

Item: 3.6

Planning Committee: 4 March 2020.

**Change of Use from Former Police Station to Office (Class 4)
(Retrospective) at Station House, North End Road, Stromness.**

Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

1. Summary

1.1.

Full planning permission is sought for the change of use of the former police station in North End Road, Stromness, to an office (Class 4). The application is retrospective, as the change of use has already taken place. One objection has been received on the grounds of parking availability and congestion, which is considered of insufficient weight to merit refusal. The development accords with Policies 1, 2, 4, and 14 of the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval.

Application Number:	19/411/PP.
Application Type:	Planning Permission.
Proposal:	Change of use from former police station to office (Class 4) (retrospective).
Applicant:	Green Marine (UK), c/o Jason Schofield, Station House, North End Road, Stromness, KW16 3AG.

1.2.

All application documents (including plans, consultation responses and representations) are available for members to view at the following website address:

https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/D/application_search_submission.htm
(then enter the application number given above).

2. Consultations

Consultees have not objected or raised any issues which cannot be addressed by planning conditions.

3. Representations

3.1.

One objection has been received from:

- Mr Norman Brass, Blue Star Garage, North End Road, Stromness, KW16 3AG.

3.2.

The objection is based on the grounds of parking availability and congestion on the public road, which have been considered in the assessment of the proposal.

4. Relevant Planning History

None.

5. Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

The full text of the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017 and supplementary guidance can be read on the Council website at:

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/D/Planning-Policies-and-Guidance.htm>

The policies listed below are relevant to this application:

- Orkney Local Development Plan 2017.
 - Policy 1 – Criteria for All Development.
 - Policy 2 – Design.
 - Policy 3 – Settlements, Town Centres and Prime Retail Frontages.
 - Policy 14 – Transport, Travel and Road Network Infrastructure.

6. Legal Aspects

6.1.

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended (the Act) states, “Where, in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination is, unless material considerations indicate otherwise...to be made in accordance with that plan...”

6.2.

Where a decision to refuse an application is made, the applicant may appeal under section 47 of the Act. Scottish Ministers are empowered to make an award of expenses on appeal where one party's conduct is deemed to be unreasonable. Examples of such unreasonable conduct are given in Circular 6/1990 and include:

- Failing to give complete, precise and relevant reasons for refusal of an application.
- Reaching a decision without reasonable planning grounds for doing so.
- Not taking into account material considerations.
- Refusing an application because of local opposition, where that opposition is not founded upon valid planning grounds.

6.3.

An award of expenses may be substantial where an appeal is conducted either by way of written submissions or a local inquiry.

7. Assessment

7.1. Background

The property was built in 1928 as a police station to serve the town of Stromness, and in recent years became vacant after being deemed surplus to requirements and disposed of by the Scottish Police Authority. In the application form for the proposed change of use to offices, the applicant, Green Marine Limited, confirmed that internal works required to convert the property to offices have taken place; therefore, the application is retrospective.

7.2. Principle

The property is situated in a prominent roadside location, in an area defined as 'Town Centre', as indicated on the site plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Policy 3A – The Town Centre First Principle of the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017 supports development that would enhance the vibrancy, vitality and viability of the Stromness Town Centre. The principle is therefore accepted.

7.3. Design and Appearance

The offices would be contained within the existing building and there will be no external changes required. No signage is currently proposed. The development therefore complies with Policy 1 – Criteria for All New Development, parts (i) and (ii), and Policy 2 – Design.

7.4. Residential Amenity

The building is in a relatively mixed-use area, with a vehicle garage, offices, hostel, veterinary surgery and houses all located nearby. It is anticipated that the proposed offices would have no greater impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties than that of the previous police station. The development is therefore considered to comply with Policy 1 – Criteria for All New Development, part (iv).

7.5. Parking and Road Safety

Roads Services was consulted and confirmed that a development of this use and scale would normally be expected to provide six parking spaces. The application form states that two parking spaces are available; however, this refers to the two adjacent on-street spaces. To be clear, therefore, the development would provide no dedicated private parking spaces. This relates to the objection, which refers to a lack of availability of parking in the vicinity, and the potential for the development to create congestion within the street. Roads Services has considered this specific point, the development proposed and existing surrounding development, and concluded that due to the adjacent on-street parking available, the free long-stay parking in the vicinity of the site, and the Town Centre location, it is appropriate to

relax the normal parking requirements, in accordance with Policy 14. Roads Services has no objection.

8. Conclusion and Recommendation

The proposed change of use is acceptable in principle in the Town Centre location and would have no adverse impact on amenity. No external alterations are proposed so any historic character and appearance of the building would be preserved. Roads Services has no objection in relation to parking demand. The development accords with Policies 1, 2, 3 and 14 of the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017. Accordingly, the application is **recommended for approval**.

9. Contact Officer

Alison Poke, Graduate Planner, extension 2536, Email alison.poke@orkney.gov.uk

10. Appendix

Appendix 1: Site Plan.



LAND REGISTER
OF SCOTLAND

Officer's ID / Date

5140
25/6/2018

TITLE NUMBER

OAZ14147



ORDNANCE SURVEY
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE

140m

HY2509

Survey Scale

1/2500

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