

**7A DCNE0009/1088/F & DCNE0009/1089/L - CONVERSION OF REDUNDANT UPPER FLOOR ACCOMMODATION TO & CREATE TWO SELF CONTAINED RESIDENTIAL DWELLING APARTMENTS, WITH ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL STAIRCASE  
7B ACCESS AND BALCONY. ALTERATIONS AND RE-ORDERING TO EXISTING UPPER FLOOR RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION FRONTING ONTO HIGH STREET ABOVE BANK PREMISES. 4 HIGH STREET, LEDBURY, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR8 1DY.**

**For: Languard Properties Limited per Hook Mason Ltd, 41 Widemarsh Street, Hereford, HR1 2ZB.**

**Date Received: 18 May 2009**

**Ward: Ledbury**

**Grid Ref: 71142, 37693**

**Expiry Date: 13 July 2009**

Local Member: Councillors ME Cooper, PJ Watts & JK Swinburne.

## **1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 This report relates to concurrent applications, one for planning permission and one for listed building consent.
- 1.2 The application site relates to 4 High Street. Ledbury. The building is a seventeenth century grade 2 listed. It would originally have been a house that was refronted in the eighteenth century. The frontage was again re-fronted with stone in the early twentieth century. It has a particularly interesting staircase. The brickwork within the roof space is of interest and there are some particularly interesting trusses that clearly date from an earlier period and probably have been reused.
- 1.3 The building is three storeys with a deep three storey nineteenth century rearward projection. That rearward "warehouse" projection has a high quality roof structure.
- 1.4 To the south of this rearward projection immediately adjacent to the site is a dwelling known as 'The Long House'. To the north of the site is the Burgage Hall.
- 1.5 The ground floor of the premises is still used as a bank. A single three bedroomed maisonette (Unit 1) exists above the bank over two floors.
- 1.6 The proposal under consideration is to create two two-bedroomed flats on the first and second floors of the rearward projection. This would involve both internal and external alterations to the building. The proposed alteration of significance is a staircase and balconies to the eastern rear gable end elevation. The balconies would only project some 1.2 metres from the rear elevation. It is proposed to provide an etched glazed screen to the southern sides of both balconies.
- 1.7 To the rear of the building a limited amenity space would be provided together with provision for four cars to park and manoeuvre. Access to this parking area would be from the rear (east) via an area known as 'Old Tannery Yard'. This area is already partially surfaced and has been used

for the parking of motor vehicles for some time. Indeed this area can currently be used as parking incidental to the lawful use of the site.

## 2. Policies

### 2.1 National Planning Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 1	– ‘Delivering Sustainable Development’
Planning Policy Statement 6	– ‘Town Centres’
Planning Policy Guidance Note 13	– ‘Transport’
Planning Policy Guidance Note 15	– ‘Planning and the Historic Environment’

### 2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007

S1	–	Sustainable development	
S2	–	Development requirements	
S3	–	Housing	
S5	–	Town centres and retail	
S6	–	Transport	
S7	–	Natural and historic heritage	
TCR2	–	Vitality and viability	
H1	–	Hereford and the market towns: settlement boundaries and residential areas	established
H13	–	Sustainable Residential Design	
H14	–	Re-using previously developed land and buildings	
H18	–	Alterations and extensions	
HBA1	–	Alterations and extensions to listed buildings	
HBA3	–	Change of use of listed buildings	
HBA6	–	New development within conservation areas	

## 3. Planning History

3.1 None of direct relevance

## 4. Consultation Summary

### Statutory Consultations

4.1 The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings has not objected.

4.2 English Heritage has not objected.

### Internal Council Advice

4.3 The Conservation Section is satisfied with the proposals that have been the subject of extensive discussions. They welcome the restoration of this important historic building. They make the point that securing a viable use for of the entire building should assist in securing its long-term conservation.

## 5. Representations

5.1 Ledbury Town Council wish to see the applications approved.

5.2 The occupiers of the neighbouring residential dwelling known as 'The Long House' object on the following summarised grounds:-

- Loss of privacy to the kitchen windows at 'The Long House';
- Loss of light to windows in northern elevation of 'The Long House';
- Lack of space for pedestrians to enter and leave the site;
- Noise and disturbance arising from manoeuvring motor vehicles;
- Potential damage to adjoining listed buildings;
- Adverse impact of parking area upon setting of listed buildings;
- The existing entrance gates should be removed to prevent noise and disturbance from idling engines; and
- The proposal would be better if a single new dwelling were proposed.

