



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL WEST

Date: 18 June 2010

Subject: APPLICATION 10/01598/FU - CHANGE OF USE AND ALTERATIONS OF PUBLIC HOUSE TO AN ART STUDIO AND ARTS EDUCATION CENTRE WITH A TWO BEDROOM FIRST FLOOR FLAT AND A SECOND FLOOR RESIDENT CARETAKERS FLAT AT THE WOOLPACK INN, BONDGATE, OTLEY LS21 3AB.

APPLICANT

R Sabey

DATE VALID

15 April 2010

TARGET DATE

10 June 2010

Electoral Wards Affected:

Otley and Yeadon

No

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION subject to the following conditions

1. 3 year time limit for implementation
2. Development to accord with approved plans
3. Details of external walling materials to be approved and implemented
4. Details of bin storage and cycle storage to be approved and implemented.
5. Details of sound attenuation scheme to be approved and implemented
6. Details of doors and windows to be approved and implemented
7. Stonework to be made good
8. Site frontage to be laid out and maintained as an outdoor amenity space in accordance with surface materials, planting and boundary treatments to be approved and implemented.
9. In recommending the granting of planning permission for this development it is considered all material planning considerations including those arising from the comments of any statutory and other consultees, public representations about the application and Government guidance and policy as detailed in the Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements, and (as specified below) the content and policies within Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), the Leeds Unitary Development Plan 2006 Review (UDP).

UDP Policies: GP5 ;T24 ; N15; N17 BD6

On balance, it is considered the development would not give rise to any unacceptable consequences for the environment, community or other public interests of acknowledged importance.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 The application has been brought to Plans Panel as the recommendation is for approval and the Highway Authority objects to the proposal due to the lack of off-street parking provision. As this is an objection from a statutory technical consultee the application cannot be determined using delegated powers.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1 The proposal seeks consent to change the use of a public house to an art studio and arts education centre, with a separate two bedroom first floor flat. The Woolpack is a Grade II listed building - a separate application for Listed Building Consent is also under consideration.
- 2.2 The proposal is to use the ground floor for educational, music and other arts projects for visiting groups of young people, school groups, learning disabled groups and community groups. It is also intended to provide weekend courses for adults in arts disciplines.
- 2.3 The proposal seeks to create three education rooms on the ground floor in the existing bar area. These would be equipped with computer workstations, and would be used for educational courses on subjects such as music technology, film production, and other related disciplines. It is stated that these rooms could also be used for music practice and would be suitably sound proofed for that purpose.
- 2.4 The present kitchen area would be converted for use as a recording studio and would be soundproofed accordingly. This would be used during educational projects as well as hired out. The outbuildings are proposed to be converted to two artist's studios to provide workspace for artists.
- 2.5 On the first floor it is proposed to create a self contained flat, which would be separately accessed from a new access to be created to the side of the property by reinstating an existing blocked-in door. The remaining area of the first floor would be used as office or storage space ancillary to the ground floor arts centre.
- 2.6 It is proposed that the existing second floor residential accommodation be used as a flat for a resident caretaker in respect of the ground floor arts centre. This accommodation would be accessed via the existing internal staircase.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The site is an existing two and three storey public house situated in the town centre of Otley. The premises are not occupied and have been vacant for some time. The building is Grade II Listed. The listing description reads: "Eighteenth century, two storey, rough rendered with painted plinth. Stone slate roof with rendered stack. Two windows, one of a single and one of three lights, hung sashes with later glazing bars. Door in stone architrave. Rear premises entangled with those of Ring

of Bells Public House, New Market. No's 10 to 34 (even) and 38 to 44 (even) form a group."

3.2 The building is of stone construction and is rendered to the front elevation, but not to other elevations. Externally, four original window openings facing Mercury Row have been crudely boarded up, while an original doorway facing the narrow lane to the west has historically been blocked with stone.

3.3 The premises are adjoined by a shop at 16 Bondgate and the Ring O'Bells public house which faces New Market. To the west there is a narrow unnamed street.

3.4 The premises are located within the Otley Town Centre and the Otley Conservation Area. Surrounding properties are predominantly two storey and of stone construction, and include shops, a restaurant and public house. Nearby Mercury House is a poor quality 1960's building faced in brick and cladding materials.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

4.1 None

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS

5.1 The application was preceded by a pre-application submission in March 2010. Written officer advice was broadly supportive of the proposals.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

6.1 The application has been publicised by means of site notices. Seven representations have been received as follows:

- Representation from Ward Member Councillor Colin Campbell which states that "given that this building is in a sensitive location in the Conservation Area should we be asking for more details of the forecourt, it would be inappropriate to cover it in cars"

Three letters from members of the local community which make general comments as follows:

- While loss of a historic pub is regrettable, conversion may be required for its survival;
- Application does not refer to the Otley Conservation Area Appraisal which identifies the frontage area as a positive space within a significant view at this point on Bondgate;
- The frontage space is a significant event space for the town, what controls are there to prevent it becoming a car park?
- The historic fabric of the building should be preserved;
- Noise has been a problem in the past when music was played.

