

<b>APPLICATION NO:</b>	15/00371/COU
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Former Village Hall, Main Street
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Proposed change of use from former Village Hall to A1 retail, rebuilding of existing rear extension with first floor extension over and insertion of Mezzanine first floor
<b>WARD:</b>	Halton Castle
<b>PARISH:</b>	None
<b>CASE OFFICER:</b>	Adam Brennan
<b>AGENT(S) APPLICANT(S):</b>	Steve Hunt Partnership Newspaper House Tannery Lane Penketh Warrington Cheshire WA5 2UD
<b>DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION:</b>	Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) Core Strategy (2013)
<b>DEPARTURE REPRESENTATIONS:</b>	No
<b>KEY ISSUES:</b>	10 neighbour objections, plus councillor objection Retail planning use Parking/ Highway Safety
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Approve

**SITE MAP**



## **1. APPLICATION SITE**

### 1.1 The Site

The application site relates to a former village hall located on Main Street in the Halton Castle area of Runcorn. The property is located along a stretch of terrace dwellings that lead into Halton Village from the Norton Arms Public House.

## **2. THE APPLICATION**

### 2.1 The Proposal

Proposed change of use from former Village Hall to A1 retail, rebuilding of existing rear extension with first floor extension over and insertion of Mezzanine first floor

### 2.2 Documentation

The application has been submitted with the requisite planning application form and location plan, including associated plans, which have been amended at the request of the Council's Conservation advisor.

### 2.3 History

No planning history.

## **3. POLICY CONTEXT**

### 3.1 Halton Core Strategy (2012)

Policy CS5 A Network of Centres

### 3.2 Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2005)

- *Policy BE1* - General Principles of Development
- *Policy BE12* - General Development Criteria – Conservation Areas
- *Policy TP12* – Car Parking
- *Policy H8* – Non Dwelling House Uses

The primary planning policy for the determination of this planning application is policy BE1 'General Principles of Development' of the Halton UDP.

## **4. CONSULTATIONS**

### 4.1 Highways

The Council's Highways section was consulted as part of the applications consultation exercise. They have not raised any objection to the proposed use, commenting that the parking requirement for the proposed use is less than that of the lawful use. The highway officers' comments are as follows:

*The present accepted use of the building is D1 and has the requirement for one space per 10sqm. The application proposes A1 non-food retail which has a requirement for 1 space per 20 sqm. Given the square area of the premises proposed (including the mezzanine), this constitutes a reduction of parking required by one space. There are no parking restrictions outside of the property and, given this, despite the parking difficulties on Main Street, Highways would not object to the application on parking grounds.*

The highways officer has also undertaken site visits in the area during potential peak hours for the proposed end use. It was observed that parking capacity is available on street. Concerns have been raised in relation to highway safety. Given the low speeds in the area it is not envisaged any road safety risks are generated by this proposal.

#### 4.2 Conservation Officer

The Council consulted Conservation Officer at Cheshire West and Chester Council as the proposal is located within Halton Village Conservation Area. In principle, there were no objections to the proposed changes to the building, which are minor. The requested changes involved ensuring the proposed roof materials matching the existing (reclaimed slate), removing a parapet, removal of window, conditioning of roof light type and changing soffit materials to timber rather than UPVC. These alterations were requested and amended by the agent, to the satisfaction of the Conservation Officer, who has no further objections based on the amended plans submitted. A condition will be placed on the permission to ensure certain details are met.

### **5. REPRESENTATIONS**

There have been 10 neighbour representations received for this application. The main theme from the objections received is that the premises has no on-site parking, meaning that the only alternative would be to park on street. The consensus from the objections is that there is not enough parking in the immediate and surrounding area to accommodate parking for the proposed salon, leading to congestion and thus compromising highway safety.

Two of the ward Cllrs have objected and asked for the decision to be made by the Committee. They have stated that if successful the application would be extremely detrimental. They have also raised concerns about the situation that exists and that no objections are being raised by the Council's highway section on the grounds that car parking calls for less provision for a salon than for a village hall and that this conclusion completely ignores the reality of the situation. This is due to the building not being used as a village hall for over 46 years. Main Street is already congested with parked cars, many illegally parked on yellow lines.

### **6. ASSESSMENT**

#### **6.1 The proposed use**

The proposed use is not deemed to have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. The site falls within a Primary Residential Area, outlined in UDP, Policy H8 is applicable. The development is considered compliant with H8 in the UDP as it does not detract from the character of the area and would not adversely affect residential amenity. It brings back into use a derelict building. The new use would also create new jobs. As the floorspace is under 200sqm a sequential assessment is not required. The proposed A1 retail use is deemed acceptable in principle.

#### 6.2 Development in a Conservation Area

The Council's Conservation advisor raised concerns with the original proposal. However, as highlighted above, these have been resolved by submitted amendments. It is not believed that the amended alterations proposed within this application will have a detrimental impact on the buildings setting in the Conservation Area, and actually improves the appearance from a visual aspect. It is deemed that the development will improve the setting of the Conservation Area.

#### 6.3 Parking

The Council's Highways department have raised no objections to the proposal. The existing lawful use of the site is use Class D1 Non-residential institutions. Uses falling within this class include Public Hall, Crèche, Nursery, Medical/ Health facilities and places of worship. The property can be used for any Use within Class D1 without the need for planning permission. Although the site has no off road parking spaces the proposed use of the site is not likely to be intensive and generates a lower demand for parking when the lawful use of the site is taken into consideration. Parking is not deemed to have a detrimental impact on highway safety on Main Street and the surrounding roads. It is therefore not considered that a refusal on the grounds of parking and highway safety could be sustained.

#### 6.4 Conclusion

It is deemed that the proposal is an opportunity to add to the vitality and viability of this part of Halton Village. It brings unused floorspace into operation and meets the policies outlined in our Unitary Development Plan. Therefore the application is recommended for approval.

### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Grant planning permission subject to conditions

### **8. CONDITIONS**

1. Standard 3 year expiry
2. Plans condition
3. Materials condition (BE1)
4. Rooflight specification to be agreed before development begins (BE1)

## **9. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT**

As required by:

- Paragraph 186 – 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No.3) Order 2015; and

This statement confirms that the local planning authority has worked proactively with the applicant to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of Halton.