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| <b>Application Number:</b> | 2023/0642/FUL   |
| <b>Site Address:</b>       | Post Office Sport and Social Club, Dunkirk Road, Lincoln                      |
| <b>Target Date:</b>        | 9th November 2023   |
| <b>Agent Name:</b>         | Lomas Architecture Design And Developments Ltd                                |
| <b>Applicant Name:</b>     | Mr James Harland  |
| <b>Proposal:</b>           | Conversion of building to 6 apartments and erection of 3 dwellings (Revised). |

### **Background - Site Location and Description**

The application site previously forms the existing Post Office and Social Club, associated car park and grounds.

The site is located on the corner of Dunkirk Road and Mons Road with existing access taken from Mons Road. The site is surrounded by residential dwellings with the existing table tennis club building positioned immediately to the north.

The proposal has been subject to pre application advice and further officer discussions during the application process which has resulted in revised drawings. The original layout has been revised to accommodate further parking spaces following the initial response from Highways and local residents. Whilst the revised scheme has altered the layout of the new build plots, the number and size of the dwellings remains as originally submitted. Further information has also been sought in relation to energy efficiency and landscaping and biodiversity net gain.

The application is brought to Planning Committee as it has received more than 4 objections as well as a request from Ward Councillor Nannestad following the initial round of consultation.

### **Site History**

No relevant site history.

### **Case Officer Site Visit**

Undertaken on 9th November 2023.

### **Policies Referred to**

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Policy S1: The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy S3: Housing in the Lincoln Urban Area, Main Towns and Market Towns
- Policy S6: Design Principles for Efficient Buildings
- Policy S7: Reducing Energy Consumption - Residential Development
- Policy S13: Reducing Energy Consumption in Existing Buildings
- Policy S49: Parking Provision
- Policy S53: Design and Amenity
- Policy S61: Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains

## **Issues**

To assess the proposal with regard to:

- 1) Accordance with National and Local Planning Policy
- 2) Impact on Amenity of Neighbouring uses and future occupiers of the premises
- 3) Impact on visual amenity
- 4) Contaminated Land
- 5) Energy Efficiency
- 6) Landscaping and Biodiversity
- 7) Highway safety, access and parking

## **Consultations**

Consultations were carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement, adopted January 2023.

## **Statutory Consultation Responses**

| Consultee                | Comment           |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Highways & Planning      | Comments Received |
| John Lincolnshire Police | Comments Received |
| Highways & Planning      | Comments Received |
| Environmental Health     | Comments Received |

## **Public Consultation Responses**

| Name                        | Address   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Miss Rebecca Smith          | 111 Dunkirk Road<br>Lincoln<br>Lincolnshire<br>LN1 3UJ                        |
| Mr Richard Milburn          | 103 Dunkirk Road<br>Lincoln<br>LN1 3UJ  |
| Mrs Vicky Heslop            | Longstone House, High Street, Washingborough<br>Lincoln<br>Lincoln<br>LN4 1AZ |
| Councillor Donald Nannestad |   |
| Mr John Morrison            | Anzio Crescent<br>Lincoln<br>LN1 3PX  |
| Miss Fiona Warner           | 107 Dunkirk Road<br>Lincoln<br>LN1 3UJ  |
| Miss Samantha Mori          | 113 Dunkirk Road<br>Lincoln<br>Lincolnshire<br>LN1 3UJ                        |

## **Representations**

All representations are included on the agenda in full. Comments have been received as part of the application process and issues/concerns raised include predominantly a concern over parking provision, vehicular access, traffic and safety, size of amenity space for proposed occupants and bin storage for the proposed flats.

## **Consideration**

### **Accordance with National and Local Planning Policy**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out three overarching objectives (social, economic, and environmental) to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Paragraph 8 states that the overall planning balance must look across all three strands and development should be pursued in a positive way.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF outlines that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay

Paragraph 123 states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as

much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.

Paragraph 124 suggests that decisions should:

- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
- b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;
- c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
- d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.

Paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The application is for the conversion of a former public house to residential flats and the erection of 3 new two storey dwellings and therefore the following policies are relevant:

- Policy S1 - The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy S3 - Housing in the Lincoln Urban Area, Main Towns and Market Towns
- Policy S6 - Design Principles for Efficient Buildings
- Policy S7 - Reducing Energy Consumption - Residential Development

- Policy S13 - Reducing Energy Consumption in Existing Buildings
- Policy S49 - Parking Provision
- Policy S53 - Design and Amenity
- Policy S61 - Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains

The application would generally be in accordance with Central Lincoln Local Plan (CLLP) Policy S3 which supports housing development within the Lincoln Urban Area in principle. The development is within an existing residential area and previous developments have been granted and built out elsewhere on Dunkirk Road and Anzio Crescent. In principle a new dwelling in this location is acceptable.

