

<b>Item 3D</b>	<b>15/00312/FUL</b>
<b>Case Officer</b>	<b>Adele Hayes</b>
<b>Ward</b>	<b>Chorley North East</b>
<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Change of use from mixed use comprising social club and 8no. bedsits to 11no. self-contained 1 bedroom apartments.</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Polish Ex-servicemen's Club 10 Park Road Chorley PR7 1QN</b>
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Hightown Group</b>
<b>Consultation expiry:</b>	<b>18 June 2015</b>
<b>Decision due by:</b>	<b>28 May 2015</b>

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended that this application is approved subject to conditions.**

### **Proposal**

1. The application site comprises a three storey semi-detached property which occupies a corner plot at Park Road / Park Street within the St. Lawrence's, Chorley Conservation Area. The property has formerly been in use as a social club at basement and ground floor with eight bed-sit units on the two floors above. The property has been vacant for four years.
2. The site is within a predominantly residential area, whilst some of the nearby properties have been converted for commercial office use, the dominant land use is residential. The wider local area contains a variety of housing types, many of which are positioned within large plots and ranging between 2 and 3 storey in height.
3. It is proposed to convert the existing premises into 11 no. (one bedroomed) self-contained dwellings. The majority of works involve interior modifications, however, there will be some minor elevational changes which includes the insertion of a new ground floor window in the gable elevation and the replacement of windows where perished. The replacement windows will be sash-pattern casement windows with the frames set back 100mm within the existing brick reveals.

### **Representations**

4. The application has been publicised by way of individual letters sent to the occupiers of neighbouring premises and a site notice has been displayed. As a result of this publicity 7no. representations have been received citing the following grounds of objection:
  - On street parking is very limited and it is very difficult to find a parking space in the locality at the moment, especially on Tuesday, market day and because of the proximity of the nearby primary school.
  - The proposed development will exacerbate existing parking difficulties.

- The parking needs of the proposed development are underestimated in the Transport Statement. There is a 100% increase in living accommodation (from 2 to 4 floors) and potentially 200% increase in inhabitants, on existing, from 8 persons to potentially 22+ persons.
- There will be insufficient control over the number of future inhabitants and the Council has no ability to issue an overcrowding order. The alteration from a property of multiple occupation to one of self-contained apartments has different legal controls in terms of numbers of occupants.
- The proposed use and increase in the number of residents will potentially lead to an increase in nuisance, including noise, unsociable behaviour and poor management of facilities including refuse collection, above that experienced when the building was used as bedsit accommodation. A high turnover of inhabitants is likely to be unsatisfactory to the existing community living nearby, currently a mixture of owner occupants and tenants, leading to 'fly tipping' of discarded furniture, poor parking practises when unloading/loading, proliferation of 'to let' signs, and a lack of commitment to the local community.
- Insufficient information has been provided on the submitted drawings concerning the existing boundary walls and railings, and a lack of consideration for adjacent residents in terms of overlooking and privacy from the development.
- There is no need for more flats on Park Road

### **Consultations**

5. LCC Highways – No objection subject to a condition requiring the provision of secure and covered cycle storage on site to encourage residents to cycle as an alternative to using the private car.
6. Environmental Health – no comments have been received

### **Assessment**

#### Principle of the Development

7. The application site is located within the settlement of Chorley and at a local level, Policy GN1 of the Chorley Local Plan states that '*Within the areas of Adlington, Chorley, Clayton Brook/Green, Clayton-le-Woods, Coppull, Euxton and Whittle-le-Woods, as well as land adjoining Feniscowles and Horwich, excluded from the Green Belt, there is a presumption in favour of appropriate development, subject to normal considerations and the other Policies and Proposals of this Plan.*
8. Policy GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review states that the design of proposed developments will be expected to be well related to their surroundings. The proposed elevational alterations are minor and are considered to be acceptable.
9. There are therefore no objections in principle to the proposed use.

#### Impact on amenity

10. The property has previously been used as a social club and 8no. bedsits which are each capable of being used as double bedsit rooms which could in total accommodate up to 16 people. In addition, as a House in Multiple Occupancy, there is no control over whether some of these rooms could be used as dormitories and as such greater numbers could be accommodated.

