

Agenda Item	Committee Date	Application Number
A8	30 March 2020	19/01531/FUL

Application Site	Proposal
Co-op Centenary House Regent Road Morecambe	Change of use of retail store (A1) to mixed use comprising of retail store (A1), offices (A2), cafe (A3), workshops (B1) and events space (D1/D2) and installation of new entrances and shop frontages including fascia and integrated roller shutter, replacement windows and cladding

Name of Applicant	Name of Agent
Jo Bambrough	Sarah Renshaw

Decision Target Date	Reason For Delay
10 February 2020	Officer workload

Case Officer	Mr Robert Clarke
Departure	No
Summary of Recommendation	Approval

(i) **Procedural Matters**

This form of development would normally be dealt with under the Scheme of Delegation. However, Lancaster City Council is the property owner, and as such the application must be determined by the Planning Regulatory Committee.

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

The building forming the subject of this application is located at the corners of, and with frontages on, Regent Road, Clarendon Road and Westminster Road in the West End of Morecambe. It is a large structure set over 4 stories including the basement level. The structure as it currently stands has been constructed in phases. The earliest element dates from 1927 and is constructed with brick to the south western elevation facing Back Regent Road, coursed stone with ashlar stone string courses and window surrounds to the north western elevation facing Clarendon Road West whilst the primary north eastern elevation facing Regent Road is finished in fine cut ashlar. In the 1960s, an extension was added to the original building which consisted of a 'modern' addition finished in blue mosaic tiling followed by a reproduction of the original building finished in dressed ashlar to the Regent Road and Westminster Road elevations and brick to the Back Regent Road elevation. The building has multiple roof arrangements resulting from its staged development, including hipped and dual pitched roofs finished in slate as well as flat roof sections. The ground floor of the building now features modern shop frontages. The building was originally constructed as a convenience store and the part of the ground floor still remains in this use. However, the wider building has been empty and unused since the early 1990s.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 This application seeks consent for the change of use of the building as a whole from its historic A1 retail use to a flexible mixed use development set over its 4 levels. The uses applied for include the retention of the existing A1 retail space to the ground floor, as well as the provision of flexible office and workshop spaces falling with the A2 and B1 use classes, an A3 café space as well as larger spaces that would cater for studio uses, events, markets, temporary exhibitions, galleries or conferences falling within the

D1 and D2 use classes. The intention for the development is to provide various different spaces to facilitate multiple flexible uses and uses that will facilitate the involvement of all sections of the community. In addition, the proposal will involve the installation of new entrances and shop frontages including fascia, installation of integrated roller shutters as well as replacement windows where required and cladding to the central blue mosaic tiled area.

3.0 **Site History**

3.1 The site has an extensive planning history. The most recent is detailed below:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
19/00786/ADV	Advertisement application for the display of 3 externally illuminated fascia signs, 1 externally illuminated hanging sign, 1 non-illuminated wall mounted sign and 1 non-illuminated fascia sign	Permitted
19/00645/FUL	Installation of replacement plant equipment, installation of cladding to the side elevation and new fence panels to the side	Permitted

4.0 **Consultation Responses**

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and non-statutory consultees:

Consultee	Response
County Highways	No objection
Environmental Health	No response received
Property Services	No response received

5.0 **Neighbour Representations**

5.1 No responses received.

6.0 **Principal National and Development Plan Policies**

- 6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable development
 Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
 Section 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
 Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
 Section 12 – Achieving well designed places
- 6.2 Development Management Development Plan Document
 DM1 – Town Centre Development
 DM20 – Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages
 DM22 – Vehicle Parking Provision
 DM35 – Key Design Principles

7.0 **Comment and Analysis**

7.1 The key considerations arising from the proposal are:

- Principle of the development;
- Scale, design and impact of the development upon the wider street scene;
- Residential amenity; and
- Highway impacts