The original proposal has been revised to accommodate additional off street, car parking spaces to satisfy the requirements of the Local Highway Authority. Further information has also been sought to seek to ensure that the developments are in accordance with the authorities' energy efficiency policies and to achieve a net gain in Biodiversity on site.

Additional supporting documents have been submitted including:

- Revised Layout Plan
- Landscaping Plan
- Biodiversity Metric
- Energy Statement and associated documents

### **Impact on Amenity of Neighbouring Properties and Future Occupiers of the Premises**

The proposed scheme can be split into two elements, the first seeking to change the use of the existing Social Club and Public House. The development would create 6 new self-contained flats within the existing building with some minor external alterations to facilitate this new layout. The conversion would create 4 one bed and 2 two bed units all of which would be well above the minimum requirements as identified within the Governments technical standards document, ensuring that the amenity of the proposed occupiers is of an acceptable level. Each unit has sufficient circulation space as well as adequate openings within the existing property, providing a good level of natural light and outlook.

The proposed external changes include the removal of one of the first floor central window and ground floor doors on the principal western elevation, the removal of the existing lean to on the southern elevation and the inclusion of a new door and ground floor window and the inclusion of 4 new first floor windows on the northern elevation adjacent to the existing table tennis club. Finally, to the eastern, rear elevation the development proposes the installation of 4 new windows to the ground floor, matching the same size and proportions of the existing. The changes are minimal and the new openings to the first floor on the northern elevation would be positioned over 30m from the nearest residential properties on Dunkirk Road. Additional openings to the eastern elevation would also be located on the ground floor, ensuring that there would be no new relationships created to overlook existing neighbouring properties.

The existing remaining windows would serve the new flats and there would be a separation distance of approximately 15m to the nearest dwellings to the east and over 30m to the west. Whilst the eastern elevation would face windows on the side elevation of no's 202/204 Dunkirk Road, these are existing and would arguably create less activity than that of the public house and pool room they currently serve.

The creation of 6 new flats would create an increase in movements to and from the property as a result of the sub-division of the space, however, this in itself would not be considered to result in an unduly harmful impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties within an area that is predominantly residential.

Bin storage has been identified on the revised submitted site plan, indicating ample room for storage on site, creating an enclosed area for the 6 new flats.

The second element of the proposal seeks to erect 3 two storey dwellings within an area of the existing car park, facing Dunkirk Road. The proposals seeks to create a row of 3 two bed terraced dwellings, taking influence from the existing dwellings on the estate. The dwellings would be positioned approximately 12.5m from the existing dwellings to the opposite side of Dunkirk road and whilst this would create a close relationship between windows, this is not an unusual relationship within the existing estate when taking into account similar built out developments to the west. The properties would have a separation of approximately 21m to the rear elevation towards existing dwellings on the east side of Mons Road and approximately 18m to the west. Given the existing character of the estate it is not considered that any of these relationships would be unduly harmful.

With regards to the position and height of the proposed dwellings, the two storey units take into account the existing dwelling types on the estate and would be very similar in design to those to the north. The dwellings are slightly wider than those originally built as part of the larger estate to accommodate an increased floor space, however, this would not cause harm to any neighbouring properties through loss of light or appear overbearing towards any existing dwelling.

The new dwellings provide 70m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace, which is over the minimum standards as described within the technical space standards. Each dwelling has an enclosed amenity space to the rear, which whilst smaller than the average existing dwelling in the area, provides an area that is commensurate to the size and the dwelling and would be considered to be adequate.

In summary, it is considered that the proposed conversion and new dwellings on site can be accommodated without having a detrimental impact on surrounding properties. The proposal would therefore be in accordance with the requirements of Policy S53 in terms of impact on residential amenity.

### **Impact on Visual Amenity and Design**

The change of use of the existing post office club would result in very minimal external alterations, retaining the existing footprint with the removal of an offshoot to the southern elevation. Existing openings would be altered and a number of new openings would be added to accommodate the layout of the new flats. All new openings would match the existing in size, proportions and detail ensuring that there would be very minimal change to the external fabric of the premises.

The design of the new dwellings takes influence from the existing terraced blocks on Dunkirk Road with similar overall size and scale of the existing. The houses would replicate the front gable detail and would have similar opening proportions and canopies above the entrance doors. The material palette would make use of both brick and render that both matches and compliments the surrounding properties. Whilst the general information on materials has

been established it would be deemed reasonable to condition further details of the specific materials to be used as part of the development should permission be granted.

The development as a whole includes areas of soft landscaping alongside the private garden space for the new dwellings, resulting in a significant improvement from the existing hard standing and car parking spaces on site.