Additionally two letters of support have been received, one from a local resident and one from Otley Chamber of Trade:

- We should welcome the bringing back into use of a characterful building, particularly as the proposed use would retain public access to the building;
- The present state of the building has an adverse impact on the locality;
- Lack of viability of continuing with the current use.

Otley Town Council has commented on the application, and states that while the Council welcomes the development, it has concerns that the plans do not specify sufficiently how the parking at the front of the building would be controlled. The Town Council considers that parking at this location is very sensitive and must be managed soundly.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

7.1 **Environmental Health** - A recording studio is shown and it is stated that it will be sound insulated but no details are given. It is essential that suitable works are carried out prior to the studio being occupied to protect the amenity of local residents. A flat is to be situated on the first floor and it is essential that the floor/ceiling between the arts centre and flat is suitably sound insulated

7.2 **Highway Authority** - The site is located in the S2 centre of Otley. Car parking is available on the forecourt to the front of the building. However, no car parking layout has been submitted for comment. It is clear from the information submitted that at times there will be a need for disabled user parking, mini-bus parking/drop-off as well as parking for staff and other visitors. Secure cycle parking is also required.

A parking layout plan which maximises the use of the forecourt for staff and visitors including space for a mini-bus must be submitted for comment. The layout must be designed such that all vehicles can enter and leave the site in a forward gear (reversing to/from Bondgate in this location is unacceptable). The layout must also include space for 2 covered/lockable cycle spaces and a motorcycle parking space with ground anchorage bar.

CONCLUSION: The proposal is not acceptable as submitted. The applicant must submit a car parking layout plan which demonstrates that the forecourt to the front of the premises can accommodate the parking demands of the proposals.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

8.1 Leeds UDP (Review 2006):

GP5 – proposals should resolve detailed planning criteria

T24 - Car parking guidelines

N15 – where the original use of a Listed Building is no longer required, proposals for a change of use will be favourably considered providing the new and adapted use does not diminish the special architectural or historic value of the building and its setting

N17 – wherever possible existing detailing and features of Listed Buildings should be preserved; the original plan form should be preserved where it contributes to the special character of the building

BD6 - all alterations should respect the scale, form, detailing and materials of the original building

BC7 – development within conservation areas will normally be required to be in traditional local materials

National guidance:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development.

PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

- Vitality and viability of Otley town Centre
- Setting of the listed building
- The character of Otley Conservation Area
- Highway safety

- Residential amenity

10.0 APPRAISAL

10.1 Vitality and viability of Otley town Centre

10.2 The applicant proposes to make the premises a permanent base for the Big Hoo Ha community arts project. The Big Hoo-Ha Co started life in 1999, the idea behind it being to establish a pool of artists in various art forms to deliver high-quality workshops and projects, with the emphasis being on work with young people, and people of all ages with learning or physical disability. Up until December 2005 it was run by sole principal Richard Sabey, collaborating with various other artists in projects involving music, drama, dance, film and visual arts. The Big Hoo-Ha Co became an unincorporated non-profit making community association in December 2005, with five trustees from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

10.3 Both the existing and proposed uses would be defined as 'main town centre uses' by national guidance such as PPS4. There would therefore not be any harm to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Also the addition of a flat at first floor level should be welcomed in this respect as it would help to bring life to the town centre outside of trading hours. While the loss of a pub is to some extent regrettable, there are not objections to this in principle. If this were in a more isolated position this loss would be of more significance, but given the relative abundance of such facilities in the locality then its loss would not have a significant impact upon the town centre.

10.4 Setting of the Listed Building;

10.5 As referred to above, this application for planning permission is accompanied by a concurrent application for Listed Building Consent. Officers are therefore currently considering the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the Listed Building as part of the latter. The proposals are considered to be broadly acceptable subject to the receipt of further detailed plans regarding materials, door and window treatments etc. However it is appropriate to also consider the impact upon the wider setting of the Listed Building as a material planning consideration.

10.6 While internally there is not a great deal of historical fabric surviving, as a general principle special attention should be paid to the possible impact of the proposals on the special architectural or historic value of the building and its setting. The building is of eighteenth century origin, and is rough rendered to the front elevation with a stone slate roof. A number of timber sliding sash windows survive. The applicant proposes to retain and renovate these where possible. Where this is not possible they are proposed to be replaced exactly in terms of materials, glazing sub-division, opening style etc.

