

**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM RETAIL (A1)
TO RESIDENTIAL (C3)**

**The Old Post Office, Old Main Road
Fleet Hargate, Holbeach, Lincs, PE12 8LJ**

for
Mr. & Mrs. R. Pearson



PLANNING STATEMENT

(incorporating Conservation Area Statement)

PROPOSAL

Planning consent is sought from South Holland District Council for a Change of Use of a two storey building from A1(retail) to C3 (residential). Formal planning consent is required due to the application site being located within a designated Conservation Area.

THE SITE

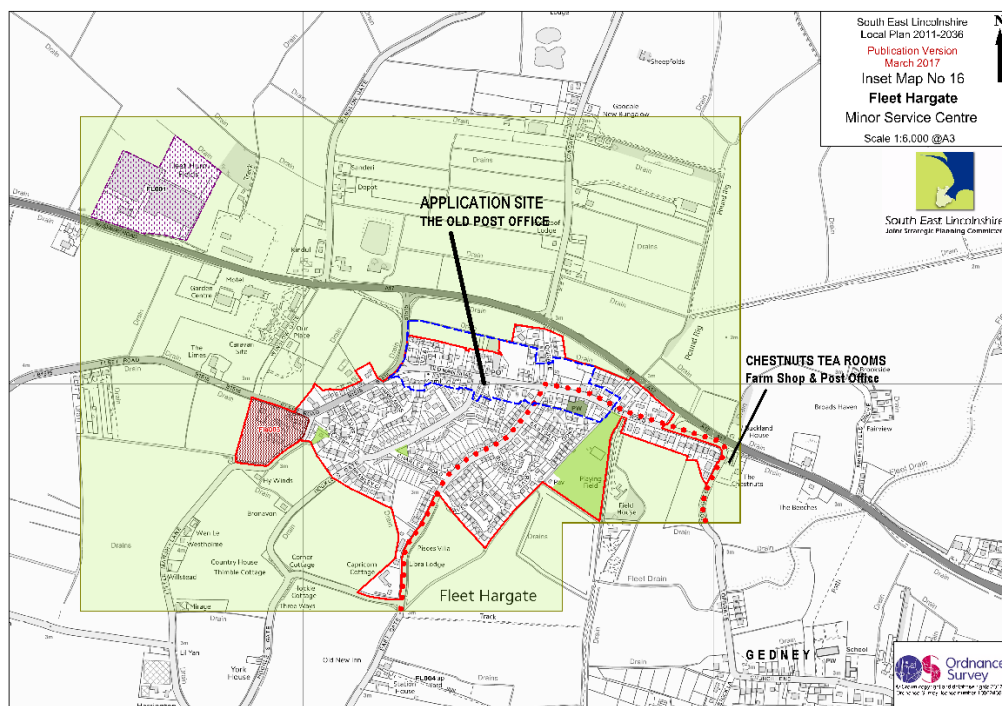
The application site is located within the Conservation Area of Fleet Hargate and is located along the Old Main Road which runs east to west through the village. As the site is located within Flood Zone 1 there is no requirement for a Flood Risk Assessment to accompany the application.

Although well positioned in the centre of the village the premises remain empty since lastly being the village post office and general store up until March 2017. The first floor had been in use as a hair salon up until April 2016 when that use ceased.

The premises have been actively marketed by the owners since early 2016 but there has been no firm interest in the property.

The most significant change in circumstance is the relocation of the sub post-office to alternative nearby facilities and given the relatively small trading space at the subject premises there is little potential for any prospective viable business uses.

The Post Office is now located within an expanding local enterprise which offers a diverse range of services including general provisions.



SE Lincs Local Plan Settlement Boundary Plan – Fleet Hargate

It was reported in the local press at the time of relocation that the new premises would be within 650 metres of the former post office and that it was also on a bus route if customers required such transport.

It is now considered that the application premises should be considered for alternative use rather than remain vacant and given the relationship with adjoining buildings it is considered that residential use would be most appropriate.

THE BUILDING & PROPOSED WORKS

The subject building is of traditional construction of two storey masonry construction under a tiled roof. It is located within a terrace of dwellings and directly abuts the public footway. There is unrestricted on-street parking in the form of layby parking in front of the property.

There is a secure passageway access leading to the enclosed rear garden which itself is of sufficient size to provide private amenity space for the proposed residential use including garden area, storage space for cycles etc. and refuse bin storage.



Rear Elevation – passageway on left hand side



Rear Garden Area – residential properties adjacent

THE BUILDING & PROPOSED WORKS /cont.....

The premises are fully serviced with all main utilities and the current foul drainage is by means of septic tank system located in the rear garden area.

Existing and proposed floor layouts and a section are provided to demonstrate the suitability of the building to be readily converted to provide a three bedroomed dwelling of satisfactory floor space and amenity. The conversion works would be confined to fairly minimal internal alterations and there are no external alterations required to the elevations or roof.

CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT

As mentioned the application building lies within the designated Conservation Area for the settlement of Fleet Hargate but has no other designated status and is not located close to any listed buildings or monuments. As no external alterations are necessary to implement the physical change of use to create a dwelling there is no adverse impact on the Conservation Area.

CONCLUSION

It is an unfortunate but increasingly common change of circumstance in retail and commercial trends that has left the applicants with premises that are no longer sought after for their previous established uses.

Despite their efforts via specialist Agents to secure interest in the premises since early 2016, this has proved fruitless.

The relocation of the Post Office facility to alternative nearby premises was beyond their control and the limited floor space offers little potential for a viable business to commit and expand.

As the subject property is well positioned within Fleet Hargate which, as a Minor Service Centre, can accommodate limited development, it is considered that the proposed Change of Use to re-use the empty property to create a dwelling, with minimal alteration, is fully compliant with relevant Planning Policy.