

REPORT SUMMARY

REFERENCE NO: 23/501008/LBC		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL: Listed Building Consent for erection of a third floor to create additional business space.		
ADDRESS: Chord Electronics Ltd. The Old Pump House Farleigh Bridge East Farleigh Maidstone Kent ME16 9NB		
RECOMMENDATION: GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT – subject to the planning conditions set out in Section 5.0 of the report.		
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: There is no significant harm to the appearance and setting of the curtilage listed building, or the setting of the adjoining designated heritage assets. The proposal complies with local and national planning policies and is recommended approval.		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE: Call in from Cllr Gooch to allow committee discussion on sunlight and daylight car parking and residential amenity.		
WARD: Barming And Teston	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL: Barming	APPLICANT: Chord Electronics AGENT: DHA Planning
CASE OFFICER: Chloe Berkhauer-Smith	VALIDATION DATE: 23/03/23	DECISION DUE DATE: 28/07/23
ADVERTISED AS A DEPARTURE: No		

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.01 This application was first considered by members at the planning committee meeting on the 22nd June 2023. The committee report to this meeting is provided as an appendix to this report.
- 1.02 The committee resolved to defer a decision on the application for the following reasons:

"That consideration of this application be deferred to enable Members to see the Conservation Officer's assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance and setting of designated heritage assets, including the Farleigh Lane road bridge over the River Medway, and weigh any potential harm against the public benefits of the proposal".

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.01 This application is for the construction of an additional building storey (at third floor level) over the main part of the building to create additional floorspace for the existing commercial use. The additional floor is intended to provide showroom space.
- 2.02 The additional building storey would have the same width and depth of the main building which is approximately 7m wide and depth of 14.7m (additional 70 square metres). The proposal would increase the main building eaves height from 11m to 13m and the roof ridge height from 12.3 metres to 15.7m.

3. APPRAISAL

- 3.01 This report seeks to address the following point as set out in the committee minutes from the meeting on the 22nd June 2023:

"That consideration of this application be deferred to enable Members to see the Conservation Officer's assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance and setting of designated heritage assets, including the Farleigh Lane road bridge over the River Medway, and weigh any potential harm against the public benefits of the proposal".

- 3.02 The NPPF (paragraphs 201 and 202) requires the impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset to be assessed as either "substantial harm" or "less than substantial harm" with NPPG guidance setting out that "substantial harm" has a high threshold "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".
- 3.03 The building is situated within a sensitive location, within the setting of the Grade I listed bridge, Grade II* listed Church of St Mary, and the Grade II listed Railway Station and Bridge House.
- 3.04 The proposed site is set behind the Waterworks and the Malthouse but can be seen over the roof. Due to the height of the building, it has the potential of more of an impact on the wider setting of the listed building.
- 3.05 The conservation officer has highlighted historic photographic evidence that shows the current building had an additional storey in place of the existing "strange roof structure" The proposal seeks to reinstate a similar scale and form of the lost upper floor and roof structure, but in a contemporary design.
- 3.06 It is concluded that due to the nature of the proposal whereby it is proposed to reinstate a similar scale and form of the lost upper floor and roof structure, but in a contemporary design would lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of the grade II listed The Works building. In these circumstances the NPPF (paragraph 202) advises that "...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".
- 3.07 The purpose of the extension is to provide additional commercial floorspace for the existing business that occupies the application building. The business employs 17 full time staff and 6 part time staff. Whilst the current application is not intended to increase staff numbers, the applicant has stated "*With this additional space, Chord's operation on the site (and the job opportunities available in the company) are safeguarded in the medium and long-term*". Enabling the continued commercial occupation of the building and the employment is a public benefit and overall, the proposal will result in a positive impact.
- 3.08 Farleigh Lane road bridge over the River Medway is Grade I listed. The road bridge is separated from the application site by The Works building. In this context, it is considered that the current proposal will not harm the significance of the Grade I listed bridge.
- 3.09 A copy of the conservation officers' comments can be found as an appendix of this report.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 3.10 Due regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.01 For the reasons outlined above, I do not consider there to be significant harm to the appearance and setting of the curtilage listed building, or the setting of the adjoining designated heritage assets. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with local and national planning policies and is recommended approval.

5. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT subject to the following conditions

with delegated powers to the Head of Planning and Development to be able to settle or amend any necessary planning conditions in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee.

- 1) The works to which this consent relates must be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent. Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
Proposed Second Floor Plan – Drawing No. 348(P)033 Rev 1 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed Third Floor Plan – Drawing No. 348(P)034 Rev 2 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed Roof Plan – Drawing No. 348(P)035 Rev 1 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed South Elevation – Drawing No. 348(P)040 Rev 4 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed East Elevation – Drawing No. 348(P)041 Rev 3 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed North Elevation – Drawing No. 348(P)042 Rev 4 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed West Elevation – Drawing No. 348(P)043 Rev 4 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed Section AA – Drawing No. 348(P)045 Rev 1 – Received 27/02/2023
Proposed Site Plan – Drawing No. 348(P)003 Rev 1 – Received 08/03/2023
Reason: To clarify which plans have been approved.
- 3) No external work shall take place on the building until details (manufacturer name, product name, and photographs) of the external facing materials to be used for the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall be constructed using the approved materials and maintained as such thereafter. Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.
- 4) No works shall take place until detailed drawings at a suggested scale of 1:5 of all new external and internal joinery work and fittings together with sections through glazing bars, frames and mouldings have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.
- 5) No works shall take place until detailed drawings at a suggested scale of 1:5 of how the new storey will connect with the existing structure have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.