

## **Planning : Heritage and Design and Access Statement**

Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd

### **Penny Lane Shopping Mall, High Street, Cheadle, Staffordshire**

#### **Proposed Development:**

**Reconfiguration of existing floorspace to provide 2 retail units and 5 apartments (3 two bedroom apartments and 2 one bedroom apartments).**

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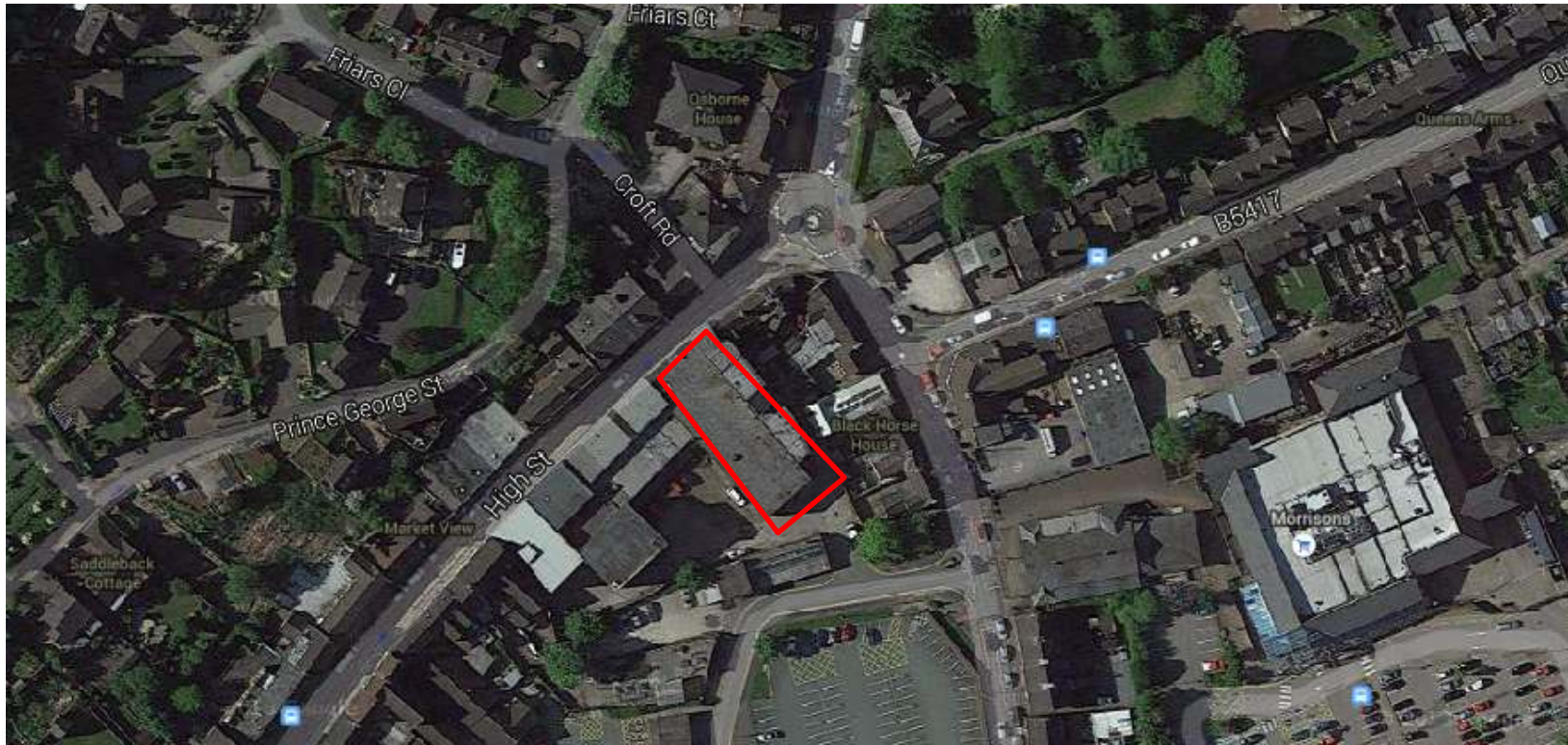
### **Introduction**

- 1 The purpose of this statement is to assess the proposed development against the prevailing planning policies and the spatial suitability for retail and residential development at the site. The main areas of comment are:
  - Previously developed use of the site and retention of retail along the shopping street
  - There is a shortage of housing generally including and within this location for low cost market housing
  - Sustainable location close to a public transport and shops
  - The proposal complies with policies the Core Strategy and NPPF

- 2 Additionally the statement reviews the site and character of the local area. All of the above factors are taken into account when concluding that in our opinion planning permission should be granted.

### **Design and Access Context of the Planning Application**

- 3 Transport links to the site are very good given the town centre location. The shopping mall has a mix of uses at present with retail and commercial uses as well as existing apartments. The proposal involves reconfiguration of the existing building without extending so the general character of the area will be maintained. The character of the conservation will be unchanged as a result of the addition and reconfiguration of windows.
- 4 Staffordshire Moorlands BC has acknowledged through a Strategic Housing Market Assessment that a shortage of housing exists locally, including for smaller residential units. The submitted scheme for the site is designed to create sustainable development with market housing being desirable to local people. The aim is for an environment to be safe and attractive in a community in which people will aspire to live and remain.
- 5 The proposal, in detail, is for the reconfiguration to accommodate an five apartments (3 two bedroom and 2 one bedroom apartments) and two retail units. Aerial image of the site currently and surroundings are provided below. The site is shown identified in red.