Taking account these elements, officers are satisfied the proposed conversion and new dwellings on site would assimilate into the surroundings and would not have a harmful visual impact, in turn the proposal would be in line with Policy S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

## **Contaminated Land**

The City Council's Contaminated Land Officer has advised that due to past uses on the site there is the potential for significant contamination to be present. As no preliminary risk assessment has been submitted prior to determination, it is considered reasonable to apply the full set of contamination conditions to any permission to ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised and appropriately dealt with where necessary.

## **Energy Efficiency**

The application includes an energy statement which underlines how the proposals are broadly in accordance with policies S6, S7 and S13.

The statement confirms that the proposed new town houses have been orientated on a north south axis to maximise opportunities for solar gain, and minimise winter cold wind heat loss. A fabric first approach has been adopted utilising timber frame construction which ensures a more sustainable form of construction and provides for better thermal performance and better air tightness values. Air source heat pumps are proposed as the primary source of heating, supplemented with the installation of Photovoltaic solar panels. This approach ensures this new build element of the proposal meets the requirements of Policy S7. Full energy assessments have been undertaken for the new build element of this proposal and any permission would be conditioned in accordance with the submitted details and verified later, prior to the occupation of the properties.

The conversion of the existing social club would ensure that all the new walls, floor, roof & glazing will meet, as a minimum the latest Limiting U-values for fabric elements in existing buildings other than dwellings from the latest Part L, Volume 2 of the Approved Document of the current Building Regulations and upgraded elements will meet the u-values identified in the Conversion summary report. SAP assessments have been undertaken for the conversion element of the proposals and a summary documents has been produced and submitted as part of this application which demonstrates compliance with Policy S13.

The requirements of local planning policies S6, S7 and have therefore been demonstrated.

## **Landscaping, Ecology and Biodiversity**

With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain, the local plan contains Policy S61 which requires all qualifying development to achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain. The new policy was adopted in April 2023, which echoes the government's national mandatory biodiversity net

gain requirement which is due to be brought into force in April 2024. Whilst this is not currently a mandatory requirement the application has endeavoured to include new soft landscaping and an overall net gain.

The existing site is predominantly covered by hardstanding, either covered by building footprint or hard-surfaced impermeable car parking. The revised site and landscaping drawings identify the proposed soft landscaping on site. The drawings are accompanied by a Biodiversity Metric and a preliminary Ecological Appraisal in support of the application.

The submitted Biodiversity Metric identifies that there would be a significant gain as expected from an existing hard surfaced site. The gain would go above and beyond the 10% identified in the policy and would satisfy the requirements within policy S61.

### **Highway Safety, Access and Parking**

The original site layout proposed the provision of 9 car parking spaces for the development. Following consultation on the proposals written representations received have predominantly raised concern with the parking provision within the proposed development.

Following a request for further information from the Highways Authority and receipt of neighbour responses, the application has been revised to accommodate further spaces, providing 2 spaces for each new build dwelling, 1 for each individual flat and an additional visitor space. A further consultation with Lincolnshire County Council (as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority) has concluded that the proposed development would now provide satisfactory parking provision on site for this specific location.

Following an additional consultation period the general neighbour response welcomed further parking spaces, but highlighted concerns with the existing junction of Dunkirk Road and Mons road and the potential issues with the new access and vehicular movements from and to the site. The Highway Authority have not provided any comment on this and have concluded that the proposals would not be expected to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network or increase surface water flood risk. As there would be no objections from professional colleagues at the County Council officers would not consider that the revised proposals would result in any safety concerns and should not be refused on these grounds.

Comments have been made on the potential conflict with new street equipment and the new dropped kerb access, however, this would be the responsibility of the applicants to ensure they attain the required permissions for this work through the Highways Authority. The relevant informatives will be included on a decision notice, subject to approval.

Cycle storage provision has not specifically been included within the submitted site plan, however, there is adequate space for this in both the private garden space and communal space around the proposed flats.

### **Conclusion**

The development would provide new sustainable and energy efficient housing stock on an existing brownfield site, converting an unused building and providing a number of new build units. The proposals would be of a suitable size and scale commensurate to the locality and would not result in any undue harm to existing residents within the area. The development would also create a net gain in biodiversity on site.



Technical matters are to the satisfaction of the relevant consultees and can be dealt with where required by condition. The proposals would therefore be in accordance with the requirements of CLLP Policies and the NPPF.

### **Recommendation**

That the application is Granted Conditionally

Conditions:

- Materials
- Landscaping scheme to be implemented as drawing and BNG metric
- Standard Contamination conditions
- Energy efficiency measures incorporated and verified