5.3 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Northern Planning Services, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

## **6. Officer's Appraisal**

- 6.1 The site lies within Ledbury in a highly sustainable Town Centre location. Indeed the location is such that reliance upon the use of the private motor vehicle should be limited. Development Plan policies allow for new residential development in Ledbury.
- 6.2 It needs to be recognised that from a strategic point of view, ultimately the more dwellings allowed within the boundaries of existing towns means that less land needs to be released from the open countryside in the longer term. Generally the need for additional housing arises from the growth in the number of households rather than the population itself. Government advice and planning policies encourage making the most efficient use of land and buildings by maximising densities. As a consequence the provision of two two-bedroomed units rather than a single larger unit is welcomed.
- 6.3 A further benefit of the proposed development is that it would secure a viable and active use of the rear "warehouse" element of the listed building. Securing active uses throughout listed buildings is the best way to attempt to secure their future maintenance and retention.
- 6.4 The detail of the conversion itself is considered to safeguard the special character of the listed building.
- 6.5 It is desirable for each dwelling to have an outdoor space. The proposed balconies would provide such outdoor space. Both balconies have a depth of approximately 1.2 metres. However, the balcony at first floor level is wider. The residents of 'The Long House' expressed concern with regard the originally deposited plans, that persons standing on these balconies would unduly overlook the first floor kitchen windows of 'The Long House'. The case officer shared their view and following an on-site meeting secured amended plans that provide an etched glass screen to the southern flank elevations of these balconies. The first of these screens at first floor level would be some 2.8 metres from 'The Long House' whilst the second screen at second floor level would be some 4 metres distant. These etched screens would extend well above eye level. Appropriately etched glass will safeguard privacy and would not result in any loss of light. I am recommending a condition to control the precise glazing
- 6.6 Whilst the history of the site may not be entirely clear, it appears that the area to the rear of the property has been used for the parking of motor vehicles by the bank staff and/or the occupiers of the dwelling above the bank for some time. Whilst the objectors are correct that the current owners have top-dressed this area in the last year, photographic evidence suggests that prior to that the land was a mix of concrete hardstanding and overgrown scrub vegetation. Indeed it is understood that there have been vehicular access rights to this area since the 1950's which

suggests that it has been used for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles for a considerable period of time.

- 6.7 The proposed parking provision of four spaces, comprising two spaces for retained flat 1 and one space for each of the new flats is considered to be satisfactory in this town centre location. The manoeuvring area meets the requisite standards. The manoeuvring area is such that damage to adjoining buildings should not occur. However, if an accident were to occur that would be a private matter, presumably dealt with by the parties' insurance companies.
- 6.8 The precise surfacing material for this area needs to be controlled by condition as its appearance needs to be controlled. Clearly the surfacing material would need to safeguard the setting of the adjoining listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.9 To remove the existing gates would in my view be a retrograde step as the character of these plots is as physically enclosed spaces.
- 6.10 The area for pedestrians to access the site would be tight if all cars are parked. However, this is not considered a sufficient reason to refuse the application.
- 6.11 It is not considered that there would be an undue level of noise and disturbance arising from manoeuvring vehicles.
- 6.12 In summary the proposal would provide two additional dwellings for small households in Ledbury. It would secure the re-use of the entirety of a listed building assisting in its future retention and make a positive contribution to the viability and vitality of the Town Centre. The detail of the proposal is also considered to be acceptable subject to conditions.

## RECOMMENDATION

**A) That Planning Permission (DCNE0009/1088/F) be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:**

**1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)) – 12 months**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

**2 Prior to commencement of the development hereby permitted the following matters shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for their written approval:-**

- **Written details of the materials to be used to surface the car parking and manoeuvring areas together with surface water drainage arrangements if an impermeable surface is proposed;**
- **A sample of the etched glass to be used in the glazed screen on the southern elevations of the balconies;**
- **Written details and samples of all external materials;**
- **Large scale drawings of all internal and external joinery together with written details as to their finishes;**
- **Written details of all rainwater goods;**
- **The location and design of cycle parking facilities**

**The development shall not commence until the Local Planning Authority has given such written approval. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved plans.**

**Reasons:**

- 1) To ensure that the special character and appearance of the listed building is conserved;
  - 2) To safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation area;
  - 3) To safeguard the setting of the listed building;
  - 4) To ensure adequate cycle parking provision;
  - 5) To ensure that the glazing is sufficiently etched to safeguard the privacy of the occupiers of the dwelling known as 'The Long House'.
- 3 Prior to the first occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted the approved car parking areas, turning manoeuvring area(s) and cycle parking provision shall be fully implemented. Thereafter these areas shall be maintained and kept available for such use.

**Reasons:** To ensure satisfactory vehicle and cycle parking facilities.

- 4 Prior to the first occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted the balconies shall be provided with the etched glazed screens as detailed upon the approved plans. Thereafter these glazed screens shall remain in-situ and be maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To safeguard the privacy of the occupiers of the dwelling house to the south known as 'The Long House'.

