

TWC/2018/0560

5 Chetwynd End, Newport, Shropshire, TF10 7JJ

Change of use of 5 Chetwynd End from dwelling (Use Class C3) to offices (Use Class B1(a)) \*\*\*Amended location plan red line\*\*\*

**APPLICANT**

Ascendancy Group Ltd

**RECEIVED**

14/09/2018

**PARISH**

Newport

**WARD**

Newport North and West

**THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN CALLED TO COMMITTEE AT THE REQUEST OF NEWPORT TOWN COUNCIL**

**1. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.1 Full Grant subject to Conditions and Informative(s).

**2. APPLICATION SITE**

2.1 The Application Site, No. 5 Chetwynd End is located within the Market Town of Newport, approximately 7 miles from Telford Town Centre. The site is located 130m to the north of Newport Town Centre.

2.2 Chetwynd End is located within the Newport Conservation Area and is home to a mixture of traditional buildings. The application site is a historic building however is not listed, and has a relatively blank appearance onto the main highway with no windows facing onto the street itself. The site is attached to No. 3 Chetwynd End which is also in the ownership of the Applicant.

**3. APPLICATION DETAILS**

3.1 The application is for an existing digital marketing company to relocate to Newport Town from Shifnal involving the Change-of-Use use of a dwelling (Use Class C3) into offices (Use Class A2).

3.2 As many of the existing staff live within the Town of Newport, the proposed location for the business would be more accessible for staff and would create additional employment to Newport.

3.3 The application site has no suitable on-site parking, however is located within close proximity to several public car parks, with a bus stop immediately adjacent. The parking spaces on-site are not suitable for use due to the compromised highway safety caused by vehicles utilising an existing substandard access onto Green Lane. As such, the Applicant has advised they will include within Safety Contracts that staff must park elsewhere within Newport, using the existing car parks or using public transport.

3.4 The business currently employs ten Full-Time employees and two Part-Time employees, and the premises would be occupied during standard office hours

of 0900-1700 Monday to Friday with no working proposed on weekends or Bank and Public Holidays. Due to the nature of the proposed business, there would be very limited visitor activity, with approximately 1-2 visitors to the premises per week. The public pedestrian entrance would be through a gate on the front elevation, which allows access directly from Chetwynd End.

- 3.5 The current application has been subject to two amendments to the red line boundary. The application was first registered to No. 5 Chetwynd End, however the red line boundary was requested to be altered to include No. 3 Chetwynd End as the Applicant stated that parking spaces at this property would be used for the business. The red line was further amended to omit No. 3 Chetwynd End. Due to this, there have been several re-consultation periods as it was necessary to re-consult when the red line boundary was changed. A further re-consultation took place earlier in the application process when the Applicant submitted some supporting information to meet the highways and residents' concerns.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 No relevant planning history exists.

#### **5. RELEVANT POLICY DOCUMENTS**

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 5.2 Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011-2031
- 5.3 Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2031

#### **6. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 Seven neighbouring properties have been formally consulted on the proposal and the Local Planning Authority have received several letters of objection raising the following material planning concerns:
- Green Lane is narrow and unsuitable to accommodate the increased traffic movements which would be dangerous to pedestrians and residents;
  - The lack of footpath along Green Lane increases this risk;
  - Concern for emergency vehicles, tractors and other large vehicles accessing the field at the end of Green Lane;
  - Unsuitability of the parking spaces which exist at No. 5 Chetwynd End, and that reversing onto the highway would be the only way to exit the spaces which is unacceptable;
  - Introduction of a commercial business in a residential area is unacceptable;

