

## Officer Report On Planning Application: 14/02439/FUL

<b>Proposal :</b>	Internal and external alterations to include change of use and conversion of offices (Use Class B1) to form 2 No. residential units and the retention of 1 No. first floor office (Use Class B1) (Part Retrospective). (GR 332137/108589)
<b>Site Address:</b>	Chard And Ilminster News, 3 & 3A Fore Street, Chard.
<b>Parish:</b>	Chard
<b>COMBE (CHARD) Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr M Wale
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	Linda Hayden Tel: 01935 462534 Email: linda.hayden@southsomerset.gov.uk
<b>Target date :</b>	7th August 2014
<b>Applicant :</b>	Mr & Mrs A Kenton
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	Paul Rowe, Caparo, 11 Mervyn Ball Close, Chard Somerset TA20 1EJ
<b>Application Type :</b>	Minor Dwellings 1-9 site less than 1ha

### REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to Committee as the applicant is a District Councillor.

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The application site comprises the former Chard and Ilminster News Offices and the first floor of the adjacent premises (Age Concern), one side of the application site forms part of a Grade II listed property. The ground floor comprises the entrance to the former newspaper offices with the remaining former office accommodation on the first floor. The property sits to the north of Fore Street opposite Holyrod Street within the centre of Chard.

The application proposes various internal alterations to enable the retention of an office above the entrance and the conversion of the remaining parts of the building into two 1-bedroom flats. There is an associated listed building application for the works (14/02440/LBC).

The property is situated within the defined development area and conservation area of Chard. It is also within the primary shopping area but outside of the primary shopping frontage.

## HISTORY

There is a lengthy planning history for the listed building which benefits from permission for a restaurant and takeaway use on the ground floor with flats above. The adjoining property benefits from permission for a shop use on the ground floor with offices above.

## POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decisions must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## Relevant Development Plan Documents

South Somerset Local Plan 2006:

Policies:-

ST2 - Development Areas

ST5 - General Principles of Development

ST6 - The Quality of Development

EH1 - Conservation Areas

EH3 - Changes of use of Listed Buildings and Alterations to Listed Buildings

MC4 - Other Uses in Town Centres

The starting point for the exercise of listed building control is the statutory requirement on local planning authorities to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' (section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

Sections 16 and 66 of the Act require authorities considering applications for planning permission or listed building consent for works that affect a listed building to have special regard to certain matters, including the desirability of preserving the setting of the building. The setting is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function.

Section 72 of the Listed Buildings Act requires that special attention shall be paid in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts, not only those that relate directly to historic buildings. The desirability of preserving or enhancing the area should also, in the Secretary of State's view, be a material consideration in the planning authority's handling of development proposals that are outside the conservation area but would affect its setting, or views into or out of the area.

National Planning Policy Framework

Chapters

1 - Building a strong competitive economy

2 - Ensuring the viability of town centres

4 - Promoting sustainable transport

12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

## CONSULTATIONS

**Chard Town Council:-** Recommend approval.

**County Highway Authority:-** Standing Advice

**Conservation Officer:-** No objections - recommends conditions with regard to joinery detail and finish of new front door and window. Has requested additional details regarding foul drainage which have been forwarded.

## REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

- It is considered that the main planning considerations are:-
- Loss of office space
- Impact upon listed building and the conservation area
- Impact upon neighbouring residential properties.
- Highways and parking

### **Loss of office space**

Policy MC 4 advises that the provision of a variety of uses within town centres is important in maintaining their viability and vitality, this includes residential use. The application includes the retention of part of the first floor office space and it should be noted that the creation of two flats above Age Concern would normally constitute 'permitted development'. It is therefore considered that the application proposal is an appropriate mix of uses for the town centre and will introduce an element of residential use that will increase the vitality of the town centre.

### **Impact upon listed building and conservation area.**

It is considered that the proposed works have been carefully considered and there will be no significant intrusion into the historic fabric of the listed part of the building. The most significant alterations to facilitate the creation of the two units of accommodation will take place within the unlisted part of the structure. A new door and window are proposed for the ground floor entrance and appropriate conditions can be attached to ensure appropriate materials and finish as required by the Conservation Officer. As such, it is considered that the proposals will not have an adverse impact upon the listed building and will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### **Impact upon neighbouring residential properties.**

It is not considered that the proposed mix of uses will have any significant impact upon existing residential flats adjacent to the site.

### **Highways and parking**

The current property does not benefit from any form of parking provision, with the front of the site being protected by double yellow lines and zigzag lines leading up to the traffic lights. It is considered that as the site is within a highly sustainable location within the centre of Chard that a car free development is acceptable. In addition, it has to be noted that the existing office use operated without the benefit of any parking.

In the circumstances, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in relation to highway safety/parking.

### **Summary**

The proposed uses will provide an appropriate addition to the town centre and have been carefully considered in order to respect and preserve the historic character and fabric of the building.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve

01. The proposed change of use to a mix of office and residential is considered to be an appropriate use within this town centre location as such it is in accordance with Policy MC4 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

02. The proposed change of use and associated alterations by reason of their size, scale, design, materials and position, and limited/informed intervention into the historic fabric of this listed building, are considered to respect the historic and architectural interests of the building and preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. This is in accordance with policies EH1 and EH3 of the South Somerset Local Plan, and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

**SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: KCWP1, KCWP3 and KCWP4 received 2 June 2014.

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

03. No work shall be carried out on site unless details of the design, materials and external finish for the new front door and window have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will include detailed drawings including sections of at least 1:5. Such approved details, once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the listed building in accordance with policy EH3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

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