

APPLICATION REPORT – 19/00220/FULMAJ

Validation Date: 13 March 2019

Ward: Brindle And Hoghton

Type of Application: Major Full Planning

Proposal: Erection of industrial building

Location: Unit 1 Brindle Mill Bournes Row Brindle Chorley PR5 0DR

Case Officer: Amy Aspinall

Applicant: Mrs J Corner

Agent: Mr R Maudsley

Consultation expiry: 15 May 2019

Decision due by: 12 June 2019

RECOMMENDATION

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

SITE DESCRIPTION

2. The application site is comprised of part of Brindle Mill industrial estate which is occupied by various industrial uses. The application site (as defined by the red edge) previously housed a mill which was subject to a fire and had to be demolished due to being structurally unsafe. This building housed workshop and storage facilities, office space and meeting space.
3. The site is accessed via Bournes Row and falls wholly within the settlement boundary of Gregson Lane, as defined by the Chorley Local Plan Policies Map.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of an industrial building with mixed Class B uses (B1, B2 and B8 use).

REPRESENTATIONS

5. 2no. objections have been received. These are available to view on the Council's website and are summarised below:
 - Comment is made that the application is refused
 - Traffic pressures / impact on highways safety and parking
 - Current impact of traffic going to and from the mill in terms of noise, disturbance and reduced privacy for residents
 - Impact on character of the rural area, increasingly becoming an industrial estate
 - Buildings at Brindle Mill need to move to an industrial estate, not a rural residential area.
 - The construction of such a building in this area is not conducive to the quality of life for residents and pupils attending the two schools on Bournes Row

- Additional industrial constructions will negatively affect the stress and mental health of residents.

CONSULTATIONS

Lancashire Highway Services: Have no objection.

Regulatory Services - Environmental Health: Have no objection.

Brindle Parish Council: Have commented that the:

'this is an overdevelopment of the site. It should be resisted on traffic grounds as this proposal will lead to increased traffic on what is a basically residential area. There would be a detrimental effect on the two schools on Bourne Row'.

United Utilities: Have no objection and recommend drainage condition.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

6. The National Planning Policy Framework at paragraph 80 states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It also provides that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
7. The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Gregson Lane, as defined by the Chorley Local Plan Policies Map, at the northern periphery of Chorley borough adjacent to the boundary with South Ribble. The settlement area of Gregson Lane forms part of a wider built up area extending from South Ribble borough.
8. Central Lancashire Core Strategy policy 1 seeks to focus growth and investment on well located brownfield sites and the Strategic Location of Preston, the Key Service Centres of Chorley and Leyland and other main urban areas in South Ribble, whilst protecting the character of suburban and rural areas. Gregson Lane falls to be considered an 'other place' under policy 1. The policy states that the growth and investment in other places – small villages, substantially built up frontages and Major Developed Sites – will be development that is typically small-scale and limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings, and proposals to meet local need, unless there are exceptional reasons for larger scale redevelopment schemes.
9. Policy EP3 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 states that proposals for new business, industrial and storage and distribution uses, including extensions to existing premises, will be permitted if they satisfy the following criteria:
 10. **a) they are of a scale and character that is commensurate with the size of the settlement;**

The proposal entails the redevelopment of part of the industrial site which was previously occupied by an industrial building. The scale and character of the proposal is consistent with the previous development and established industrial estate and commensurate with the size of the settlement.
 11. **b) the site is planned and laid out on a comprehensive basis;**

The layout of the proposal respects the previous layout of the building which has been demolished and follows the logical pattern of the industrial estate.
 12. **c) the proposal will not prejudice future, or current economic activities within nearby areas;**

There would be no conflict with this criterion.

13. d) the proposal will not cause unacceptable harm e.g. noise, smells to surrounding uses;

The proposed use is consistent with existing industrial uses within the established industrial estate. A residential dwelling is situated immediately adjacent to the site and the level of amenity afforded to this property is of a lower standard than a typical dwelling found within a residential estate, given the prevailing land uses and established relationships. Furthermore, as a building previously occupied this space, it would not be unreasonable to expect the former building to be replaced for industrial purposes. Although the proposed development would have an impact on the adjacent dwelling, it is not considered that this neighbouring dwelling would be subject to unacceptable harm in amenity terms, over and above the established situation prior to the building being demolished.

An objection has been received from the occupier of a neighbouring residential property of Bournes Row in relation to noise, disturbance and loss of privacy for residents as a result of traffic going to and from the site. It should, however, be noted that the site is an existing industrial estate and Bournes Row is the main access into the site. It is acknowledged that larger vehicles have the potential to cause a level of disturbance to properties along Bournes Row, however this is an established situation and the proposal does not result in the expansion or overall intensification of the industrial estate, but the redevelopment of part of the site with a new building, due to the previous building having been demolished as a result of fire damage. In addition, Environmental Health have assessed the application and state that they do not envisage any nuisance arising from the proposal. In the absence of an objection from Environmental Health, and having regard to the above, it is not considered that a reason for refusal on amenity grounds, in particular noise and disturbance, could be sustained.

