

DELEGATED

AGENDA NO. 7

REPORT TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE: 10 May 2006

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

06/0799/COU

**HARTBURN POST OFFICE, 73 HARTBURN VILLAGE, STOCKTON-ON-TEES
CHANGE OF USE FROM POST OFFICE TO 2 NO. FLATS AND TWO STOREY
EXTENSION TO SIDE.**

UPDATE REPORT

As detailed in the main report the applicant has submitted superseding plans showing the proposed car parking to the front of the property. The consultation period for comment to neighbours and Ward Councillors did not expire until 6th May 2006. This report therefore updates Members on the additional views received.

Since the Committee report was prepared, 15 letters of objection have been received from neighbouring properties and one letter of objection from the Ward Councillor. The comments are summarised below:

- The provision of car parking to the front of the dwelling will set a precedent for the village and be out of character with the conservation area
- The proposal for the bow window and UPVC windows are out of character with the area.
- The majority of the properties in the conservation area have deep front gardens surrounded by hedges, which should be retained
- The area should be designated resident only parking then some objections will be withdrawn, as it would stop the decay of a building
- The local planning authority should prevent any unacceptable changes
- Changes like this result in areas devoid of greenery and the local character and charm is lost.
- Support the removal of cars from the side of the road, but object to the removal of the garden to create car parking spaces, however would prefer this from a road safety perspective and believes a 'green' space could be provided with hedgerows retained and improved so that it will not be detrimental to the village.
- The removal of the hedgerow is not in keeping with the recent conservation area document.
- A wildlife study should be carried out to assess the damage that this proposal will create.
- There is insufficient car parking for two flats.
- The post office closed at 5.30pm and the vehicles parked were only temporary not parked all day and night
- The driveway to the front is not a car parking area.

Set out below is the response to the issues raised above:

The proposed car parking to the front is accessed from a side road and the hedge around the remainder of the site is to be retained. A condition relating to the retention and supplementary planting of the existing hedge has been recommended. The Historic Buildings Officer has viewed the plans and has raised no objections to the provision of car parking to the front providing suitable materials are used. A condition relating to the materials used in the construction of the driveway has been suggested should the application be approved. Examples of existing hard standing areas can be seen at 85, 87 (The Masham), 89 and 93 Hartburn Village.

The description 'UPVC' windows as shown on the plans are an error. The applicant had not removed the 'upvc' description from the plans. This has now been amended and the wooden windows proposed are considered acceptable.

Whilst it would be desirable that hedges be retained, as outlined in the Conservation document, it cannot be controlled by the local planning authority as permission is not required for the removal of a hedge unless it falls within the criteria as defined in The Hedgerow Regulations Act 1997

Whilst there may be wildlife in the garden it would be unreasonable to request a study for a small garden area.

The requirements and provision of car parking for 2no flats and the highway implications are covered in the main report.

Many objectors comment that the existing hard standing to the front is not a car parking space, however this not a proposed car parking space for the development.

Resident only parking is not a planning issue.

One letter of support has been received from the Vendors of the property:

The property was been up for sale as a shop with a first floor flat for 15 months with no interest. The applicant wishes to convert to two flats, which will look better than a boarded up shop. Since closure of the Post Office where I received many deliveries and visitors to the shop, all traffic has ceased so any objections to the parking of two vehicles to the front does not add up. Fraser Road is a cul-de sac. Any Changes will enhance the site.

In addition, the applicant has submitted a letter to support his application:

- Any alterations carried out to the building will be in keeping with and enhance the fabric of the village
- The property has been used as a combined commercial and residential property without major parking problems or complaints.
- The off-road parking was at the insistence of the Highways Department.
- Any alterations to increase bedroom capacity would require the provision of off- street parking. Current rules would prevent any domestic upgrade, which would render the building unsaleable resulting in the building falling into a state of disrepair.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking the above letters into consideration, no change to the recommendation in the main report is necessary and it is recommended that the application be APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS as set out in that report.

Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services

Contact Officer: Elaine Atkinson – Telephone 01642 526062

Financial Implications

As report.

Environmental Implications

As Report

Community Safety Implications

N/A

Human Rights Implications

The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Background Papers

Stockton-on-Tees Adopted Local Plan (1997)
Planning Application 06/0799/COU

Ward and Ward Councillors

Ward **HARTBURN**

Ward Councillors Councillor Lupton and Councillor Laing