

Planning Application Response of Planning Policy

Application No:	APP/15/00706
Site Address:	10 High Street, Emsworth
Development:	Conversion of office spaces on the first floor into two self contained apartments.
Case Officer:	Mrs T Pickup
Comments by:	Gavin Stonham
Date of Comments:	27 th August 2015

The Local Plan is now comprised of the Core Strategy (2011) and the recently adopted Allocations Plan (2014). It should be noted that Saved Policies are no longer relevant.

Comments:

This application proposes to convert the vacant office on the first floor of No. 10 High Street, Emsworth, into two self-contained residential apartments. This would result in the replacement of 119.5 sq.m. of office floor space with the same amount of residential floor space.

The applicant applied in March 2015 for a certificate of lawful use to seek determination as to whether a proposed change of use of the first floor to a residential use would meet the criteria of the relevant Class of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 1995 (As Amended). The ground floor and first floor are currently vacant and were formerly occupied by Barclays bank i.e. A2 use on the ground floor. However the previous use of the first floor at that time was unknown and it was unclear from the submission documents accompanying that application under which Class of development the application was being made, i.e. whether the use was A2 or B1(a). Clarification was requested from the agent, but no response received; the application was therefore refused due to lack of information.

The applicant has now submitted this planning application which explicitly requests a change of use of the first floor from an A2 office use to two flats (C3 residential). The change of use is partial, as the proposal would retain the vacant A2 ground floor use; change of use from A2 to a mixed use including up to two flats is permitted under Class G of Part 3 of the consolidated Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. From previous site visits, the second floor of the building appeared to be in residential use. The additional flats to be provided under this application would take the total of flats above two, hence the need for a full planning application rather than a prior approval application.

Policy DM2 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy): Protection of Existing Community Facilities and Shops requires an active marketing process to be undertaken for loss of any premises last used as community facilities or shops, with a reduced period of marketing required for loss of shops outside of the primary and secondary frontages. The application does not relate to any part of the previous ground floor A2 bank use that was accessible to the public; the first floor was previously in use as an A2 office, which does not fall into either the category of a shop or a community facility. The reoccupation of this vacant first floor use with a residential use is also unlikely to be detrimental to the High Street's vitality and function as a primary shopping frontage. It could even have a potentially slight positive impact on the local area as a result of potentially increased trade for these shops in Emsworth High Street.

The application site is not within either Flood Zones 2 or 3 and as such does not require the Environment Agency to be notified of the application. Consequently there are no flooding risks associated with the development.

The Residential Car Parking and Cycle Provision SPD requires 1 space per residential unit. This is lower than the requirement for commercial B1(a) development in the Hampshire County Council Parking 2002 Parking Standards which is for 1 space per 30 sq.m of floor space. The location is also highly accessible and in close proximity to bus stops and the rail station. I would not therefore suggest seeking additional car parking provision.

The site is within the area covered under policy CS12: Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. CS12 states that development must carefully assesses the impact of individual proposals, and their cumulative effect, on the Chichester Harbour AONB, and its setting, be appropriate to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area and conserves and enhance the special qualities of the Chichester Harbour AONB. As the works proposed are internal only, it would appear unlikely that there would be any visual impact on the AONB, nevertheless this will need to be assessed.

The site is also located within a conservation area, so Conservation Area Consent may be required as well as planning consent.

Policy CS9 sets out a requirement under Policy CS9 (Housing) for an affordable housing contribution of 30-40% on sites of five or more gross dwellings. This proposal is for two new dwellings, so there is therefore no need for an affordable housing contribution.

Under the Havant Borough Community Infrastructure Levy Charging (CIL) Charging Schedule, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is normally payable on new residential floor space at a rate of £100/sqm in Emsworth. The requirement for a CIL payment applies even in the case of development that is permitted under a general consent. However in this case an exemption does apply. Under the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the building needs to have been occupied for at least six months in the last three years prior to planning permission being approved in order for the deduction of the floor space to be re-used as residential accommodation to qualify for an exemption to the CIL requirement. The applicant has submitted a form to confirm that the floor space has been occupied for this length of time and that the site was last occupied in March 2015. There is therefore no requirement for a CIL payment.

A Solent Recreation Mitigation Project (SRMP) contribution would be payable at a rate of £172 per dwelling (plus administration and monitoring charges) in accordance with policy DM24. This will need to be satisfied prior to the commencement of development to comply with the Habitat Regulations.

Principle of development:

No policy objections.