

Mr T Hicks
140 Barrier Bank
Cowbit
PE12 6AQ

25 July 2024

Proposal **Prior Approval - Change of use from commercial workshop, storage building to residential dwelling**

Property **Rear of 104 Barrier Bank, Cowbit, PE12 6AQ**

Applicant **Mr T Hicks**

Introduction

This letter is submitted to support my proposal and to give additional information to officers and consultees dealing with the application.

Background and planning history

This application proposal relates to the existing steel portal framed building, located to the rear of my house and garden, that has been used by me for commercial purposes for storage and as a workshop.

The proposal utilises the existing structure and retains the existing volume and footprint of the building without extension. The temporary covered storage at the end of the building will be removed.

The proposed change utilises the existing access way from the adopted highway at the front of the site without alteration.

I was operating my business Manor Marquees from home with a storage yard and workshop/store at Frognall near Market Deeping. In 2011 I sought planning permission for a garage and implement store at the rear of 104 for domestic use. Permission was granted under application reference H01-0023-112 on 13 January 2012 and a condition was attached to that planning approval as follows:-

3 - the building shall be used only for ancillary domestic uses in connection with the residential occupation of number 104 barrier bank only, and no other purposes (such as commercial uses).

The reason for the condition was:-

to ensure that the local planning authority retains control over the future use of the building in the interests of residential amenities.

In 2016 I decided that it would be preferable from a business viewpoint to relocate all of the business operations to the application building as this avoided the need to commute between locations and would lead to a much more practical, efficient and sustainable business operation.

In 2017 applied for planning permission to remove condition 3 of H01-0023-112 to enable me to formally consolidate my business activities.

Permission was granted allowing a modification of condition 3 to allow the building to be used for commercial purposes under SHDC reference H01-0050-17 on 8th March 2017.

Conditions were attached to that approval as follows:-

2 - The garage store shall not be used for any purposes other than the existing marquee storage business currently operating from the site and shall be operated solely in conjunction with the occupation of 104 Barrier Bank, Cowbit.

The reason for the condition was:-

To ensure control over the future usage of the site and to protect residential amenity.

In addition, condition three required:-

3 - This permission shall operate for the benefit of Mr T Hicks and the use hereby approved shall terminate at such time as he ceases to occupy the premises.

The reason for this was:-

To ensure control over the usage of the site and protect residential amenity.

I have operated the business from that building but have recently sold business and am planning to retire. I therefore have no need of the application building from either a business or domestic viewpoint.

The building represents a significant investment and I do need to find an alternative use for it moving forward. It is of robust steel frame construction and am aware from the conditions previously imposed in relation to the use of this building that impact on neighbours residential amenity is a sensitive consideration.

Under the circumstances I think that the most appropriate use for the building, particularly given the size of the building and sensitivities involved would be conversion to residential use.

I am aware of the permitted development rights that allow the conversion of commercial buildings to residential and I'm therefore submitting this application for prior approval to confirm that this is acceptable in this instance.

The application building location

The is shown in the photographs in the accompanying Appendix. It is of modern steel portal frame construction that can be readily converted to residential use.

The application building is located behind two frontage properties number 104, my two storey house and the second a one and a half storey building used by my wife as a beauty salon and hairdressers.

The frontage of the property as a whole comprises a tall mature garden hedge. The application building cannot be seen at all. The access way leading from Barrier Bank is fairly centrally located and passes between the 104 and its garden on the west side and the beauty salon and its amenity space on the east side. Each of these properties have their own car parking and manoeuvring space allowing vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear.

The application building is located beyond the garden of 104 and is at a lower level than house and is screened from it by behind a tall leylandii hedge.

Because of the landscaping to the frontage the buildings within the site can only be glimpsed from the road frontage through the entrance. The application building cannot be seen from the road and is barely visible from the frontage buildings. Similarly, intervening landscaping limits the views to the building from the adjacent properties on adjacent sites.

The closest building on adjacent land is over 50m away.

Nearby development proposals

It worthy of noting that recently planning permission has been granted for residential development close to the site to the east and the west and these developments when built will benefit from the removal of the commercial activity from the application building in terms of their residential amenity.

The Application Proposal

Use

The application proposal is to change the use of the existing commercial building into a single residential bungalow.

The access to the building remains unchanged and is shared with the house, beauty salon and balance of the land in my ownership.

Amount

The amount of the development is dictated by the existing building resulting in a 3 bedroom bungalow 152 m2 of floor space, on the same footprint as the commercial building.

Appearance

The building retains its existing volume and form. This together with its location and context would lead to the selection of external materials, which move away from the existing plastic coated profile cladding to something more traditional and reflective of a barn like building in a semi rural location.

