

2014/93 FORMER PARKRIDGE OFFICE 1 MAIN STREET SHIRLEY

Application No: 2014/93/S

Ward/Area: BLYTHE

Location: FORMER PARKRIDGE OFFICE 1 MAIN STREET OLD DICKENS HEATH ROAD SHIRLEY SOLIHULL

Date Registered: 20/01/2014

Applicant: ELEGANT HOMES

Proposal: PRIOR NOTIFICATION FOR A CHANGE OF USE FROM OFFICE TO 10 No. TWO BEDROOM APARTMENTS AND 8 No. ONE BEDROOM APARTMENTS.

Documents Online:

<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/planning/dc/ViewAppDetail.asp?Y=2014&R=93>

PROPOSAL

This application seeks a determination as to whether the prior approval of the Council is required to change the use of the former Parkridge offices (of some 3,800 m²) from B1 (a) offices to 10 No. two bedroom apartments and 8 No. one bedroom apartments (C3 use) at first and second floor.

There is an existing car park to the rear of the building (accommodating 88 vehicles) and a total of 27 parking spaces (including 1 disabled space) would be allocated for use by residents.

The scheme proposes some alteration to the external appearance of the building namely the addition of 2 No. rooflights to the elevation from Market Square, the addition of 2 No. dormer windows, 7 No. blind windows replaced with windows and 2 No. window opening with louvres replaced by window to the rear elevations that face the car park. These external alterations were approved under planning application 2013/1567.

The existing vehicular access to the site from Old Dickens Heath Road will be utilised.

BACKGROUND

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013, which came into force on 30 May 2013, introduced several new forms of development that are now exempt from requiring planning permission.

Class J of Part 3 of the Amendment confirms that one such permitted change is development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order from a use falling within Class B1(a) (offices) of that Schedule.

Effectively, the change of use of existing B1(a) office buildings into dwellings does not now require planning permission and is therefore permitted development. However, there is a limited amount of control that the local planning authority can have in these situations.

As such, and as is the case here, the developer must apply to the LPA for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the LPA is required for the proposed change of use. The guidance makes it clear that the only issues that the LPA can consider in assessing any prior approval application are:

- The transport and highway impacts of the development;
- The contamination risks of the site; and
- The flooding risks of the site.

In terms of the level of information that must be provided to accompany the application, the guidance only requires the submission of the following:

- (a) a written description of the proposed development;
- (b) a plan indicating the site and showing the proposed development;
- (c) the developer's contact address; and
- (d) the developer's email address if the developer is content to receive communications electronically.

The Local Planning Authority has just 56 days from the date of receiving the application to make its decision – any later and the applicant will gain permission by default. The 56 days expires on 16th March 2014.

The application is being reported to Planning Committee at the request of Councillor Mrs Linda Brown.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Dickens Heath PC	:	Objection
Environmental Protection	:	No Comment
Highways	:	No objection
Environment Agency	:	No comment
Neighbours Notified	:	22/01/14
Site Notice	:	23/01/14

REPRESENTATIONS

7 representations, in summary;

- Already high demand for the available parking spaces in the centre of Dicken Heath, and the new parking restrictions have placed additional pressure on legal parking. Allocation of 27 existing parking spaces to these proposed flats would exacerbate the already pressurised parking situation.
- Car parking to rear presently serves Dickens Heath Village Centre as a public car park and is barely adequate to meet parking needs for the shops, cafes and public houses together with adjacent library and is often full.
- Removal of 27 parking spaces from their present purpose would have a very serious adverse impact on the viability of the village centre which already suffers from a serious shortage of on-street parking facilities which has been recently aggravated by new traffic regulation orders.
- Unsure of legal status/ownership of car parking rights on the surface car park but in planning terms can only stress that the removal of 27 spaces for the purposes of this application to service new apartments would have a very serious impact that needs to be clarified.
- Query what the situation would be in provision of public car parking as a result of this application.
- Strongly object to loss of car parking that currently services the Dickens Heath Village Centre.
- Object to proposal due to provision of private parking within the application.
- Not enough parking spaces within the village centre and to turn 27 existing spaces into private places is unacceptable.
- The car park which services the apartment block in which objector lives does not have enough spaces. There are only 48 spaces servicing 70 apartments. We therefore use the car park from which the 27 spaces will be taken, which will further increase the difficulty for existing residents to find spaces.
- As the new parking regulations are in force, we must have provision for existing residents before taking into account newly proposed residents.
- If we were to have dedicated spaces given to the apartments on the Tesco side of the road no objection would be raised.
- No objection to change from office to apartments but specific objection to reservation of 27 parking spaces for the residents. Parking is already extremely difficult in the village centre and now with the new parking restrictions the spaces at the rear will be even more sought after. To take 27 of these for actual residents would be ridiculous and cause even more problems than there have been.
- No problem with conversion to 18 flats but 27 car parking spaces to accompany this is excessive. Parking is at a premium in Dickens Heath as it is and there will not be enough for visitors if this goes ahead. Cllr uses the car park regularly when visiting the library for councillor duties, attending meetings and taking out books and the car park is