14. e) the site has an adequate access that would not create a traffic hazard or have an undue environmental impact;

Although objections have been received which raise issues of traffic, parking and highways safety, Lancashire County Council do not raise an objection and state that they are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with criterion (e).

15. f) the proposal will be served by public transport and provide pedestrian and cycle links to adjacent areas;

The site is situated within an area which is served by bus links to surrounding settlements such as Leyland, Bamber Bridge and Chorley. The proposal does not incorporate any additional pedestrian or cycle links, over than those currently serving the industrial estate and area.

16. g) open storage areas should be designed to minimise visual intrusion;

The proposal does not incorporate open storage.

17. h) adequate screening is provided where necessary to any unsightly feature of the development and security fencing is located to the internal edge of any perimeter landscaping;

The application indicates that 1.8 metre high fencing would be provided to the boundary with the adjacent dwellinghouse. However, no additional screening is proposed or required to screen the development.

18. i) on the edges of industrial areas, where sites adjoin residential areas or open countryside, developers will be required to provide substantial peripheral landscaping;

Substantial peripheral landscaping is not proposed between the site and the adjacent residential dwelling. The proposed building would have an increased set back from the common boundary than the previous building and although landscaping is not proposed, it is an improved situation over and above the previous arrangements.

19. j) the development makes safe and convenient access provision for people with disabilities;

Access to the building would be level, however the proposal does not incorporate additional disabled facilities such as disabled parking bays. Nonetheless, LCC Highways do not raise any objections in relation to lack of disabled parking bays.

20. k) the buildings are designed, laid out and landscaped to maximise the energy conservation potential of any development, and to minimise the risk of crime;

The proposed building would occupy a similar footprint of the previous building, with the office element being to the south elevation. Policy 27 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy requires buildings to achieve a certain level of BREEAM, however given the nature of the use and the design of the building (i.e. large proportion of the building to be B2 and B8) it is not considered appropriate to apply the requirements of policy 27 in this case.

21. l) the proposal will not result in surface water, drainage or sewerage related pollution problems; and

United Utilities raise no objection to the application and a drainage scheme could be secured by way of condition, in the interests of securing proper drainage and preventing water pollution.

22. m) the proposal incorporates measures which help to prevent crime and promote community safety.

The proposed building would be situated within an established industrial estate whereby security measures are already in place. The adjacent dwelling is accessed through the site and would also provide an element of natural surveillance.

23. The proposed development is considered to be compatible with policy EP3 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 as a whole.

24. In line with policy 1 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, exceptional reasons are required for larger scale redevelopment schemes. As the proposal is major development, exceptional reasons are required to justify the proposed development, in line with policy 1 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

25. The applicant has advanced the following as exceptional reasons:

- The proposal retains and expands a well-established local business and employer. The new building will facilitate this and subsequent businesses / occupiers to expand and provide further employment as part of an established industrial use linked to the existing site.
- The proposal is a development of a brownfield site within an established employment site.
- Prior to the fire in January 2018, there was a substantial industrial building of similar scale and position to the proposal which was required to be demolished. The office and industrial use is directly reflected in the proposal.
- Access and land use is maintained and enhanced through this proposal.

26. The site is part of an established industrial estate, which provides employment and supports the economy. The site previously housed an industrial building, but this was subject to fire

damage and subsequently demolished. The application seeks planning permission for a modern industrial building to accommodate an existing business which currently operates from the site and would result in significant investment in a local business. The proposal is large scale due the amount of floorspace and nature of the proposed use which incorporates storage and distribution, however it is of a scale which is commensurate with established uses which have, and which continue to operate from the estate. Significant weight is afforded to the benefits of this proposal and it is considered that exceptional reasons justify the proposal, having regard to policy 1 of the Core Strategy.

Design

27. The proposal is for a modern industrial building, with entrance to the southern elevation. The layout is similar to the previous building which occupied the site until recently, although is of a slightly reduced scale and set in from the common boundary with the adjacent dwelling, affording some degree of separation. The scale is consistent with other buildings found on the industrial estate and would be seen in the context of existing industrial development. A condition is recommended to secure appropriate materials.

Highway safety

28. The application proposes 14no. dedicated parking spaces. For a new development, this falls short of the Council's parking standards, however it is in line with the previous parking arrangements and LCC Highways have raised no objection to the shortfall. Tracking drawings have been provided to demonstrate that a large vehicle can enter and exit in a forward gear, and it is acknowledged that the site has operated successfully previously. Although objections have been received on traffic grounds, it is an established industrial estate and the application site did house a mill up until it was destroyed by fire damage just over a year ago. It is acknowledged that Bournes Row also serves residential properties and primary schools, however in the absence of any objection from LCC Highways, a refusal on highways grounds could not be sustained.

CONCLUSION

29. The Framework is clear that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The proposal would support economic growth, local investment and jobs; and there are exceptional reasons to justify the proposed development in this location, having regard to Core Strategy policy 1 and policy EP3 Chorley Local Plan 2012 - 2026. The application is recommended for approval accordingly, subject to conditions.

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

30. To follow.