

Agenda Item	A10
Application Number	20/00650/FUL
Proposal	Change of use of dwelling (C3) to 2 self-contained 1-bed flats (C2) and installation of porch canopy
Application site	37 Beck View, Hala Square, Lancaster, Lancashire
Applicant	Lancaster City Council
Agent	n/a
Case Officer	Mr Stephen Gill
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 applicant, and as such the application must be determined by the Planning Regulatory Committee.

1.0 Application Site and Setting

1.1 The property subject of this application relates to a 3-bed, 2-storey former scheme manager's residential unit within the elderly residential sheltered housing scheme. The site is accessed to the south of Hala Square, with parking provision immediately north west of the application site and further off-street parking to the south of the sheltered housing block. The property is associated with a wider residential sheltered housing scheme, and is finished in pebbledash under a grey tiled roof with brown window frames within cast stone surrounds. The site is owned and managed by Lancaster City Council.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 The application proposes the change of use of the existing 3-bed, 2-storey residential dwellinghouse (use class C3) to form two additional self-contained 1-bed flats (use class C2) as part of the wider sheltered housing scheme. To facilitate the proposed change of use, the only proposed external alteration is to move the existing door opening and remove one window opening to the front elevation. Internal alterations are proposed to form a bedroom, bathroom and a living/dining room, to form the two self-contained units, in addition to blocking the internal ground floor access to the first floor.

3.0 Site History

3.1 A number of relevant applications relating to this site have previously been received by the Local Planning Authority. These include:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
81/1072/DPA	Erection of Sheltered Housing for the elderly comprising of 36 units, 2 wardens' units, communal block, chapel etc.	Permitted

4.0 Consultation Responses

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

Consultee	Response
County Highways	No objection
Fire Safety	No comments received to date.
Environmental Health	No objection

4.2 No neighbour comments received to date.

5.0 Analysis

5.1 The key considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Principle of the Use
- Scale and Design Impacts
- Residential Amenity
- Highways and Parking

5.2 Principle of the Use (NPPF Section 5 (Delivering Supply of New Homes) & DPD Policy DM1)

5.2.1 The proposal forms part of the wider sheltered housing scheme at Beck View and will provide two additional self-contained sheltered accommodation units. The existing 3-bed, 2-storey property is currently vacant as it is surplus to requirements. The proposal is to provide two additional sheltered housing units within an existing sheltered housing scheme. The scheme would be managed by a full time scheme manager on site 0900-1700 and would then be monitored out of hours by a remote call centre who are contactable, using call points located in every flat around the scheme, to ensure the safety and care of residents. This is considered to be acceptable in principle and the proposal would make a modest contribution to meeting the District's housing needs for those requiring care.

5.3 Scale and Design (NPPF Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) & DPD Policies DM29 & DM30)

5.3.1 The property would remain externally very similar to the existing, with a new front door proposed, replacing an existing window opening and the existing front door opening blocked up and finished in the matching peppledash render. Works to the ground floor doors and windows benefit from householder permitted development and does not require planning permission providing that they are undertaken prior to the proposed use commencing. The existing porch canopy and surround is to be removed, with these or a similar porch canopy and surrounds provided for the new front door opening. The upper floor flat will use the existing back door as a front door access to the internal stairwell, so each property will have its own separate front door.

5.3.2 Given the matching materials proposed, the proposal is considered to be of an acceptable design and will have no undue impact upon the streetscene or wider landscape. Two new kitchen vents are to be provided to the front elevation, though given the setback of the property from the public viewpoints and location of vents immediately adjacent to existing rainwater downpipe, these will appear inconspicuous.

5.4 Residential Amenity (NPPF Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) and DPD policy DM2)

5.4.1 The proposed one-bed self-contained units are of a similar size and style to typical single person's elderly residential sheltered housing, although space is relatively limited due to the conversion and space confined to the existing built form. In terms of internal room standards, Policy DM2 states that

all new residential units should meet the standards set out in the Nationally Described Spacing Standards (NDSS). When considering the standards set out in NDSS, the bedrooms proposed are for single occupancy. These measure over 10sqm, 3m in width and have a 2.4m floor to ceiling height, which exceed the requirements set out in NDSS. In addition, the proposed storage facilities also exceed NDSS requirements and this is considered acceptable.

- 5.4.2 The ground floor flat demonstrates some wheelchair accessibility and manoeuvrability, and the stairwell to the first floor flat is of sufficient width to accommodate a stair lift if required. Although the proposed units could not be converted to be fully accessible to all, the proposed accommodation is considered to be sufficient to meet the needs of tenants and will offer acceptable residential amenity to future occupants.
- 5.4.3 The site currently benefits from a modest external area, which is to be used for bin storage as existing, with the space sufficient for a small drying area. As part of the wider sheltered housing scheme, the two proposed units are considered to offer a satisfactory level of residential amenity and will not cause any adverse impacts to the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 5.5 Highways and Parking (NPPF Section 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) & DPD Policy DM62.)
- 5.5.1 The site overall benefits from external parking as part of the sheltered housing scheme, with off-street parking available to the north and south sides of the site, with on-street parking available in this residential area.
- 5.5.2 There are 16 residential parking spaces available to occupants of Beck View sheltered housing scheme, with no proposed increase to this provision through this application. Given that one 3-bed dwellinghouse has the same parking requirement as two 1-bed flats, the proposal is considered to have no severe impact upon highways or parking, particularly in this sustainable location with good bus links and walking distance from services and facilities in the wider area. County Highways raised no objection to the proposal.

6.0 Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 6.1 The proposed two self-contained flats for sheltered accommodation are considered to provide suitable levels of residential amenity whilst not detracting from the residential amenity of neighbours. The physical alterations to facilitate the change of use are modest and will appear inconspicuous in matching materials and colours. The site will benefit from the existing parking provision as part of the sheltered housing scheme at Beck View, resulting in no severe highway or parking impact.

Recommendation

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

Condition no.	Description	Type
1	Standard 3 year timescale	Compliance
2	Development to be carried out in accordance to approved plans	Compliance
3	Ventilation equipment finished in matt black	Compliance
4	To be owned and operated as part of the sheltered housing scheme at Beck View only	Compliance

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