10.7 There is a stone flag floor to part of the building, and the applicant intends to lay a false floor over this in order to make the surface usable for disabled people. However the original flags would be protected and left in situ for any future use of the building. The application proposes a sub-division of the existing space, including the partition of the existing bar area into three education rooms. However the corridor layout would be retained. Externally the only alterations proposed are the re-opening of four windows on the Mercury Row elevation with the installation of quartered timber sliding sash windows, the re-opening of an historical doorway facing onto the unadopted lane and minor improvements to the frontage forecourt.

- 10.8 The forecourt to the premises has in the past been used for a variety of purposes, including as a semi-public event space during festivals etc. It has also functioned as an outdoor drinking space for the pub, and has been laid out with benches and tables. However it has also been used at least in part for informal car parking. The application indicates that some limited use of the forecourt for temporary parking would be desired. However the application also indicates that it would be laid out with seating and planters. The Otley Conservation Area Appraisal identifies this area as a “positive space” and part of the “significant view” along Bondgate. The protection of this space, due to its impact upon the setting of the building, as well as the wider street scene, is therefore important.
- 10.9 The character of Otley Conservation Area
- 10.10 The main impact upon the character and appearance of the O.C.A. will be the treatment of forecourt frontage area and any external alterations. In line with policy BC7 of the Leeds UDP Review (2006) only traditional local materials are to be used for restoration works such as windows. Careful attention should also be given to the design and quality of any boundary and landscape treatments.
- 10.11 The application indicates that the frontage area would be laid out relatively informally with planters etc. However information regarding permanent boundary treatments is lacking. It is therefore proposed that a condition be imposed requiring full details of these. They should themselves contribute positively to the conservation area in terms of design and materials etc. High quality materials such as local stone will be sought for walls.
- 10.12 Signage should be sensitively related to the host building and the street scene in terms of character and scale. Illuminated signs are usually only permitted in conservation areas where they do not detract from the building or the street scene. Although these would be the subject of a separate application the applicant has indicated that it would be the intention that these would replicate in size and style the existing signage to the public house, including the sign board to the front elevation as well as possibly the free standing sign.
- 10.13 Highway safety
- 10.14 As the property is located in the designated Otley Town Centre then it benefits from being in a relatively sustainable and accessible location and the town bus station is nearby. Officers therefore consider that specific off-street parking provision is not necessary for the proposed community/arts use of the building, which in most respects is less intensive than the previous use as a pub.

- 10.15 The applicant has provided information within the Design and Access Statement to the effect that it is considered that the proposal would generate a limited amount of parking demand. The two staff who would work at the centre live locally and would generally walk to the premises, unless working off-site. There may occasionally be additional staff who work as project assistants. The main demand would come from groups attending the premises. It is anticipated there would be two visiting school or community groups per week, each group being a maximum of 15 people. On some occasions these groups may be disabled, although in these cases such a group would be a maximum of ten people. These groups would be likely to arrive in a minibus. Other groups attending the site would be young people attending out-of-school projects and others attending educational courses. As these groups would both be principally local people it is not anticipated they would generate a significant parking demand. Finally, the applicant also hopes to run weekend arts courses for adults, and suggests that these users may require weekend parking; as well as other occasional users such as those hiring studio premises etc.
- 10.16 The Highway Authority does consider that off-street parking provision should be provided to a level of at least one space suitable for mini-bus parking, and one staff space. As reversing onto this section of Bondgate would be detrimental to highway safety, then it is recommended by Highways officers that a vehicle circulation route be provided such that vehicles would access the site via the unadopted lane, and exit through the existing forecourt area. This would of course require the applicants red line boundary to be amended to include the access. The applicant would also need to gain control over this third party land which is not part of the public highway which may not be feasible. There is in addition the potential safety detriment of vehicles attempting to manoeuvre in this pedestrian-dominated space.
- 10.17 Officers consider that the sustainable town centre location of the premises means that specific parking provision for the proposed use is not necessary. Furthermore, this application is an important opportunity to upgrade a key space in the Otley Conservation Area as an attractive pedestrian space. Overall it is considered that the benefits of this far outweigh those of providing two extra parking spaces given the availability of parking generally in the town centre.

10.18 Residential Amenity

There is a flat attached to the adjacent premises which has a balcony area which overlooks the frontage of the premises. However, this flat is itself situated over the adjacent Ring O' Bells public house and in view of the existing use of the premises as a pub and the town centre location it is not considered that the proposals would result in a loss of residential amenity to the occupiers. A planning condition recommends that sound proofing measures be carried out to the music recording studio parts of the building.

