

Memo

From: PHILIP DAGNALL

To: Rachel Horton

cc: Colin Hirst

Ref: Ext: 4570

Date: 20-2-12

Re: APPLICATION COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM
WAREHOUSE TO GYMNASIUM, UNIT 6 LINCOLN PARK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
CLITHEROE

Dear Rachel,

Brief Description of Proposal

The proposal is to change the use of a pre existing warehouse building on the Lincoln Park Industrial Estate, Clitheroe to a gymnasium open to the public. No physical changes are proposed to the building and the last use of the building was as a plumbing merchant business but the building is currently vacant. The building is approx 270 sq metres in area.

Policy Context

National planning Policy PPS4, which is the main in principle policy guide in considering this proposal, states that such D2 uses as are proposed are town centre uses and should ideally be located within town centres as defined on relevant local plans. If there are no suitable such town centre locations then sites further from the town centre may be considered within a sequential approach laid out in PPS 4 Policy EC15, starting with what are defined as edge of centre sites (among other considerations sites roughly 300m from the town centre defined boundary). It places the burden of demonstrating that there are no suitable town centre or edge of centre sites on the applicant

Another consideration is that the building currently comprises a part of the employment land (uses B1 to B8) resource of the Borough and our current evidence base indicates that the Borough will need to allocate additional land for future B1 to B8 uses in the future. As such its change of use would be a loss of a relatively scarce resource.

Discussion

A balance needs to be struck between the loss of a part of the Borough's B1 to B8 employment land and also the need, given local and national economic circumstances and the government's expressed preferences, to encourage business and job creation. In addition national policy would seek to place these uses ideally within town centre locations.

Also important is the current government's desire for economic development to be supported, including references in the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The applicant has supplied details regarding that lack of suitable sites in Clitheroe town centres and adjoining areas based on a series of criteria including details of the size of the building, its parking, door size and open plan layout. Information from the Council's regeneration function would support the view that, apart from a new build option, there are limited options to locate such a development in existing buildings in more sequentially appropriate locations. Also to be borne in mind is the reuse of a currently empty building for employment purposes within area of broadly employment use and the generation of new employment opportunities.

Conclusion

I do consider that, on balance, this potential development could be supported in principal at this time. This view is given without prejudice to any other potential issues you may wish to consider.

I trust the above is of assistance. Phil Dagnall, Assistant Planning Officer, Forward Plans