11. The proposed development involves conversion of the property to form 11 no. self-contained flats which is likely to limit the maximum number of occupants to 22 persons. It is considered that this level of occupation is acceptable.
12. It is understood that local residents have previously experienced anti-social behaviour when the social club was operational and more recently when the property has been empty. It is considered that the proposed change of use to self-contained flats would remove the conflicting previous use as a Social Club in a residential area.
13. The applicant's agent has indicated that a management company will oversee the management and maintenance of the communal areas and the rear yard will be utilised as a secured cycle store.
14. The existing wall and railings along Park Street form an important element of the boundary treatment in the Conservation Area and to the property itself. The railings also prevent people from falling down the light well. The applicant has confirmed that the railings will be retained and has submitted an amended drawing detailing them.
15. The property is on a main road and given its lawful use, as a social club with bed sit accommodation, it is not considered that the proposed use will have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the locality, or on the level of residential amenity currently enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring.

#### Highway safety

16. For the proposed change of use, a certain level of on-site parking is normally necessary to reduce congestion on the highway, to ensure safety of pedestrians and to protect the amenity of other residents within the vicinity of the site.
17. However, the previous use, which had a similar level of parking as the proposed, relied on available parking spaces on-street, but resulted in no adverse parking conditions in the area. In addition the site is located close to the town centre with extensive waiting restrictions, but with good public transport accessibility, cycle and walking facilities that would make it possible for residents to reach day-to-day destinations, such as jobs, schools and shops, without the use of a car.
18. Besides sections of Park Road and Park Street that are without waiting restrictions where residents could park, there are long and short stay public car parks within walking distance of the site in Water Street and Hollinshead Street.
19. There have been four recorded traffic accidents within 100m of the site in the past 5 years, but the accidents were not due to an identifiable common cause and none of them resulted in personal injury. It is therefore not considered that the proposed change of use will exacerbate existing accident problems in the area.
20. Given the above local circumstances, the proposal is considered acceptable in highways terms and no objections have been raised by the County Highway Engineer.

#### **Overall Conclusion**

21. The proposed development will result in the provision of housing in a highly sustainable location in close proximity to the Town Centre. It is considered that the refurbishment and reuse of this substantial Georgian building, which has fallen into disrepair and which contributes to the setting of the adjacent Grade 2 listed buildings (12/14 Park Road), the Manse and Unitarian Chapel's Hall, as well as the Conservation Area as a whole, is acceptable.

#### Planning 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 Borough Local Plan Review 2003 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Consideration of the proposals has had regard to guidance contained with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the development plan and the emerging Local Plan 2012-2026.

### **Note on the Emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026**

In October 2013, the Local Plan Inspector issued her partial report on the findings into the soundness of the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 which is a material consideration in the consideration of any planning application. In summary, the plan is considered to be legally compliant. In relation to soundness, the plan is considered sound, with the exception of matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers.

Paragraph 18 of the Partial Report states: *“For the avoidance of doubt, the Plan may not be adopted until it has been changed in accordance with all the main modifications set out in the Appendix to this partial report and any which may be specified in the Appendix of my forthcoming supplementary report. However because of the very advanced stage in the examination process that the main modifications set out in the Appendix have reached, significant weight should be attached to all policies and proposals of the Plan that are amended accordingly, where necessary, except for matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers.”*

The Council accepted the Local Plan Inspector’s modifications for Development Management purposes at its Executive Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013. It is therefore considered that significant weight can be given to her report, and to the policies and proposals of the emerging Local Plan, as amended by the main modifications.

Further consideration has been given to matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers, and the Local Plan Inspector’s Supplementary Report on Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople was issued (8 May 2015) and it concludes that the part of the Chorley Local Plan dealing with Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople policy and site allocation is also sound, providing a number of main modifications are made.

### **Suggested Conditions**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Condition</b>									
1.	<p>The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.  <i>Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</i></p>									
2.	<p>The approved plans are:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="280 1514 1230 1603"> <tr> <td data-bbox="280 1514 520 1547">Plan Ref.</td> <td data-bbox="528 1514 767 1547">Received On:</td> <td data-bbox="775 1514 1476 1547">Title:</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="280 1547 520 1581">15/031/E01 Rev B</td> <td data-bbox="528 1547 767 1581">8 June 2015</td> <td data-bbox="775 1547 1476 1581">Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="280 1581 520 1615">15/031</td> <td data-bbox="528 1581 767 1615">2 April 2015</td> <td data-bbox="775 1581 1476 1615">Location Plan</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>Reason: To define the permission and in the interests of the proper development of the site.</i></p>	Plan Ref.	Received On:	Title:	15/031/E01 Rev B	8 June 2015	Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations	15/031	2 April 2015	Location Plan
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3.	<p>No development shall commence until details of secure and covered cycle storage have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall accord with the Chorley Council Parking Standards. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the first occupation of the development. The facilities shall be retained at all times thereafter.  <i>Reason: To encourage sustainable transport modes.</i></p>									

## **Planning History**

There is no recent relevant planning history.