**INFORMATIVES:**

- 1 N15 - Reasons for the Grant of Planning Permission
- 2 N19 - Avoidance of doubt - Approved Plans

B) That Listed Building Consent (DCNE0009/1089/L) be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

- 1 B01 (Time limit for commencement (Listed Building Consent))
- 2 Prior to commencement of the works hereby permitted the following matters shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for their written approval:-

- Written details and samples of all external materials;
- Large scale drawings of all internal and external joinery together with written details as to their finishes;
- Written details of all rainwater goods

The works shall not commence until the Local Planning Authority has given such written approval. The works shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To ensure that the special character and appearance of the listed building is conserved.

**INFORMATIVES:**

- 1 N15 - Reasons for the Grant of Listed Building Consent
- 2 N19 - Avoidance of doubt - Approved Plans

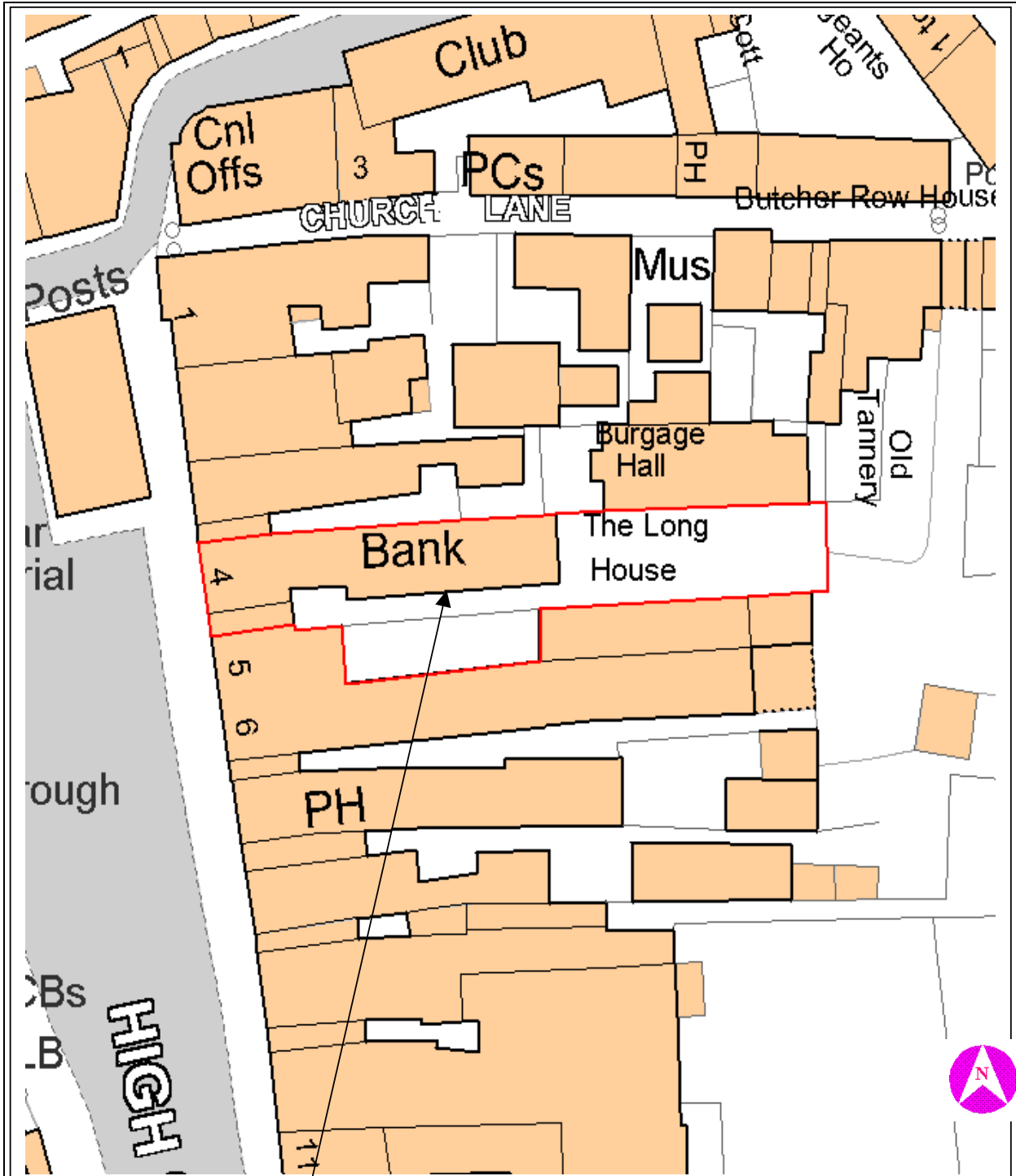
Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** DCNE0009/1088/F

**SCALE :** 1 : 500

**SITE ADDRESS :** 4 High Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1DY

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