The existing cladding will be replaced with horizontal timber cladding set above a deep brick plinth to reflect the ffl set in the accompanying SSFRA (Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment) recommendations. The roof is shallow pitch and the finish will be similar to the existing but will include roof lights and will carry solar panels.

The main entrance will reflect the position and scale of the existing loading door and the fenestration will be functional and contemporary with slender anodised aluminium framing providing high levels of natural light to the main living areas.

Access and Highway Safety

In addition to my own vehicle the business I ran from the site used 3 flatbed pickups and a rough terrain fork lift used predominantly for off site installations and an electric forklift used in the yard and building. A trailer was also used for transporting the forklift.

I employed 3 - 4 subcontract staff who would arrive at the site daily in their own vehicles and would be loading and unloading, and erecting and dismantling marquees on site and off site. Our hours of operation would generally be between 8 am and 5 pm.

Thus, with occasional visits during the day traffic generation from the commercial activity was greater than that that might be expected from a three bedroom detached bungalow and the nature of the vehicles using the site was different.

The access to the site as existing off Barrier Bank with good visibility in each direction for both pedestrians and vehicles. The entrance is gated, with electronically controlled gates, and is set well back from the carriageway with sufficient space to allow the large vehicles to pull clear of the highway when entering the site.

Deeper into the site the access way is of variable width with passing places along its length.

No changes proposed to the entrance or access way, which has been well used when serving the existing domestic and commercial uses on the site.

There is more than ample room on the hard surfaced areas in front of the application building to allow its vehicles to enter park, manoeuvre and leave the site in a forward gear.

Parking

A minimum of 2 car parking spaces will be provided in front of the building but there is ample space for more if required. There is also ample space for secure covered cycle storage and bin storage.

The position of these features will be confirmed when a detailed scheme for hard and soft landscaping is prepared.

Noise

The removal of the commercial use has a modest beneficial effect on the nearby residential properties.

Similarly there are no activities within the immediate area that give rise to noise that would have an adverse impact on residential amenity of the proposed dwelling.

Impact on the character of the area

As mentioned previously, the existing building is barely discernible from the surrounding area. The proposed use would take away commercial vehicle movements and the noise associated with the commercial activity.

The scale and bulk of the building would not change however, the extent of hard surfacing around the building and the number and nature of vehicles on the site, parking and external storage would be reduced. The tented storage structure would also be removed.

All of these would result in a significant visual improvement

Sustainable design and construction

The detailed construction of the building will be specified at the building regulation stage however, it is anticipated that the building will be super insulated and will have solar panels on the roof the ultimate specification/design will evolve during the design process.

It is also anticipated that air source heat pumps will be used.

Behind the external cladding and existing frame the walls will be constructed of block work to the required dpc / ffl. And above this block work or SIPP panels. The floor will be block and beam construction off the existing slab with the void providing the opportunity for thermal insulation in excess of that required by building regulations.

Landscaping and ecology

The areas immediately around the building are entirely hard surfaced and provide little or no habitat with no plants or vegetation.

There are no trees on the commercial site or close to the building that would be impacted on by the proposal.

The hard surfaced areas in front and to the north of the building will accommodate parking, but will be significantly reduced in size to reflect the domestic use and allow for the introduction of soft landscaping and the creation of amenity space which will both enhance appearance and enrich ecology. This will be further complimented by bird and bat boxes and bug hotels.

This will result in a biodiversity net gain the extent of which will be determined by the landscaping proposals.

Flood Risk

The application site falls partly within Flood Zone 3 and as a result a SSFRA (Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment) has been undertaken by Ellingham Consulting Ltd.

The Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and supporting planning practice guidance (PPG) on Flood Risk and Coastal Change.

The SSFRA concludes that with appropriate mitigation the site is suitable for the use proposed.

Surface water drainage

The change of use proposed will not increase impermeable surface or give rise to any additional surface water run off. In fact, with the introduction of new soft, landscaping the impermeable surfaces will be reduced . Existing soak-away drainage will remain.

Conclusion

The proposal is in keeping with its surroundings particularly in the sense that the local planning authority have been keen to ensure that through the imposition of conditions on the two earlier approvals that the use of this building does not have an adverse impact on residential amenity.

Given the sensitivity associated with neighbouring residential amenity and potential future development, the logical use of this building going forward would be residential.

The proposal use, in its detailing and use of materials, would be sympathetic to the character appearance of the building.

The proposal would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting in terms of visual improvements as a result of the design of the repurposed structure, the removal of extensive hard surfaced areas and the introduction of new landscaping which would improve and enrich biodiversity as well as improving appearance. In addition there would be an enhancement to amenity through the removal of the commercial activity and the development would be flood resilient.

I therefore hope that you can support my application for prior approval.

Should you require any additional information or which should discuss any aspect of this application please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ends

Tim Hicks. Applicant.