10.19 Impact upon the amenity of occupiers of the proposed flat

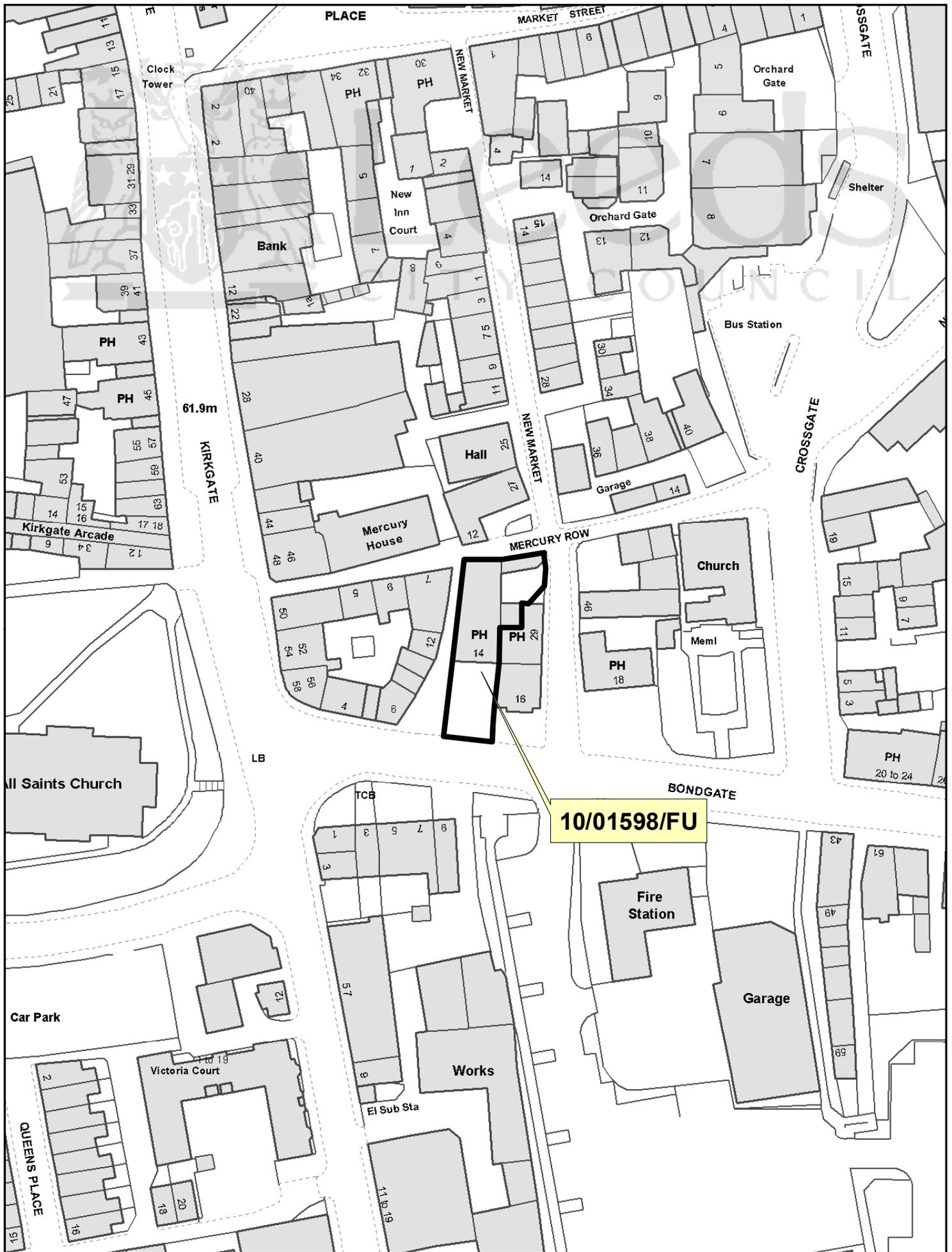
- 10.20 The proposed flat would not have access to any private amenity space. However as this is an existing situation, and given the context of a Listed Building in the town centre, then this would be acceptable. Clearly the proposed separate flat would be located over a number of rooms which would be likely to generate a certain amount of noise and activity. As referred to above the ground floor rooms would be soundproofed to ensure that the amenity of residential occupiers is not adversely affected.

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 Overall it is considered that the proposal to bring back into use a building which has stood empty for some time as an arts education centre should be broadly welcomed. The town centre is an appropriate location in principle for such a use, and it is not considered that the proposal would cause a loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers. Alterations to the building would be relatively low key, and would not have a negative impact upon either the Listed Building or the Otley Conservation Area. Additionally the proposal represents an opportunity to create an enhanced pedestrian space in a prominent location at the front of the building.

Background Papers:

Application files: 10/01598/FU



WEST PLANS PANEL

Scale 1/1000

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