- Introduction of a commercial business is out of keeping with the Conservation Area and associated concerns regarding any proposed business signage.
- 6.2 Other concerns have been raised which are not material planning considerations include pedestrian movements spoiling the enjoyment of neighbouring properties, unfamiliarity regarding the pre-application process and concern regarding consultation.
- 6.3 In response, it is noted that pedestrian movements will not adversely impact upon any neighbouring properties, the application site is on a main thoroughfare into Newport Town Centre and therefore increased pedestrian activity within a busy town centre is not considered to be an unacceptable impact.
- 6.4 Where pre-application advice has been sought from the Local Planning Authority, this can be referenced on the Application Form. This is a common process offering an informal officer opinion regarding the likely acceptability of a proposal prior to a formal submission. Neighbouring properties are not consulted as part of this process.
- 6.5 In respect of neighbouring consultation, only properties directly adjoining the red line boundary of the site are legally obliged to be consulted. Given the siting of the property within the Conservation Area, a Site Notice was displayed at the front of the site to inform other neighbours of the application in addition to a Press Notice.

## 7. STATUTORY REPRESENTATIONS

*Comments received prior to omission of parking spaces from the Block Plan*

- 7.1 Cllr Peter Scott: **Object:**
- Parking issues and associated road safety problems;
  - Green Lane is not sufficient to have this amount of extra traffic, alternative parking should be considered.
- 7.2 Newport Town Council: **Object:**
- Lack of parking provision for the proposed Change-of-Use and associated increased traffic movements;
  - Unsuitability regarding the access from Green Lane.
- 7.3 Highways: **Object:**
- Whilst the site has parking provision of 3No. Car Spaces, satisfying the requirements of the Local Plan, the access to the spaces through Green Lane is unacceptable and would result in safety issues for existing

residents. The spaces available, whilst meeting the Local Plan requirements, are insufficient to support the 12 members of staff.

7.4 Built Heritage Conservation: **Comment:**

- No objection to the Change-of-Use subject to any signage being designed in a way which is sympathetic to the Conservation Area;
- Concern raised regarding the access from Green Lane, and how widening this would impact upon the historic boundary treatments.

7.5 Shropshire Fire Service: **Comment:**

- Consideration should be given to the 'Fire Safety Guidance for Commercial and Domestic Planning Applications' document.

7.6 Shropshire Council: **No comment**

## 8. APPRAISAL

### 8.1 Principle of Development

8.2 The proposed development would see a building which sits just outside of Newport's primary shopping area turned into offices for the use of a business wishing to relocate from Shropshire into the Telford & Wrekin Borough. Telford & Wrekin Plan Policy SP2 'Newport,' identifies that development within Newport should support its role as a Market Town. Policy EC4 'Hierarchy of Centres' stipulates that market towns should provide localised services and a variety of uses.

8.3 The proposal is considered to be compliant with policies SP2 and EC4 as the Change-of-Use would introduce a new company and new employment to the Market Town, and allow the town to continue to diversify. Policy EC6 'Market Towns' suggests that Changes-of-Use of premises to A2 will be supported outside of the Primary Shopping Area where the Change-of-Use will not impact upon the retail centre. It is considered that the proposed use is an appropriate use adjacent to Newport town centre. It is a Use that is likely to generate additional footfall into Newport and thereby contribute to the diversity, vitality and viability of the Town Centre. The proposal would support Newport's role as a market town directly benefitting its economy, therefore complying with Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy E1 'Employment' development in Newport.

### 8.4 Impact upon Character and Appearance of the Local Area

8.5 No external alterations are proposed and the character and appearance of Newport Conservation Area is considered to be preserved. Concern has been raised by residents regarding the out of keeping nature of a business within a residential area. However, Officers note that there are other commercial premises in very close proximity to the site and Chetwynd End is immediately adjacent to the Newport Town Centre and officers are satisfied that the

proposal will not have an adverse impact upon the character of the area or residential dwellings nearby. A concern has also been raised regarding the potential for business signage, however this would be subject to a separate advertisement application, and would be expected to be sympathetic to respect the character of the Conservation Area. The proposal therefore complies with Policies BE1: Design Criteria, BE5: Conservation Areas of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan, and Policy RS1: Newport Conservation Area within the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan.

