in reality be used to house low paid transient workers or possibly some sort of hostel accommodation?;
 - There is no need for a bed and breakfast in Adlington. As there are already 3 bed and breakfasts within ½ a mile of the centre of Adlington. The White Bear has 3 bedrooms and they struggle to fill them. Ivy House also has multiple rooms and struggles to fill them and also the same applies to The Bay Horse on Babylon Lane. In fact 2 local bed and breakfasts have recently closed down due to lack of custom. One of them being Briarfield House, Bolton Road, Anderton, this being a mile from the centre of Adlington and the other also a mile away, Sunnysdale, Grimeford Lane. These places closed down because there is clearly not the demand for such places and certainly not in such a strange and off the beaten track place as this proposed site. What else is in store once they can secure the planning permission?;
 - They are intending to apply for a license to sell alcohol. There are families with young children in this area and one in particular 20 yards from the proposed site. If they had wanted to live across from a pub they are sure that is where they would have bought a home;

- The applicant has blocked off with high fencing (blocking out light and basically making the locals feel like they are being imprisoned) a passage which has been communal and used on a regular basis by the properties on Harrison Road;
 - This is a mixed community and they do not see anybody welcoming such an establishment. It is antisocial and apart from being totally unnecessary in this area it will cause high traffic pollution on a road that is clearly not built for such traffic and also the local residents (elderly as well as young families) will have to endure heavy traffic and noise in an area which is clearly not suitable for such an establishment;
 - The use will require 24 hour access. It will be detrimental to the local area in terms of noise, nuisance and disturbance;
 - The fire escape will require 24 hour lighting which will cause a nuisance;
 - The Local Plan does not require any further hotel (C1 use) development in the borough and there are unimplemented planning consents for this use type. There is indeed a surplus;
 - Other bed and breakfasts in Adlington have failed and now stand derelict. Another failed and derelict businesses must not be allowed in the area;
 - There is already low cost accommodation in the area. If it is so cheap it is likely to be a multiple occupancy hostel or common lodging house;
 - It will unquestionably increase the risk of crime in the area and prejudice the adjacent business premises;
 - It will damage the prospects for economic improvement over the whole of Adlington and beyond;
 - It will have a severe impact on local policing;
 - The issues associated with a 24 hour use were not an issue when it was a 9-5 office;
 - Parking is already limited in the area and it will restrict access for emergency vehicles
5. 3 letters of support have been received on the following grounds:
- It will be better than what was there before wagons and cars passing all day people should welcome new business and jobs in their local area and stop moaning it could be worst it could be left to go to ruin and be an eyesore on their neighbours;
 - They support new businesses in the area, new jobs will be created, and an old site will be transformed for the better rather than sitting empty. The former site was extremely busy with transport and constant movement, for 30 years. The new proposal is for a small bed and breakfast not a night club or worse that could make noise 24/7, why would you choose to live next to such a site in the first place, it's always been industrial. They support them for bringing a local business Adlington and saving a site from ruin.
6. Adlington Town Council objects strongly to the application for the following reasons:
- The development is inappropriate for a residential area which also includes sheltered accommodation for elderly residents;
 - The change of use to class C1 (hotel or hostel) [it should be noted that a C1 use does not cover hostels] will change the demographic of the area and does not form part of the current or proposed Chorley Local Plan;
 - The pattern of traffic access to the site will be spread over a wider range of times during the day and is likely to be heavier than for the previous office use. The roads around the site are narrow and mainly residential and additional traffic would cause access problems for residents;
 - There is no provision for parking in the area surrounding the proposed development. The plans include one parking space per room/member of staff but this would be inadequate to accommodate visitors or multiple room occupancy and any additional parking would restrict access for residents;
 - Additional traffic and parked vehicles would also make access more difficult for emergency and utility vehicles;
 - There is only one access route to the site via Harrison Road which at its junction with the A6 is narrow and has poor visibility.

The Town Council also requests that this application is considered by the Development Control Committee and that the decision is not made under Delegated Powers.

Consultations

7. Chorley Planning Policy

They consider the applicant has fully covered the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 10 and the relevant Supplementary Planning Document – Controlling re- use of employment premises.

8. They also consider the building proposed as proprietor's accommodation does not require marketing because it is ancillary to the Bed and Breakfast guest house. This part of the proposal is adjacent to existing residential properties and will act as a buffer to the guest house.

