

## The Site

The site comprises a three storey building, occupying a corner plot at the junction of Nevill Street and Stanley Street, Southport. This application relates to the first and second floors only.

## Proposal

Conversion of commercial space on first and second floors to four self-contained apartments

## History

Long history for ground floor units for new shop fronts, changes of use etc. History relating to upper floors:

### 14 Nevill Street:

S8750 Change of use from dance use to office uses. Granted 25/07/1978.

22917 Change of use of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor offices to aerobics dance studio. Granted 15/08/84.

### 16 Nevill Street:

22917 Change of use of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor offices to aerobics dance studio. Granted 15/08/84.

### 20 & 22 Nevill Street:

22917 Change of use of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor offices to aerobics dance studio. Granted 15/08/84.

N/1996/0321 Change of use of first floor to betting office. Granted 18/07/96.

## Consultations

**Highways Development Control** – No objections to the proposal to convert the existing commercial space on the first and second floors to four self-contained apartments as there are no highway safety implications.

**Environmental and Technical Services** – No objections subject to following issues being addressed:

- Sound insulation condition required to address structure and airborne noise given adjacent use as public house.
- Secondary glazing will be required and acoustically treated ventilation system required given town centre location close to late night bars and restaurants.
- Could request a noise impact assessment by condition to address the above instead.

## Neighbour Representations

Last date for replies: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011

Received: None

## Policy

The application site is situated in an area allocated as Southport Town Centre and within the Lord Street Conservation Area on the Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan.

DQ3	Trees and Development
EDT13	Southport Central Area - Development Principles
R2	Southport Town Centre
R8	Upper floors in Defined Centres and Shopping Parades
HC1	Development in Conservation Areas
MD2	Conversion to Flats
EP6	Noise and vibration

## Comments

Main issues – principle of use, impact on amenity, impact on character and appearance of the Conservation Area, compliance with tree policy.

### Principle

The site comprises the first and second floors of an existing building, above ground floor retail units. Policy R8 permits the re-use of vacant upper floors for residential use as it can make an important contribution to the regeneration of the local area and provide valuable residential floorspace. The policy requires such development to have a satisfactory means of access. In this case the flats will be accessed from doors fronting Stanley Street and Nevill Street which is appropriate. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.

### Conservation Area

The site lies within the Lord Street Conservation Area. Policy HC1 requires development to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. The proposal will involve the removal of the mirrored frosting to the large feature windows serving the first and second floors which will improve the appearance of the building. Also, two replacement windows are proposed to the rear and these will be timber which will enhance the conservation area. The proposed new doors to Nevill Street and Stanley Street are of an appropriate design and will improve the appearance of the building within the conservation area. The application complies with policy HC1 in this respect.

### Residential Amenity

Policy MD2 permits the conversion of buildings into flats provided it would not cause significant harm to residential amenity of neighbours or potential occupants or the character of the area. In terms of residential amenity, there is no impact on surrounding properties as a result of this proposal. The main issue is ensuring the proposed occupants have a satisfactory level of amenity. Each habitable room has a direct outlook and whilst the kitchens and second bedrooms are to the rear with limited outlook, this is balanced against the particularly good outlook that the main living areas and main bedrooms have to the Nevill Street and Stanley Street elevations provided by the very large feature windows. The proposal therefore complies with policy MD2.

Given the location of the site within Southport Town Centre and its proximity to many bars and restaurants, there is concern about noise and the potential impact on residents of the proposed flats. This is particularly relevant due to the adjacent use

being a public house at ground and first floor level. Environmental and Technical Services consider that this can be addressed with suitable sound insulation, acoustic glazing and ventilation and the submission of a noise impact assessment, all of which can be requested by condition. The applicant has already carried out some acoustic work but the information was not ready to be submitted and will be done so as part of a discharge of condition application. The proposal therefore complies with policy EP6.

### **Trees and Greenspace**

Policy DQ3 requires the provision of 3 new trees to be planted for every new dwelling created. In this case 12 are required but as there is no opportunity for on-site planting they will be planted off-site at cost to the applicant of £5,778. The applicant has agreed in writing to enter into a section 106 agreement for this financial contribution and the scheme therefore complies with policy DQ3.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed conversion is a welcome re-use of upper floors within Southport Town Centre. The building will benefit from external alterations which will enhance the conservation area and the scheme will provide a satisfactory level of amenity for occupants subject to noise impact work and mitigation measures being implemented. The tree planting requirement will be met via section 106 agreement and as such the proposal complies with policy and is recommended for approval.

### **Reasoned Justification**

The proposal will provide a good standard of accommodation in terms of residential amenity and is an appropriate use for upper floors in the town centre. The proposal will enhance the conservation area and provision is made for tree planting in accordance with policy DQ3. The application complies with Sefton's adopted UDP policies CS3, DQ1, DQ3, HC1, EP6 and MD2 and the granting of planning permission is justified.