

APPLICATION REPORT – 17/00490/FULMAJ

Validation Date: 8 May 2017

Ward: Chorley North West

Type of Application: Major Full Planning

Proposal: Erection of 5-storey block comprising 18 No. apartments following demolition of existing buildings

Location: Garside and Son Plumbers 5 - 9 Queens Road Chorley PR7 1JU

Case Officer: Mr Iain Crossland

Applicant: 108 Ventures Ltd.

Agent: Design Studio Architects

Consultation expiry: 2 June 2017

Decision due by: 18 August 2017

RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that this application is approved subject to conditions and a S106 agreement.

SITE DESCRIPTION

2. The application site is located on the edge of Chorley Town Centre. It comprises a commercial unit that has previously been used for storage but which appears to have been disused for some time. The building is of traditional design and appearance and lies within a terrace of traditional buildings in commercial uses. The building on the site is notable in that it is of a lower height than the adjacent buildings. The site is located between Queens Road to the north and a Council car park off Farrington Street to the south.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3. The proposed development involves the erection of a 5-storey building of contemporary design comprising 18 No. apartments following demolition of existing buildings.

REPRESENTATIONS

4. Letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of 3no. addresses. These relate to the following issues:
 - Lack of parking
 - Loss of light to nearby properties
 - Impact on character of the area
 - Disturbance caused by future residents
 - The presence of asbestos and a rat infestation will cause disruption and inconvenience
 - There are other better uses for the land

CONSULTATIONS

5. **Conservation Officer:** Considers the proposed development to be acceptable, as it would preserve the appearance of the adjacent listed buildings and the adjacent St. Laurence's Conservation Area and would thus also sustain the significance of these designated heritage assets.
6. **Lancashire County Council (Education):** Based upon the latest assessment, taking into account all approved applications, LCC are seeking a contribution for 1 primary school place. However LCC are not seeking a contribution for secondary school places.
7. **Greater Manchester Ecology Unit:** Comment that there are no known ecological reasons why the current application be refused.
8. **Waste & Contaminated Land:** No comments received.
9. **Lancashire Highway Services:** No objection subject to condition.
10. **United Utilities:** No objection subject to condition.
11. **Lancashire County Council Archaeology Service:** No objection subject to condition.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of the development

12. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.
13. The application site is located in the core settlement area of Chorley, close to the town centre. Core Strategy Policy 1 is concerned with located growth and identifies Chorley Town as a Key Service Centre where growth and investment should be concentrated.
14. The application site comprises a building that was previously used for storage but which appears to have been disused for some considerable time. Core Strategy Policy 10 seeks to protect land and premises last used for employment use. Given the amount of time that has elapsed since the buildings were last in use it is not clear what the lawful use of the building is. In addition to this, given the amount of time that the building has remained disused the site would not appear to provide any demand for employment use.
15. The site is not allocated for any specific use within the Chorley Local Plan 2012 - 2026 and the Local Plan states that within the settlement areas excluded from the Green Belt, and identified on the Policies Map, there is a presumption in favour of appropriate sustainable development.

Impact on the conservation area and heritage assets

16. The site is outside, but close to the western boundary of the St Laurence's Conservation Area and relatively close to a number of listed buildings, the closest being the grade II* listed St. Laurence's Church from which the conservation area takes its name. The listed buildings are clearly separated from the application site by other buildings, highways and landscaping features. The site is currently occupied by a fairly dilapidated and deteriorating building that is beginning to have a negative impact upon the setting of the adjacent conservation area.
17. The proposal seeks to demolish the existing building and replace it with one of a contemporary style to create 18no. apartments. In the main, this design approach works well with this location subject to the use of appropriate materials.

18. It is considered that the proposed development is acceptable as it would preserve the appearance of the St. Laurence's Conservation and the associated listed buildings and would, therefore, sustain the significance of these designated heritage assets.

Design and impact on the character of the area

19. The proposal is for the erection of a five storey building that would contain 18no. apartments. The proposed building would be of a contemporary design style.
20. The local vernacular of the area is largely made up of red brick buildings of tradition design, although there are examples of buildings faced in stone and, to a lesser extent, white render. The existing property on site is part of a series of terraced buildings comprising a two storey height building, with a series of three and four storey properties adjacent to the site. These provide an active street frontage along Queens Road. There is a Council car park to the rear of the site, where character is less defined.
21. The proposed building would be of greater scale and mass than the existing building on site but has been designed to reflect the scale of the buildings adjacent to the site. Although the proposed development would be of greater total height than the adjacent buildings, it has been designed to remain sympathetic to the area and the neighbouring properties. The roof line has been designed by using a dark zinc metal standing seam roof, which would wrap around to the floor below. This gives the impression of the roof line appearing consistent with adjacent building, and the change in materials breaks up the mass. This in conjunction with the roof space being made up of a series of dormers further reduces the massing. The proposed development would result in an improved rhythm of building scale in this location of Queens Road. It is also noted that buildings of larger scale are not uncommon in the wider vicinity with examples at Chorley Town Hall, the Police Station, Bingo Hall and Summer House.
22. The building would be faced in a simple combination of brickwork, white render, cedar cladding panels and metallic cladding, which would add materials that complement and provide contrast with the adjacent properties. This allows the development to tie in with the existing buildings and prevailing character of the area, whilst introducing a suitable level of contrast that would be expected of a modern building. The rear elevation is a continuation of the materials of the front.
23. The proposed building would continue the active street frontage along Queens Road and would be of an appropriate scale and design, close to the town centre, that would not harm the character of the area but would introduce an improvement in design quality.

