DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2016/0585	**7 BATH STREET**	**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM COMPUTER SHOP (A1) TO HAIR STYLING AND BEAUTY (SUI GENERIS)**
Valid 12/10/2016	**LEEK**	**(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the application site and wider streetscene;
- Impact on the amenity of nearby properties.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

This application relates to a site positioned on the western side of Bath Street. The site comprises a two storey flat roof building that is sandwiched between two pitched roof terraced rows. The principle elevation of the premises is stepped back from those of the neighbouring terraces and comprises of an A1 retail unit to the ground floor and storage to the first floor. The building is of limited architectural merit; nevertheless it does fall within the Leek Town Conservation Area.

PROPOSAL

Planning approval is sought to change the use of the premises from an A1 retail unit to a hair styling and beauty salon (Sui Generis)

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS5 Towns
SS5a Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
TCR1 Development in the Town Centres

National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 2 Ensuring the vitality of town centres
Chapter 7 Requiring good design

Chapter 12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

There is no site history relevant to the determination of this application.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16.11.2016
Neighbour consultation period ends: 02.11.2016
Press Advert: 16.11.2016

Public Comments

No comments received.

Town / Parish Comments

No objection subject to the development not being unneighbourly.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

In accordance with policy SS1 the Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of Staffordshire Moorlands. Policy SS1a when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The application site is located within the Leek Town development boundary and sits on the fringe of the main shopping frontage of Derby Road. Policy SS5a seeks to consolidate the role of Leek as a principal service centre and a market town through the sensitive redevelopment and expansion of the town centre to increase the quantity and quality of the retail offer. Policy TCR1 aims to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of Leek town centre through positive management, which includes focusing and promoting retailing as well as other key town centre uses within the town centre; enhancing local distinctiveness by supporting proposals which help retain, attract and expand the provision of independent retailers in the town. Within secondary frontages, non A1 retail development will be permitted where it will contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

This application relates to a site located on the fringe of the primary shopping frontage of Derby Road and is therefore regarded as secondary for the purposes of this assessment. The application seeks approval for the change of use of an existing A1 retail unit to a Sui Generis use to allow for a Hair and Beauty Salon. Though the beauty element is regarded as a non A1 use, it is a use that is common place in a

town centre location and it is acknowledged that the hairdressing element does fall within Class A1 and could be undertaken without planning permission. It is therefore considered that this development would enhance the town centre offering, contributing to the vitality and viability of the area. The principle of development in this location is therefore considered to be acceptable subject to matters of detailed design, highway safety and the impact on nearby properties.

Design

Policy DC1 requires all new development to be well designed to reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design SPG. The application site is located within the Leek Town Conservation Area. Accordingly, in line with policy DC2 the Council will resist development that would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the town.

The application building forms a circa 1960's infill development that is sandwiched between two pitched roof traditional terraced rows. The building is of no architectural merit and contributes very little to the character of the streetscene and wider consideration area. A site visit has confirmed that the external alterations made to the premises have been confined to replacing the shop window and the painting of the existing frontage. These works do not require planning approval. The proposed change of use is therefore not considered to detract from the character or appearance of the application site or the Leek Town Conservation Area.

Amenity

Policy DC1 requires all new development to protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

As this application relates to the change of use of the premises there will be no additional bulk or massing to the site that would given rise to a loss of daylight or sunlight. The site is located within a town centre location, however it is noted that there are a number of residential units within the immediate vicinity. Nevertheless, it is not considered likely that the proposed use would generate significant greater levels of noise or disruption over and above that generated by the existing A1 use.

No objections have been received and it this application is considered to protect the amenity of nearby properties in accordance with policy DC1.

Highway Safety

The application site is not served by any parking provision; however the site is located within the town centre which is served with a number of public car parking options. The centre is also well served by public transport. It is therefore not considered that the proposal would result in a harm to highway safety.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

This application seeks approval for the change of use of an A1 retail unit to a Hair and Beauty Salon. In accordance with policies SS5a and TCR1 the proposed use would successfully contribute to the vitality and viability of Leek Town Centre. Furthermore, the proposal would not detract from the character or appearance of the application site or the Leek Town Conservation Area, in accordance with policies DC1 and DC2. Taking account of the town centre location of the site and existing lawful use of the premises it is not considered likely that the development would result in harm to the amenity of nearby residents. Furthermore the proposal would not result in a threat to highway safety by virtue.

This application is therefore considered to accord with the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. A recommendation of approval is therefore given.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve

Case Officer: Lisa Howard
Recommendation Date: 18.11.2016

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Haywood, Ben

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council