

CONVERTING EXISTING OFFICES TO 19 No. SELF
CONTAINED APARTMENTS

ACORN BUSINESS CENTRE

FOUNTAIN STREET NORTH

BURY

BL9 7AN

Planning Statement

On behalf of FAA Properties Ltd

Apr 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of FAA Properties Ltd, owners of Acorn Business Centre, to support their Prior Approval planning application to convert the first and second floor of Acorn Business Centre, Fountain Street North, BL9 7AD into 19 No. apartments.

1.2 This Planning Statement addresses the 7 criteria that the Government require LPAs to assess when dealing with such Prior Approval applications, namely :-

- Flood Risk
- Contamination
- Noise
- Refuse / Recycling Collection
- Impact on the Highway
- Provision of adequate natural daylight
- Compliance with minimum space standards

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION, SURROUNDINGS AND PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The application site is a 3 storey former mill complex that was converted into offices 20+ years ago. With the onset of home working the demand for office accommodation has plummeted and the owners now have to look at alternative uses.
- 2.2 The application site has its own dedicated car park area which can be accessed directly from Fountain Street North or from the rear via a right of way leading off Wash Lane.
- 2.3 Bury Planning Department granted planning consent in 2015 for the conversion of the premises into 19 apartments (ref 59332) but this was never implemented, primarily due to budgetary constraints.
- 2.4 The neighbouring uses are a nursery (Playtime), car sales (The Motor People Ltd), a repair garage (M Tiger Garage, there are no window / doors openings facing onto the application site, same only being accessed via Back manor Street) and two car parks that serve office accommodation towards Wash Lane.
- 2.5 The self storage facility on the West side of Fountain Street North is only accessed via their entrance on York Street. This use would not trigger the special precautions identified by the Government when assessing Prior Approval applications as it would not be deemed a "storage and distribution" facility with ad hoc visits by generally small commercial vehicles.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The development will comprise the conversion of the existing office accommodation on the first and second floors into 19 No. self contained apartments (1 No. 2 bedroom, 14 No. 1 bedroom and 4 No. studio apartments).
- 3.2 The internal layout has changed slightly from that approved in 2015 primarily to accommodate the adopted minimum space standards and increased wall thicknesses to comply with increased thermal insulation requirements.
- 3.3 The apartments will be accessed via the existing doors leading off Fountain Street North. The access points will also have adjacent secure internal cycle storage areas.
- 3.4 There are no external changes proposed to the building/ fenestration etc.

4.0 CONSIDERATION OF THE PLANNING ISSUES AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Flood Risk

- 4.1.1 The Environment Agency have designated the area Flood Zone 1 and therefore the risk to future occupiers from flooding is deemed negligible.

4.2 Contamination

- 4.2.1 The applicant is not aware of any potential contamination issues on the site or within the immediate area.
- 4.2.2 The applicant has been advised of their legal duty to commission an intrusive asbestos survey before any work commence.

4.3 Noise

- 4.3.1 The apartments will be acoustically insulated with triple glazed windows and dry lining to the external walls that will also be required to comply with the thermal insulation regulations under Part L of the Building Regulations.
- 4.3.2 In addition the development will need to comply with Part E (Resistance to the Passage of Sound) of the Building Regulations for internal noise transmission.
- 4.3.3 The external walls of the building generally comprise substantial masonry which provides a high level of acoustic insulation in its own right.

4.4 Refuse and Recycling

- 4.4.1 The proposed site plan shows the location of the refuse and recycling bins, same can be readily accessed by the residents and servicing vehicles.

4.5 Impact on the Highway

- 4.5.1 The property benefits from being sited in a sustainable location that has good access to non private motor vehicle options for transport.
- 4.5.2 The site also benefits from off road parking and an area has been set aside to accommodate 14 parking spaces for the residents + 3 spaces for two wheeled motor vehicles.
- 4.5.3 It should also be noted that the existing use as offices would generate significant vehicle traffic, possibly at times when there is more pressure on the highway network and given the demographic of the proposed residents it is considered that the proposal will result in a nett reduction in the use of private motor vehicles generated by the site.

4.6 Provision of Natural Daylight

- 4.6.1 The internal layout has been designed so that each habitable room within the apartments benefits from an adequate amount of natural daylight, please see floor plans and corresponding photographs in the Appendix of this document that show the scale and position of same.

4.7 Compliance with Minimum Space Standards

- 4.7.1 The scheme originally approved by the Council in 2015 has been modified to ensure that each apartment complies with the minimum space standards detailed in the "Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards", specifically that each apartment must afford a minimum of 37m² of living accommodation.

4.8 Conclusion

- 4.8.1 Having considered all the relevant criteria required for the determination of a Prior Approval application for class MA use class E to residential it is considered that the proposal complies with same; and particularly noting that the Council approved a similar scheme in 2015 we trust that this application will also be granted consent.

APPENDICES

Photographs



Photo 1 – Fountain Street elevation



Photo 2 – Fountain Street elevation



Photo 3 – Fountain Street elevation



Photo 4 – Fountain Street elevation



Photo 5 – View looking towards Fountain Street from 2nd floor



Photo 6 – View looking towards Fountain Street from 2nd floor



Photo 7 – North gable elevation



Photo 8 - North gable elevation



Photo 9 – East gable elevation



Photo 10 – South gable elevation



Photo 11 – South gable elevation



Photo 12 – South elevation roof terrace