

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 12 JANUARY 2021

Application No:	20/02000/FUL	
Proposal:	Proposed conversion of existing ground floor flat into Community Hub, including change of use from residential to Community use.	
Location:	14 Chatham Court, Newark, NG24 4BH	
Applicant:	Newark and Sherwood District Council	
Agent:	Studio-G Architects LLP	
Registered:	19.11.2020	Target Date: 13.01.2021

This application is being presented to the Planning Committee in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation as site is owned by the District Council.

The Site

Chatham Court comprises four rendered 1960's blocks of residential flats each having 5 storeys to a height of c11m within the defined urban area of Newark. The site lies on the eastern side of Albert Street and is outside of the Conservation Area located to the north.

The application site comprises flat 14, located within the second most northerly block. This is a ground floor one bedroom flat with its frontage facing west.

There is car parking provision within the Chatham Court grounds, set amongst landscaping of grass and the occasional tree which surround the site. Vehicular access can be obtained from Chatham Court itself and via Eldon Street.

The site is in a predominantly residential area with three and four storey development located to the north and east (Eldon Street and Castle Brewery Court respectively) albeit there are some mixed commercial uses along Albert Street.

Relevant Planning History

None relevant.

The Proposal

Full planning permission is sought for the change of use of a one bedroom flat (C3 use) to a community hub. The associated external physical changes are limited to alterations to an existing ground floor window to create a new entrance that would be ramped with balustrading. This would give an independent access that no longer relies on the adjacent communal access serving the flats. The existing internal entrance to the flat from within the communal area would be permanently blocked up. In the side elevation, a 3 panel window would be replaced with a further door and 2 panel side windows.

The hub would contain an office and meeting room with a toilet and kitchen facility and would be used by members of the public and residents of Chatham Court and other agency staff/stake holders as part of the 'safer streets' initiative to provide community support for the local area. This would be for one to one consultation with residents and for providing residents support with access to community services and I.T equipment to access the internet. It is anticipated that the maximum occupancy of the hub would not exceed 8 persons at any one time, with the usual average occupancy levels being around 5 persons.

The opening hours of the community hub will be from 9am to 4 pm Monday to Friday.

One parking space would be allocated to the hub, accessed from Eldon Street.

The Submission

- Drawing no. A/100/P1, As existing Ground Floor Plan, Elevations and Section
- Drawing no. A/200/P1, As proposed Ground Floor Plan, Elevations and Section
- Drawing no. A/003/P1, Site and Location Plans
- Supporting Statement

Departure/Public Advertisement Procedure

Occupiers of 43 properties have been individually notified by letter.

Planning Policy Framework

The Development Plan

Newark and Sherwood Amended Core Strategy DPD (adopted March 2019)

Spatial Policy 1 - Settlement Hierarchy

Spatial Policy 2 - Spatial Distribution of Growth

Spatial Policy 7 - Sustainable Transport

Spatial Policy 8 – Protecting and Promoting Leisure and Community Facilities

Core Policy 6 – Shaping our Employment Profile

Core Policy 8 – Retail & Town Centres

Core Policy 9 -Sustainable Design

Core Policy 14 – Historic Environment

NAP1 - Newark Urban Area

Allocations & Development Management DPD

DM1 – Development within Settlements Central to Delivering the Spatial Strategy

DM5 – Design

DM9 – Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

DM11 – Retail and Town Centre Uses

DM12 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

NPPG

Consultations

Newark Town Council – fully support the proposal

No other representations from third or interested parties have been received.

Comments of the Business Manager

The key issues in considering this application have been identified and are discussed in turn below.

Principle of Development

The up-to-date development plan is silent on the loss of housing to other uses. Whilst one bedroom affordable flats do form part of the housing need for the District and indeed the town, it is important to balance this against the need for the community hub.

The proposal is for a new community use which Spatial Policy 8 seeks to encourage, particularly where it meets an identified need of the community. Local consultation was undertaken before this application was submitted which identified the need for this facility and its location. For this reason, whilst the hub is located outside of the town centre (as defined by the Development Plan maps) and is technically a 'main town centre use' as defined within the NPPF, a material planning consideration, I take the view that the sequential test advocated for an office use is passed in this case given that this hub needs to be located within the community it is intended to serve. As such I am satisfied that the proposal accords with the intentions of policies SP8, CP8 and DM11 as well as the NPPF.

Visual Impact

The proposal involves only minimal physical alterations which externally comprise the replacement of two existing ground floor windows to form new access doors with side windows within the same width openings. On the west elevation this also includes a new ramped entrance which would allow for accessible/disabled access and the existing internal access to be permanently closed off and the room layout reconfigured. The proposed alterations are discrete and would be undertaken in materials to match the existing flats such that these are considered to be visually acceptable in line with CP9 and DM5. There would be no adverse impact on the setting of the Newark Conservation Area which lies some c45m to the north and the impact is judged to be neutral in compliance with DM9 and CP14.

Residential Amenity Impact

The physical alterations proposed are not considered to cause any adverse impacts upon the living conditions of local residents.

The use itself is likely to generate more comings and goings than its current use as a flat. However with its own external access and its modest scale, this is unlikely to cause any issue for residents. Its occupancy would be self-governed by its modest size that is expected to accommodate a maximum of 8 people at any one time. The opening hours are stated as being from 9am to 4pm Monday to Fridays. However as longer operating hours would not be considered harmful to

amenity, it is not considered necessary to condition the hours of use. In accordance with CP9 and DM5 the impact upon the living conditions of existing residents is deemed to be acceptable.

Highway Impacts

It is not expected that the change of use would adversely impact on local car parking as the hub is for the use of the local residents in the Chatham Court area and there is existing car parking provision for residents. It is also expected that residents using the hub will walk to the centre. The staff that would use the community hub currently have a daily presence on the site and they use the existing car parking facilities. The existing flat has access to a resident's car parking space accessed off Eldon Street this would be re-allocated for use by other stakeholders when they visit the site. As such the proposal is considered to have made appropriate and effective car parking provision in line with the requirements of SP7 and DM5 and there are no highway safety concerns identified.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

Whilst the proposal would involve the loss of one affordable flat, the need for the community hub in my view clearly outweighs this loss and would have tangible benefits to existing residents through the 'safer streets' initiative. No adverse impacts have been identified and for these reasons the application is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

That planning permission is approved subject to the conditions and reasons shown below

Conditions

01

The development hereby permitted shall not begin later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

02

The development hereby permitted shall be constructed entirely of the materials details submitted as part of the planning application unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority through an application seeking a non-material amendment.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

03

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in accordance with the following approved plans, references A/100/P1, as existing Ground Floor Plan, Elevations and Section, A/200/P1, As proposed Ground Floor Plan, Elevations and Section and A/003/P1, Site and Location Plans.

Reason: So as to define this permission.

Notes to Applicant

01

The application as submitted is acceptable. In granting permission without unnecessary delay the District Planning Authority is implicitly working positively and proactively with the applicant. This is fully in accordance with Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

02

The applicant is advised that all planning permissions granted on or after the 1st December 2011 may be subject to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Full details of CIL are available on the Council's website at www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/cil/

The proposed development has been assessed and it is the Council's view that CIL is not payable on the development given that there is no net additional increase of floorspace as a result of the development.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application case file.

For further information, please contact Clare Walker ext. 5834.

All submission documents relating to this planning application can be found on the following website www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

Lisa Hughes
Business Manager – Planning Development

Committee Plan - 20/02000/FUL