9. Lancashire County Council (Highways)

Comments will be placed on the addendum; however the proposal will use the existing access and parking which is assessed below.

Applicant's Case

10. The proposal will provide seven en-suite, double guest bedrooms including a ground floor family room with full disabled access facilities. At ground floor level a kitchen and dining restaurant area will be provided together with a reception office and toilet accommodation. Access to the building will be via the existing front entrance doorway leading to the car park. A new internal emergency escape staircase will be provided at the rear of the building leading to an enclosed garden area wrapping around the rear of the building and providing separation from the commercial premises to the rear. Separate proprietor family accommodation is proposed within the former stone cottages with direct access to the guest house at ground floor level. Enclosure of the rear garden areas as proposed will not prejudice use of the rear commercial yard and premises. Furthermore, the main workshop opposite will remain fully functional with self-contained office, yard and access arrangements.

Assessment

Background information

11. The application site is a vacant office building with car park to the front, last used by Naylor and Walkden, a joinery and shop fitting contractor. It is accessed from Hatton Street off Harrison Road.
12. Shutter Doors Services Property Ltd now owns the site and the surrounding land and buildings to the east and west which are also in commercial use. Opposite the site on the other side of Hatton Street is the main joinery workshop premises which have its own access and yard accessed down the site of number 16 Hatton Street a residential property.
13. To the rear of the building (to the east) there is also a yard and a building currently in use as a car valeting business. To the south is a mono-pitched storage building and further yard area. Both of these are accessed off Atherton Street.
14. There are two residential properties opposite the site on Hatton Street and terraced houses backing on to the site located on Harrison Road to the north.
15. The application building has two distinct parts; a pair of former stone cottages (15 and 17 Hatton Street) and a larger, newer brick building attached to the cottages. All of the building is in office use with a reception on entry. The agent advises that the building extends to around 510m² (5,500 sq. ft.) in area over 2 floors.

Principle of the development

16. The application site is within the settlement of Adlington within the adopted and emerging Local Plans where there is a presumption in favour of appropriate development, subject to normal planning considerations and other policies and proposals of the plan.
17. Core Strategy Policy 10 covers the Re-use of Employment Sites and seeks to retain sites for B Class uses. Where a site is proposed for another use it states that they will be assessed under a number of criteria:

- (a) there would not be an unacceptable reduction on the type, quality or quantity of employment land supply;
 - (b) the provision and need for the proposed use;
 - (c) the relative suitability of the site for employment and for the alternative use;
 - (d) the location of the site and its relationship to other uses;
 - (e) whether the ability to accommodate smaller scale requirements would be compromised;
 - (f) there would be a net improvement in amenity.
18. It is considered that the proposal will still provide employment in the area, albeit in fewer numbers, however it also has to be considered that the site has been empty and advertised without success since June last year. It is not considered that the proposal will prejudice surrounding commercial uses. The Councils Planning Policy Team considers the proposal does comply with Policy 10.
19. In addition the Framework states that where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities. The Framework places great weight on the planning system supporting businesses and economic growth.
20. It is considered that the proposal complies with saved Local Plan Policy LT3. Although there are commercial buildings around the site these are in the same ownership as the applicant and they therefore have control over these uses. Changes to the external appearance of the existing building will be minimal. The site is within walking distance of Adlington. The issue of impact on local residents will be discussed below.

Impact on the neighbours

21. The lawful use of the building is as offices. The issue in neighbour amenity terms is whether a bed and breakfast guest house with proprietor's accommodation would have a greater impact on the surrounding properties than the lawful use.
22. The existing office has the equivalent of 24 small single offices within it so if brought back into use there could potentially be a lot of people working there. The proposed bed and breakfast guest house layout proposes seven bedrooms along with communal areas and an attached four bed property for the proprietors.
23. The main impact of the proposal on the surrounding properties will be from the comings and goings to the bed and breakfast guest house and the parking associated with this.
24. Although previous office uses generally operated from 9-5 during the week, there is no hours condition on the building restricting its opening hours. Although a bed and breakfast guest house would be in use outside these hours, it is not considered the use is one that is so different from an office it would cause such noise and disturbance that it would be unacceptable in a residential area.
25. The nearest properties to the existing building are those on Harrison Road that back onto the side of the stone part of the building and the land to the rear and numbers 16 and 18 Hatton Street that are opposite the stone cottages. The stone cottages will be converted to a four bedroom property for the proprietors of the bed and breakfast guest house with a garden area created to the rear, a use that is considered will be more appropriate sited immediately next to and opposite the residential properties than the current office use.