7.2 **Principle of the development**

- 7.2.1 The applicant, the Exchange Creative Community CIC, are a community-led organisation currently based in West Street in the West End of Morecambe. The organisation currently operate a café and community gallery and art space. In addition to this, the organisation runs a studio space within the Arndale Shopping Centre with the overarching aim of supporting and developing Morecambe's creative offer.
- 7.2.2 The proposed development aims to create a hub for community-led businesses and enterprise start-ups through the provision of affordable, flexible and accessible workspaces, encouragement of networking and collaboration and the provision of education and training facilities. The operation will provide the shared infrastructure, resources and support services as well as complementary uses such as the A3 café to encourage cross trading and professional development. In addition, the proposal also intends to continue the provision of a local community sharing network of tools and equipment, known as 'the good things library'.
- 7.2.3 The proposal is situated within the West End of Morecambe, an identified local centre consisting of a mix of commercial uses such as retail stores and professional services as well as residential dwellings. The West End also benefits from public transport connections and is well connected to the wider area by a network of bus routes. In addition, Morecambe train station is a 15 minute walk to the north east. The site and wider area are evidently sustainable whilst the building forming the subject of the application is located in a central and accessible position within the community which it seeks to serve.
- 7.2.4 The proposed development will provide a large space which will allow an existing local business to continue to grow and develop. It will also continue the provision of existing services as well as allowing for the provision of extended and additional services and facilities to serve the local community and encourage social cohesion. Moreover, the development will facilitate the refurbishment and re-use of what is a large and principally located building that has been unoccupied for a long period of time and has fallen into disrepair, not only improving the appearance of this building but which could act as a catalyst for investment and regeneration in the wider area.
- 7.2.5 The proposal is considered to fully accord with the provisions of national and local planning policy through the creation of a mixed use development that seeks to encourage and facilitate a prosperous and competitive economy, support the creation of a vibrant and healthy community and re-use and enhance an existing prominent building within a sustainable local centre. On this basis, the principle of the mixed use scheme proposed is fully supported.

7.3 Scale, design and impact of the development upon the wider street scene

- 7.3.1 The majority of the subject building has been unused since the early 1990s and has subsequently fallen into a state of disrepair. It is a large and prominently located building within a central location in the West End of Morecambe. In its current condition the building as a whole detracts from the character and appearance of the wider area. However, given the fine ashlar and coursed stone elevations with slate roofing it is not a building without character. The proposed development will provide an opportunity for the building to be re-used and contribute to its wider refurbishment and regeneration.
- 7.3.2 The proposed development will require the replacement of the existing shop frontage to the later 1960's additions. At present this part of the building is boarded with timber, as are a number of windows to the upper floors. The replacement shopfront would incorporate a replacement timber fascia as well as an integrated roller shutter. In addition to this, general repair works to the windows and rainwater goods would be required. The central blue mosaic tiled section is also in a poor condition with sections of tiling missing. Following discussions with the agent of the application it is understood that this section could be clad with an alternative material which would serve to improve its condition and provide the opportunity for this element of the structure to appear less conspicuous. Overall, the proposal will serve to refurbish this structure and lead to a visual enhancement of the building's prominent exterior. The refurbishment of a large, prominent and centrally located building could also act as a mechanism for investment into the locality. On this basis, the proposed development is supported in respect of its scale and design, however, to ensure that the detail of proposed alterations, in particular the replacement shop frontage incorporating roller shutter and timber fascia, are of an appropriate design it is recommended that a condition is attached to the decision requiring the agreement of their detailing prior to commencement of the works.

7.4 Residential amenity

- 7.4.1 The nearest residential dwellings are those located to the rear/south west of the subject building which face onto Clarendon Road West and Westminster Street. These properties are detached from the subject building and are separated from the development site by Back Regent Road. There are also properties located on the opposite side of Regent Road facing onto the subject building.
- 7.4.2 These closest dwellings have a degree of separation from the subject building and are also located within a busy local centre that will have associated levels of background noise from the highway network and surrounding commercial activities. Given this setting, the nature of the proposed use and the proposed opening hours of 08:00-22:00, it is considered that the proposed development will not cause harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers in respect of noise.
- 7.4.3 The proposal includes the provision of an internal bin store accessed from Westminster Road. The existing bin store for the A1 use, which is accessed from Back Regent Road, will remain as existing. The provision of an internal bin store for the proposed mixed use development will minimise the impact of waste storage on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

7.5 Highway impacts

- 7.5.1 The proposed development does not include the provision of off-street parking facilities which does contradict the requirements of Policy DM22 of the Development Management DPD. However, the site is located within a sustainable local centre in close proximity to numerous bus routes and Morecambe Train Station. It is therefore readily accessed via the public transport network. In addition, Regent Road and parts of the surrounding highway network are subject to highway restrictions. On this basis, the lack of parking provision can be accepted in this instance. Furthermore, County Highways has raised no objections to the proposed development.

8.0 Planning Obligations

- 8.1 There are no planning obligations to consider as part of this application.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The proposal seeks to create a hub for community-led businesses and enterprise start-ups through the provision of affordable, flexible and accessible workspaces, encouragement of networking and collaboration and the provision of education and training facilities. The proposal is considered to fully accord with the provisions of national and local planning policy. It will serve to encourage and facilitate a prosperous and competitive economy, support the creation of a vibrant and healthy community as well as protecting existing levels of residential amenity and re-use and enhancement of an existing prominent building within a sustainable local centre.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard 3 year timescale
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans
3. Materials/details including shop front, fascia, roller shutter, flues/vents/extraction facilities, windows and doors, cladding
4. Restriction of opening hours to 08:00-22:00 Monday-Saturday, 10:00-18:00 Sundays and bank holidays

Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

In accordance with the above legislation, Lancaster City Council has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been made having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

Background Papers

None