nearly always full at whatever time of day one visits. There needs to be a rethink on the number of car parking spaces to be allowed.

POLICY

Solihull Local Plan (2013)

P7 Accessibility and Ease of Access
P8 Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion
P14 Amenity
P11 Water Management

Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
4. Promoting sustainable transport
10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

SPDs

Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans

PLANNING HISTORY

[2013/1567/s](#) (18 Nov 13) [full plans approval] Minor changes to existing window arrangement at 1 - 7 main street.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located to the south east side of Old Dickens Heath Road, forms part of Dickens Heath Village Centre and is identified in the Solihull Local Plan (2013) as a local centre. The site comprises of a three storey with attic building that fronts Main Street and Old Dickens Heath Road. To the rear of the building is a car park. The building was in part the former office of Parkridge. The corner portion of the ground floor is in restaurant use.

MAIN ISSUES

- The transport and highway impacts of the development;
- The contamination risks of the site; and
- The flooding risks of the site.

APPRAISAL

The transport and highway impacts of the development

The existing vehicular access to the site from Old Dickens Heath Road would be utilised and 27 parking spaces would be reserved for residents of the proposed apartments within the existing hard surfaced parking area to the

rear of the building. This would result in the provision of approximately 1.5 spaces per unit. The car parking spaces would be separated from the other parking areas by kerbing and drop down bollards and would only be used by the new residents of the apartments.

A number of letters have been received raising concerns over the transport and highway impacts of the development.

Your Highway Engineers have been consulted with regard to this application and confirm that they have no objection.

Your Highway Engineers comment as follows. The car park adjacent to Parkridge House is a private car park, so the owner could close the car park at any time. The private ownership of the car park is therefore a material consideration for the planning application. Parkridge House has planning permission for 3797m² of B1(a) office use. The TRICs database has been interrogated to determine the likely vehicle trip generation for this land use. This trip generation has been used in a car parking accumulation assessment to provide an indication of the maximum number of spaces required for an office development of this size. The parking accumulation assessment indicates that the B1 (a) office use could generate parking demand for up to 126 spaces if brought into use. Therefore the proposed change of use to residential has the potential to reduce the levels of parking demand and with this in mind; the recommendation is one of no objection.

The transport and highways impacts of the development do not, therefore, require the prior approval of the local planning authority.

The contamination risks of the site

Your Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that as there is no history of potentially contaminative land use he has no reason to comment.

The contamination risks on the site do not, therefore, require the prior approval of the local planning authority.

The flooding risks of the site

In response to consultation the Environment Agency notes that the proposed change of use relates to an area classified as located within Flood Zone 1 i.e. areas least affected by flooding (as is the majority of the Borough). As this is an existing development and only the use of the building will change the Environment Agency made the following comment; the application is being returned to SMBC without Environment Agency comment, for the following reasons: This proposal falls outside the scope of matters on which the Environment Agency is a statutory consultee. Therefore the Environment Agency has no comment to make on this application.

The flooding risks on the site do not, therefore, require the prior approval of the local planning authority.

CONCLUSION

This application seeks determination as to whether the prior approval of the Council is required to change the use of the former Parkridge office from B1 (a) offices to 10 No. two bedroom apartments and 8 No. one bedroom apartments (C3 use).

Having regard to the scope of assessment as set out in this report and considered the submitted details the Council as Local Planning Authority confirms that prior approval is not required.

RECOMMENDATION

For the reasons outlined above it is recommended that prior approval is not required and the development may therefore proceed as proposed.