Impact on neighbour amenity

24. The proposed building would be located approximately 19m from the nearest residential dwelling at no.4 Queens Road. It would not face this dwelling and this distance is taken corner to corner. As such there would be no facing windows and the proposed development would provide no views over the rear garden, which is screened by the dwelling itself. The proposed development would not be directly visible from no.4 Queens Road and would be located to the south west of the front elevation this property. Although the height of the building would be greater than that which exists on site now, and is higher than adjacent buildings, the impact on light in relation to no.4 Queens Road would be limited in relation to the impact that already exists, by virtue of the relative positioning.
25. Other properties near to the site are in commercial uses, and would not be unduly impacted upon. Any other residential properties are located some distance from the site or are screened by other buildings.
26. The redevelopment of the site with residential accommodation is likely to have lower levels of noise and disturbance from that comings and goings associated with an active commercial use. A residential use is a compatible use when viewed in the context of other residential uses nearby, and would provide housing in a sustainable location.

Impact on highways/access

27. The transport issues, including the description of existing site conditions and details of the development proposal have been set out in the submitted Transport and the Design and Access Statements.
28. The proposed development consists of 11 no. one-bedroomed and 7 no. two-bedroomed apartments. The 5-storey block would have a front entrance facing Queens Road which has 20mph speed limit and 'No-waiting at Anytime' restrictions with good quality footways of adequate width on both sides.
29. The site is within acceptable walking distance of Chorley Town Centre and has high accessibility in relation to employment, retail, schools, health centres, hospitals, police stations etc. In addition, the site is situated close to bus routes with bus stops within short distances and in close proximity to a rail station and off and on road cycle routes. There are two long stay local authority car parks in front of the site on Queens Road and to the rear on Farrington Street. In view of the sustainable location of the site therefore, the proposed development is considered acceptable despite the fact that it includes no provision for off-street parking.
30. The applicant's proposed on-site cycle storage provision is noted and the proposal to procure season parking permits at the Farrington Street car park to cater for the parking needs of residents as indicated in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of the Transport Statement is also noted. However, the procurement of the parking permits cannot be enforced by a planning condition.
31. The site layout shows that the entrance to Queens Road would project beyond the alignment of the building. Whilst LCC Highways have no issue with the design, the applicant should take into account the fact that the footway in front of the site is less than the standard width of 2.0m, therefore, any such projection of the entrance should not encroach the existing footway.
32. The proposed layout of the rear of the property would facilitate bin storage provisions and disabled access. The proposed rear entrance would be accessed from a local authority car park at Farrington Street, which does not form part of the applicant's boundary and would lead to the loss of between 2 no. and 4 no. spaces. The issue of the access and the loss of the parking spaces must be agreed with Chorley Council, separate to the planning process. Discussions regarding this matter are ongoing.

Affordable housing requirements

33. Policy 7 of the Core Strategy requires 30% affordable housing to be provided on sites of 15 or more dwellings, or 0.5 hectares in size (which this is), in urban areas such as this. No on-site provision has been identified by the applicant. In order to achieve the 30% policy requirement, an off-site contribution equivalent to 6 units would normally be required. Any such off site contribution would need to be secured through a Section 106 legal agreement in consultation with the Council's strategic housing function. However, given the nature of the development and known requirements of registered social housing providers in the area, it is considered that a commuted sum would be acceptable in this instance.

Public open space

34. The proposed development would generate a requirement for the provision of public open space in line with policies HS4a and HS4b of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 and the Open Space and Playing Pitch SPD.
35. The grant of planning permission would need to be subject to the applicant entering into a Section 106 agreement to make a contribution towards the requirement for the provision of public open space in line with policies HS4a and HS4b of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026. In this instance there is a requirement for off-site contributions toward allotments and playing pitches totalling £29,052.

Education contribution requirement

36. It is noted that Lancashire County Council (LCC) has requested a contribution towards education provision from the application. Based upon the latest assessment, taking into account all approved applications, LCC are seeking a contribution for 1 primary school place equivalent to a value of £14,217.31. LCC are not seeking a contribution for secondary school places.
37. The grant of planning permission would need to be subject to the applicant entering into a Section 106 agreement to secure a contribution towards the requirement for the provision of 1 no. primary school place in line with policy 14 the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

Other matters

38. The presence of asbestos and a rat infestation would cause disruption and inconvenience: These issues would be dealt with by separate legislation.
39. There are other better uses for the land: The Council can only consider the proposals that are brought forward for development, and cannot refuse an application in order to wait for a different development that may be preferable.

CONCLUSION

40. There would be no unacceptable detrimental impact on the appearance and character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or as a result of the proposed development. In addition, the development is located in a sustainable location and would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. On the basis of the above, it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions and a S106 Agreement.

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.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE

Ref: 04/00937/FULMAJ **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 21 June 2007
Description: Demolition of existing redundant building and construction of mixed use scheme including commercial use of ground floor and basement levels and 10 residential apartments on 3 upper floors,

Ref: 10/00202/FULMAJ **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 10 June 2010
Description: Demolition of existing redundant building and construction of mixed use scheme including commercial use of ground floor and basement levels and 10 residential apartments on 3 upper floors (Extension to the time limit for implementing planning approval reference 04/00937/FULMAJ)

Ref: 5/1/02600 **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 1 February 1966
Description: Alterations to form off street car park, garage accommodation and warehouse storage

Suggested Conditions

To follow