

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to an objection from a local council and at least one non-councillor resident, on planning grounds material to the application (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part 3: Scheme of Delegation to Officers from Full Council) .

Description of Site:

The site is a two storey end-of-terrace building located on the south side of the High Street in Epping. A retail unit is located at ground floor level with storage on the floors above. The building has a Grade II listing attributed to it and it is within the Epping Conservation Area. It is not within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Description of Proposal:

Change of use of floors 1 & 2 from retail and storage to residential use for 4 x 1 bedroom flats including a rear roof addition at second floor level.

Relevant Site History:

EPF/0640/78 – Alterations and extension to 2nd floor for additional storage space (Linked to LB/EPF/0018/78) (10/07/1978) – Grant Permission (With Conditions)

LB/EPF/0018/78 – Details of alterations and extension to 2nd floor for additional storage space (Linked to EPF/0640/78) (10/07/1978) – Grant Permission (With Conditions)

Planning Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

Policies Applied:

Adopted Local Plan and Alterations 2008

HC10 – Works to Listed Buildings

HC13 – Change of Use of Listed Buildings

Epping Forest District Local Plan (Submission Version) 2017:

The Epping Forest Local Plan Submission Version 2017 was submitted for independent examination in September 2018. Accordingly, it can be endorsed as a material consideration to be used in the determination of planning applications and be given appropriate weight in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

Paragraph 48 provides that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and

- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

In general terms it is considered that the Submission Version of the Plan is at an advanced stage of preparation and the policies are considered to be consistent with the NPPF. As regards unresolved objections, some policies within the Submission Version have more unresolved objections than others. All of these factors have been taken into consideration in arriving at the weight accorded to each of the relevant policies in the context of the proposed development listed below:

DM7 – Heritage Assets
DM8 – Heritage at Risk

Summary of Representations:

No. of neighbours consulted: 10, no comments received

EPPING PARISH TOWN COUNCIL: OBJECT to this application. The proposal is not in keeping with a Conservation Area. The Committee are also concerned about the size of the four flats which is another issue Epping suffers from extreme parking pressures and allowing additional residences with insufficient parking will exacerbate those parking problems and have a detrimental effect on the surrounding area, resulting in unsympathetic change.

EPPING SOCIETY – Object to the proposal, as submitted, for the following reason - The overlooking from the proposed new windows on the first and second floor will impact on private rear gardens in Hemnall Street - especially numbers 44, 46 and 48.
No parking is proposed for the 4 one bed flats. This will impact on the surrounding area.

Planning Considerations

No.104 forms the end of a terrace of four Grade II listed buildings (nos.104-110). The buildings date from the 18th century and have prominent red brick frontages (other than the rendered frontage of no.110) on the High Street which make a positive contribution to this part of the Epping Conservation Area.

The frontages retain much of their 18th century character and traditional appearance, with the addition of a modern shopfront to no.104, but to the rear the buildings are much altered. The rear of no.104 in particular was extensively altered and extended in the 1970s. The front range is still discernible as a 18th century building but the original rear wall and internal layout has largely been lost and a large rear extension of modernist design, including elements of flat roof, obscures any historic elements of the building from the rear. Internally, the 1970s alterations dominate and although the remnants of some historic walls to the front of the building can be discerned, the internal space is dominated by the open-plan rear extension with its central open-tread timber staircase and large timber roof trusses.

It is proposed to convert the existing office and storage space on the first and second floors to flats and, in doing so, to rework the internal layout. Officer pre-application advice on the scheme has been provided. The internal layout dates from the 1970s and is largely open-plan on all three floors. The removal of the staircase and the insertion of stud partitions to form flats and rooms within therefore raises no objection as it will not impact on any historic fabric or any

surviving historic layout. Arguably, the reintroduction of room divisions to the front range partially reinstates its historic use as a house and the compartments within; this part of the building would not historically have been entirely open-plan. New staircases are proposed but again, there is no impact on any elements of special interest.

Externally the front elevation will remain unchanged. To the rear it is proposed to introduce new fenestration, remove the existing external staircase creating an entrance door in its place, and introduce a dormer roof extension as well as alter the roof lights on top of the building. The contemporary design approach used is appropriate given the age and building form of the rear extension and the proposed windows add some interest to an otherwise blank wall.

Whilst the dormer roof extension is a bold, contemporary design with a flat roof, something which is usually unacceptable in extensions to listed buildings, in this case the proposed design of the existing 1970s extension makes this an exception case.

Conclusion:

In summary, the change of use and the rear alterations and additions are acceptable and complies with the relevant Local Plan policies.