Design

26. The proposal will not involve extending the building and external alterations will be minimal; changing one of the front doors in the former stone cottages to a window; a door in the office building to a window; bricking up of a door in the rear elevation of the office building and the insertion of two sets of patio doors in the rear of the former stone cottages. The parking area is existing and will remain, but will be marked out. The design is considered acceptable.

Trees and Landscape

27. There are no trees on the site that will be affected by the proposal as it is largely laid with hard surfacing.

Flood Risk

28. The site is not within a flood zone as identified by the Environment Agency and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment is not required.

Traffic and Transport

29. One of the main issues with the proposal is parking and access. It is accepted that Hatton Street is a narrow road accessed from Harrison Road off Chorley Road (the A6), however the proposed bed and breakfast guest house with proprietor's accommodation is likely to generate less traffic than the office use could, given its size and it is not considered the Council could refuse the application on traffic levels given the lawful use of the building.
30. In terms of parking the Council's parking standards require one space per bedroom plus staff and three spaces for a four-bed property. An amended plan has been received showing 15 spaces for the building. Three staff spaces to the rear and twelve to the front of the building (including one disabled bay) which is in line with these standards. There would in addition to the 15 marked bays be a casual space within the site against the existing low level wall and one of the members of staff would be resident on site anyway. The parking is therefore considered acceptable in relation to the use to avoid on-street parking in the area.

Other Issues Raised

31. It is noted that residents refer to who may use the bed and breakfast guesthouse however this is not something the Council can take into account when determining the application, it can only look at the land use planning issues associated with the use applied for. Some objectors refer to a use of the building as a hostel, however this is not what is applied for and does not fall with the C1 Use Class which covers hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided. A hostel would be a Sui Generis use (one that does not fall within any Use Class).
32. The Local Plan does not set our requirements for such uses within the Borough and therefore applications should be considered on their merits as has been done above.
33. In response to comments made in relation to the premises serving alcohol, the application is not for a public house and alcohol licensing is controlled through separate legislation, so it not something that can be controlled through the planning system. The premises would need to apply for an alcohol license if they wished to serve alcohol.
34. There is no external fire escape on the building, and it is not considered that any lighting would be more than expected on a residential property.
35. Although other similar businesses in the area may not have been commercially successful does not preclude a new establishment from opening. The Framework seeks to support new businesses.
36. Access to a passage at the side of the property is a private issue between the applicant and residents. Fencing has been erected adjacent to residential properties but does not require planning permission providing it is no higher than 2m (measured from the ground level on which it stands).

Overall Conclusion

37. The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Planning Policies

National Planning Policies:

The National Planning Policy Framework.

Relevant Planning History

89/00025/FUL Construction of two storey side extension to office block. Permitted April 1989
90/00501/FUL Replacement of flat roof by a pitched roof and use for storage. Permitted June 1990
98/00843/FUL First floor rear extension (linking old stone cottages). Permitted February 1999

**Recommendation: Permit Full 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. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), no windows shall be inserted or constructed at any time at first floor level or above in the north west elevation of the proprietors accommodation dwelling hereby permitted.
Reason: To protect the amenities and privacy of the adjoining properties on Harrison Road and in accordance with Policy HS9 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

3. The hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Title		Drawing Reference	Received date
Location Plan		1301 03	22 February 2013
Proposed Site Plan		1301 04 Rev B	8 April 2013
Proposed Plans & Elevations		1301 10 Rev A	4 April 2013

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

4. The proprietors accommodation hereby permitted shall be occupied and used only in conjunction with the bed and breakfast guest house hereby permitted and shall not be used as an unassociated dwelling. *Reason: To ensure there is sufficient parking for the dwelling and bed and breakfast guest house and in accordance with Policy TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan.*

5. The parking facilities shown on the plans hereby approved shall be marked out and made available in accordance with the approved plan prior to the occupation of either the proprietors accommodation or the bed and breakfast guest house; such parking facilities shall thereafter be permanently retained for that purpose (notwithstanding the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995).
Reason: To ensure provision of adequate off-street parking facilities within the site and in accordance with Policy TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.