#### 8.6 Highway Matters

- 8.7 The application site historically has two parking spaces and a garage at the rear of the property, accessed through Green Lane. The Highway Officer has objected to the use of this access and the deficit of parking spaces available to serve the proposed 12 staff members. There has also been a large number of local objections to the unsuitability of the access arrangements, and the concern for the increase in vehicle numbers using the lane. The Applicant has attempted to overcome this concern by offering the rear of their own property for parking use for the business which is the adjoining property (No. 3 Chetwynd End). The red line boundary around the site was amended to reflect this. However, it was identified that the inclusion of these spaces at No. 3 was unnecessary and would not improve the access arrangements. The site boundary was subsequently returned back to the original plan to show only No. 5 Chetwynd End, with no parking provision identified on the plans. The Applicant has identified a bus route within very close proximity to the application site, and two public car parks within 0.2 miles of the site, therefore the connections available are more than suitable to accommodate the staff members and visitors.
- 8.8 Officers have taken these comments into consideration, however have adopted a view which has been applied to other comparable Changes-of-Use close to the primary shopping area of Newport, where many developments and Changes-of-Use have been approved without any parking provision available at the site. These sites are viewed in this context due to their close proximity to Newport's many public car parks, and the adequate public transport facilities available to support them. Therefore, whilst there is no ability to provide suitable off-street parking at the application site in this case, in view of the site's position adjacent to Newport Town Centre which is well served by public transport and the proximity of public car parks and public transport links, the proposal is considered to be acceptable.
- 8.9 The Applicant has advised that they will ensure that their staff do not park within the unsuitable spaces on site by writing this into their Health and Safety Agreements and therefore the use of these parking spaces has been removed from the proposed plans. As the need to utilise the access off Green Lane has been removed from the proposal, safety concerns have therefore been alleviated and the proposal is considered to comply with Telford & Wrekin Plan Policy C3 'Impact of Development on Highways.' Furthermore, as the proposal does not include any parking provision and does not require vehicular access, the objections raised regarding the unsuitable access onto Green Lane and the unsuitability of the parking are no longer relevant to the

proposal. The Applicant has also confirmed that several of their staff members live in Newport and would therefore walk to work, or take public transport and would not be reliant on parking in the town centre; the development would support individuals from the local community by making their employment premises more accessible, and therefore the proposal is in line with Policy C3. As the proposal would be promoting travelling on foot, or using public transport and would, the proposal is considered to be compliant with Newport Neighbourhood Plan Policy TA1 'Transport and Accessibility.'

- 8.10 Policy SP4 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development' states that development should be supported where the benefits of a scheme outweigh any potential harm it may cause. Overall it is considered by Officers that the proposed development would not cause any adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the area, as well as the amenity of nearby residents and therefore is considered to be a sustainable scheme. The NPPF also requires an assessment of the benefits of a scheme, in this case it is considered that the overall benefits of the scheme outweigh any harm the proposal may cause. The application represents a sustainable form of development and meets the requirements of Policy SP4 and the NPPF.

## 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Change-of-Use from a dwelling to offices (Use Class A2) is considered to be an acceptable use which would bring vitality, diversity and employment to the market town. The development would support the local community as several employees live within the town of Newport, and is considered to be a sustainable form of development as it would cause no significant adverse impacts upon neighbouring properties, neighbouring uses or the Conservation Area.
- 9.2 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies in the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan and Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan and the NPPF.

## 10. DETAILED RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 The recommendation to the Planning Committee on this application is that delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to **FULL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to:

A) The following conditions:

A04	Time limit
C38	Development in accordance with approved plans
D06	Restricted Use (Offices for digital marketing only)
D11	Hours of Opening (0800 – 1800 Monday to Friday)
I40	Conditions

I41

Reasons for Grant of Approval

RANPPF1