- 6 There are several architectural styles in the surrounding area with predominantly properties edging onto the back of footpath. There is quite a dense grain of development found locally. Predominantly buildings locally are two storey. The proposal will maintain the existing building and built form.

## Planning Policy & Appraisal

- 7 This section aims to demonstrate how the proposed sustainable development not only meets requirements but also contributes to the aims and objectives of the planning policy framework. We envisage that some of the main policies that would ordinarily be used to assess conversion of former employment and leisure site to housing would be policies H1, SO5 and TCR1 of the Core Strategy. Policies and proposals of the National Planning Policy Guidance (National Planning Policy Framework or NPPF) will also apply. This section aims to present a synopsis of the various planning policies relevant to the proposed use of the site for housing and which has informed the size, density and design of the development proposed as in the preceding section.
- 8 Policy H1 seeks to increase the supply and range of new housing. Policy SO5 aims to ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the three market towns of Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle. Policy TCR1 this states how the Council will plan pro-actively for the town centres by focusing growth and development in the town centre. Specifically TCR1 'Development in the Town Centres' considers the vitality and viability of the town centres of Leek and Cheadle and including in the core aims has the objective of:

“Promoting housing on upper floors within the primary shopping areas and elsewhere in the town centres where this does not jeopardise their vitality and viability”
- 9 In addition the justification of the policy advises that “upper floors in our town centres are not used to their full capacity. There is a local need for housing in accessible locations as well as the other benefits residential use could bring, such as security outside normal working hours and assisting with the development of the evening economy.” (8.5.11, Core Strategy).

- 10 We consider that the proposal complies with the above policies. The introduction of residential units the rear will serve the same purpose as apartments at upper levels. The apartments will provide additional activity in Cheadle and will help the vitality and viability of the town centre. Additionally a Senior Planning Officer of the Council has also considered that the reconfiguration to five units would be considered favourably.
- 11 The applicant and architect have reviewed the site, surroundings and local housing market. Their conclusion is that the site is suitable for the design and layout proposed and demand is evident for apartments and retail units at this location. The Council has previously, in 2008 and 2011, granted planning permission for four additional apartments at the site. The reference numbers being 08/01182/FUL and 11/00547/FUL.
- 12 The Senior Planning Officer responded positively to a pre-application enquiry concerning a proposal for five apartments following approval 08/01182/FUL. The Senior Planning Officer confirmed in her letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010, copy enclosed, that whilst the additional unit would require planning permission it would be looked upon favourably: *“Given the nature of the proposal, a planning application should be submitted, which is likely to receive favourable support”*. This planning application accords with the Senior Officers advice.
- 13 The Government have advised through NPPF their intentions for delivering housing objectives. As the Council will be aware on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2012 the Government issued various Ministerial Statements in support of new housing development to reinforce earlier statements of March 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 49 of the Framework states that ‘Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites’.
- 14 Paragraph 47 of the Framework indicates that where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, the 5 year supply buffer should be increased from 5% to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to

ensure choice and competition in the market for land. The Planning Inspectorate have placed a significant amount of weight in favour of housing development where under supply occurs. The latest information published by the Council confirms the under supply which has been consistent for many years. The NPPF provides further positive advice for the delivery of new housing:

“ To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:

- plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);
- identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand; and
- where they have identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need on site, unless off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified (for example to improve or make more effective use of the existing housing stock) and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities. Such policies should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time.”

(Paragraph 50, NPPF)

- 15 The policy base is influenced by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Not only is there a shortage of available, suitable and achievable housing sites identified there is a shortage of small units within the Borough. The proposed development delivers much needed housing. Additionally the location on previously developed land is supported by the recently published Planning Policy Guidance. The Government have very recently introduced key targets for LPAs to approve more development



on previously developed land. Environmental and regeneration improvements will also follow and the need to release other land including greenfield is reduced.

- 16 The proposal complies with the thrust of policies of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 49 of the Government Planning Policy Framework. The thrust being that new housing should be provided given the evidenced shortage. Paragraph 49 of NPPF states that *'Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites'*.
- 17 This proposal is 5 apartments and 2 retail units (four apartments had been approved), and whilst alone this development will not solve the housing supply situation in the Borough, this is certainly a development in line with NPPF. Sites such as this should be considered suitable for housing where a developer or applicant proposes affordable market homes in line with policy criteria and with development that respects the character of the area. Smaller sites such as this are more suitable in policy terms than the release of greenfield land for housing. The submitted proposal responds to the policy framework.
- 18 The NPPF advises the core principle of underpinning planning is sustainable development. The apartments and retail units would be built to at least Building Regulations 2013 standards so that the energy efficiency will be assured.
- 19 The proposal will further maintain the viability of the shopping area by ensuring that viable retail units front the high street. Each unit has 50sq.m. which is sufficient for storage and display purposes. Larger retail spaces are harder to lease. The Framework (NPPF) advises the Government is committed, as are Staffordshire Moorlands, to promoting sustainable patterns of development in both urban and rural areas by making land available for development. Aims include ensuring a high quality development to allow the creation of safe, liveable and sustainable communities. Government planning policy dictates that one of the three significant factors, along with environmental and economic of sustainable development is the social aspect; and the function of planning system is one of:

*“supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;”* (Paragraph 7, NPPF)

20 These concepts are at the heart of the Government’s planning agenda as expressed in the following paragraphs of the NPPF:

*“Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.”* (Paragraph 8, NPPF).

21 And in paragraph 9: *“Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life, including (but not limited to):*

- *making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages;*
- *moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature;*
- *replacing poor design with better design;*
- *improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and*
- *widening the choice of high quality homes.”* (Paragraph 9, NPPF).



- 22 And in paragraph 10: *“Plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas.”*(Paragraph 10, NPPF).
- 23 The proposed residential and retail development will provide:
- employment during construction
  - new open market homes which will be appropriate to the evidenced demand
  - viable retail units
  - energy efficient apartments
- 24 The proposal makes efficient use of this brownfield site without harming nearby residential amenity or other planning objectives. We consider the proposal complies with the sustainable development principles of existing national and emerging local policy.

### **Conclusion**

- 25 The site is deliverable being in single ownership and can provide energy efficient apartments. Such a development would be within the spirit of Planning for Growth, which seeks to promote economic recovery through housing development.
- 26 The NPPF expresses there are 12 core principles of planning; included is that: *“planning should not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives”*. If the application site and application proposal are assessed objectively a recommendation in support of the proposal should be forthcoming.
- 27 Furthermore the NPPF encourages LPAs to *“proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the*

*homes ..... the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing..... needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities.”*

- 28 The site will be delivered in a sustainable way, it is a sustainable location for apartments and retail space and consequently land will be used efficiently. The NPPF is very clear that sustainable development is the key principle for all planning decisions. Of great importance within the NPPF are issues of sustainability, economic growth and housing shortage. The NPPF confirms: *“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking”.....for decision-taking this means:*

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
  - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
  - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted. (Paragraph 14, NPPF).*

- 29 Ministerial Statements concerning Planning for Growth and the NPPF are aimed at encouraging development including new housing. The planning reform agenda includes the NPPF which is supportive of planning decisions being responsive to changes in trends and circumstances along with generally supporting growth, including new housing development.

30 We consider the proposed development is in accordance with the policy framework as:

- Appropriate levels of amenity are afforded to the occupiers of nearby properties
- Rationalisation of retail space will improve vitality and viability
- The site is previously developed land
- NPPF requires a five year supply of housing
- NPPF, Planning for Growth and the Budget support new apartments including above (in this case behind) the shop
- Current building regulations standards will make the buildings very energy efficient
- The use of land for housing is in line with NPPF and Core Strategy policies

31 The proposal provides efficient use of land and will provide apartments and improved retail space. The proposal maintains a scale and design consistent with the surroundings. The proposed development comprises sustainable development of which there is a clear presumption in favour. There are no adverse impacts of approving this application as such we trust the Council is able to make a favourable decision.

Prepared by S Plowman BA(Hons), BTP, MA, MRTPI for Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd

Letter from the Senior Planning Officer Attached Below:



Simon W. Baker B.Ed MBA MILAM  
Chief Executive

Heritage Design and Access Statement  
Penny Lane Shopping Mall, Cheadle  
William McCall

**Dealt with by:** Rachael Simpkin **Our Ref:** Penny Lane, Cheadle  
**Direct Dial:** (01538) 395400 (ext 4122) **Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Mr P Kennedy  
Hulme Upright  
Highpoint, Festival Park  
Hanley  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST1 5SH

Dear Mr Kennedy,

hulmeupright	
Design ref	File ref
20451	C2
- 4 MAR 2010	
Institution Director	Project Associate
PK	PK
Project Architect / Technologist	

**Proposed Amendment for additional apartment relating to permission ref.  
08/01182/FUL "Internal and external alterations to form 4 additional apartments"  
at Penny Lane Shopping Mall, High Street, Cheadle.**

Firstly, apologies for the delay in responding to you, which has been due to Officer work prioritisation.

It is noted that the additional apartment and an increase in floor area of apartment no. seven would result in the reduction in floor space and also the omission of WC / storage facilities relating to retail unit no. one, which is positioned on the first floor of the Penny Lane Shopping Mall. Given its position, however, it is unlikely that any objections would be raised on principal grounds with respect to the protection of the primary shopping frontage whilst additional external alterations proposed appear modest. Given the nature of the proposal, a planning application should be submitted, which is likely to receive favourable support.

I trust that you find my views useful. You will understand that the above comments represent Officer opinion only and do not purport to be a decision of this Council.

Yours sincerely,

Rachael Simpkin  
Senior Planning Officer



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