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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** |  | **Date:** |  | **Manager:** |  | **Date:** |  |
| **Site Notice displayed** |  | **Photos uploaded** |  |  |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2021/1054 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 3/12/2021 and 27/06/22 |
| **Officer:** | AD/JM |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **Decision** | **Approval** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed change of use and exterior alterations of a former photography studio (Use Class E) to three flats (Use class C3) and associated infrastructure. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | **23 Whalley Road Wilpshire**  |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| Support use of neglected building but parking concerns. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** |  |
| (12/11/2021) Concern as to one of the proposed parking spaces.(7/3/2022) No objection subject to conditions (implementation of parking and turning facilities; implementation of cycle parking).(20/6/2022 in respect of revisions 6/5/2022) No objection subject to conditions (implementation of parking and turning facilities; implementation of cycle parking). |
| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| One letter of objection:Parking provision.Clarification on sound insulation.Clarification on fire resistance and escape windows.Clarification of location of mechanical ventilation for bathrooms.Overlooking of patio.Storage and collection of recyclable waste. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES:** |
| Ribble Valley Core Strategy:Key Statement DS1: Development StrategyKey Statement EC1 – Business and Employment DevelopmentKey Statement EC2: Development of Retail, Shops and Community Facilities and ServicesKey Statement DM12: Transport ConsiderationsPolicy DMG1 – General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2: Strategic ConsiderationsPolicy DMG3: Transport and MobilityPolicy DME1: Protecting Trees and WoodlandsPolicy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local EconomyNPPFNPPG |
| **Relevant Planning History:**3/1998/0519 – Change of use from general store to photographic studio. PP granted 17/9/1998.3/1997/0199 – Change of use of premises to hot food takeaway. PP refused 22/5/1997. Appeal dismissed 10/11/1997.3/1982/0164 – Refused.3/1976/0361 – Refused. |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**23 Whalley Road is a prominently sited, three-storey, brick-built, early C20 roadside photography studio (vacant). It is part of a row of otherwise residential properties at right angles to Whalley Road. The area is predominantly residential (some other business uses – butchers, kitchen/interior design, public house - south towards the Ribchester Road junction). The site is within the Wilpshire settlement boundary – Tier 1 settlement.  |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**Planning permission is sought for the proposed change of use of the photography studio (Class E) to three flats (Class C3; market housing; 2 bedrooms each; one flat to each floor) with remodelling of the shop front. |
| **Land use issues:**Key Statement DS1 identifies that in addition to Standen and the principle settlements, development will be focussed to the Tier 1 Villages, which are the more sustainable of the 32 defined settlements.Core StrategyPolicy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy identifies:Proposals for the development, redevelopment or conversion of sites with employment generating potential in the plan area for alternative uses will be assessed with regard to the following criteria:… the economic and social impact caused by loss of employment opportunities to the Borough, andany attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site (must be supported by evidence (such as property agents details including periods of marketing and response) that the property/ business has been marketed for business use for a minimum period of six months or information that demonstrates to the council’s satisfaction that the current use is not viable for employment purposes.)The applicant has now submitted marketing information in this regard (6/5/2022) and identifies that commercial use is not attractive to the market due to the high costs involved in getting the building to a suitable standard a business would require. A letter from the building owner identifies pre-application discussion with RVBC and opinions that it would be possible to convert the building if a commercial buyer for the property could not be found. No comments from RVBC Policy have been received in respect to the marketing information.The proposed change of use will ensure that necessary maintenance and repair is undertaken (some contractor employment) and the property is brought back into use. This is a regeneration opportunity.  |
| **Residential Amenity:**RVBC Environmental Health have considered the submitted noise impact assessment and identify an acceptable development subject to condition (a ventilation scheme is required).There will be some visibility of the patio and side windows at No. 25 from the benched seating area but this is not significant overlooking because of similar views from the roadside, site levels (a condition could be attached to ensure acceptable ground levels), boundary treatment and proposed landscaping. The existing ground floor window has the potential to significantly overlook the patio of No.25 on proposed removal of the kitchen sink unit. Obscuring part of this window (transfers?) would appear necessary. |
| **Impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene/townscape:**On 1 April 2022, the case officer opined of concerns relating to the re-modelling of the Whalley Road elevation (proposed opening treatments incongruous in location and form contrary to Core Strategy Policy DMG1) i.e. the existing shopfront appears to be a modern alteration; suggest consideration be made to restoration of previous forms (a balanced façade with two central doors and two outside bay windows aligned with first floor windows?) or replicating the existing pattern of bay window with door to the right (the need to access the first floor flat is appreciated). It was also advised that the use of traditional materials (painted timber) would also help to achieve a sympathetic re-modelling of the shopfront. The applicant has submitted photographs of nearby buildings showing alignment in openings between first and ground floors and frequent use of bays to provide projection/recession and interest in elevations. The revised ground floor design is harmful to the character of the building and the townscape in form and material. There is little alignment between first floor and ground floor openings. The existing painted-timber bay window is an interesting feature (providing interest in the frontage) which is to be lost. 6-panel doors are indicative of the C18 – early C19. Top-opening lights and composite and upvc materials are ostensibly modern and incongruous (including inability to weather) in the early C20 brick (including ‘rubbed’ bricks around openings) building.The proposed bin store (both ‘timber’ and ‘white plastic’ storage is suggested on plan) and cycle store are prominently sited but utilitarian in form and incongruous in material (brick faced structures would be expected). Policy DMG1 requires that all development must:be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 Building in Context Principles (from the CABE/English Heritage Building on Context Toolkit;be sympathetic to existing land uses in terms of its style, features and building materials.**Head of Planning****Following initial report Head of Planning sought further amendments which has secured a better visual relationship with 2 bay windows and a smaller ground floor hallway window. This is considered to have a better visual balance and an acceptable street scene impact. Furthermore the benefit of reusing the vacant building with the introduction of additional residential accommodation would outweigh any visual harm** |
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| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:** Notwithstanding the case officers original assessment to refuse the H of P considers the scheme to have an acceptable impact. |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That planning permission be granted |