

APPLICATION REPORT – 18/00603/FUL

Validation Date: 25 June 2018

Ward: Chorley North West

Type of Application: Full Planning

Proposal: 1) Change of use of offices to 3no. flats. 2) Alterations and raised decking to the rear, including external staircase

Location: O’Riordan And Co. Solicitors 1 Queens Road Chorley PR7 1JU

Case Officer: Amy Aspinall

Applicant: Mr Brian Rawlings

Agent: Mr Ian Murray

Consultation expiry: 25 July 2018

Decision due by: 20 August 2018

RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that the application is approved, subject to conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2. The site is situated within the settlement boundary of Chorley, and adjacent to the defined Town Centre boundary and St Lawrence’s conservation area. The property is a traditional three storey building and formerly used as a solicitor’s office. The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the building to 3No flats including alterations to form two entrance doors to the upper floor flats and the provision of an external staircase and decking area to the rear.

REPRESENTATIONS

3. No representations have been received.

CONSULTATIONS

4. Regulatory Services - Environmental Health:
No comments have been received.

5. Lancashire Highway Services:
Have no objection and recommend that cycle provision should be made for each flat.

6. CIL Officers:
The development is CIL liable.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

7. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) at paragraph 59 provides, among other things, that the Government's objective is to significantly boost the supply of homes and that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

8. At paragraph 68 the NPPF states that to promote the development of a good mix of sites Local Planning Authorities should (c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.

9. Policy 1 of the Core Strategy seeks, among other things, to focus growth and investment on well located brownfield sites including the Key Service Centre of Chorley.

10. The principle of the re-use of the building for residential purposes is, therefore, acceptable in principle, subject to other considerations.

Design

11. Proposed works and alterations include a decking area and external staircase to access the ground floor and first floor flats; with two entrance doors formed in the rear elevation of the gable. At ground floor, an existing window would be altered to form French doors leading onto a private yard area. Views could be gained from Farrington Street car park and would be seen in the context of the rear elevations of those properties. Given the location to the rear of the building, with no works proposed to the front, the proposal would not be harmful to the setting of the conservation area. The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in design terms and would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would accord with Chorley Local Plan policy BNE1.

Amenity

12. The adjacent property 1-3 Park Road benefits from planning permission for the conversion of the first and second floors to 4No 1 bedroom flats which appears to have been implemented. The plans show that the two windows facing into the application site serve habitable rooms. The first floor directly facing window of the application property would be a landing window and accordingly there would be no adverse impacts of overlooking or loss of privacy to the neighbouring flat. Whilst the properties do have a close relationship and limited outdoor amenity space, this is typical of a town centre conversion scheme. The ground floor flat would be served by a small decked yard, and other flats would benefit from access to public outdoor space amenities in close proximity.

13. It is noted that there is an air conditioning unit on the external wall, in close proximity to the proposed kitchen window and living room of flat 1. Environmental Health colleagues have not commented on the application, however if this presented a statutory noise nuisance to future occupiers, this could be dealt with under Environmental Health legislation.

14. The proposal is compatible with neighbouring uses in a central location and would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or that of future occupiers, having regard to Chorley Local Plan policy BNE1.

Highway safety

15. No parking is provided as part of the proposal, however given the central location and access to public car parks and sustainable modes of transport, the proposal is acceptable in this regard. Furthermore, LCC Highways have raised no objection to the application, but recommend a condition to secure cycle storage for each flat.

Public open space

16. Chorley Local Plan policy HS4 requires public open space contributions for new dwellings to be provided in order to overcome the harm of developments being implemented without facilities being provided.

17. However, the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) post-dates the adoption of the Local Plan and states that planning obligations should not be sought from developments of 10 or less dwellings and which have a maximum combined floorspace of no more than 1000 square metres.

18. In the determination of planning applications, the effect of the national policy is that although it would normally be inappropriate to require any affordable housing or social infrastructure contributions on sites below the thresholds stated, local circumstances may justify lower (or no) thresholds as an exception to the national policy. It would then be a matter for the decision-maker to decide how much weight to give to lower thresholds justified by local circumstances as compared with the new national policy.

19. The Council must determine what lower thresholds are appropriate based on local circumstances as an exception to national policies and how much weight to give to the benefit of requiring a payment for 3 dwellings.

20. It is considered that the benefit of securing a public open space contribution on the basis of the proposed 3 dwellings (equating to £402) would not be sufficient or carry significant weight to outweigh the national policy position. The likely success of delivering improvements is also in doubt due to the difficulty of identifying schemes to pool small amounts of money secured through Section 106 agreements. Therefore, a public open space commuted sum is not requested for this scheme.

CONCLUSION

21. The application proposes a sustainable form of development and would make a contribution to the Council's housing land supply. The proposal accords with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and is, therefore, recommended for approval accordingly, subject to conditions.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE

Ref: 14/00704/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 18 March 2015
Description: Change of use from solicitors office (A2) to dwelling house (C3)

Ref: 18/00603/FUL **Decision:** PDE **Decision Date:**
Description: 1) Change of use of offices to 3no. flats. 2) Alterations and raised decking to the rear, including external staircase

Ref: 77/00638/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 13 September 1977
Description: Change of use of dwelling to offices

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

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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans below:

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

Title	Plan Ref	Received On
Rear Elevations	1309.04	14 June 2018
Proposed Floor Plans	1309.02 REV B	14 June 2018
Existing Plans	1309.01	14 June 2018
Location Plan		25 June 2018
Rear Access and Side Elevation and Section	1309.05	25 June 2018

3. Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, provision for cycle parking, in accordance with details first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, shall have been provided in all respects and made available for use, and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To ensure adequate on site provision for cycle parking.