PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT

FULL PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR CHANGE OF USE TO FIVE APARTMENTS WITH FIRST FLOOR REAR EXTENSION

10 STOCKWELL STREET, LEEK, ST13 6DS

June 2017

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Supporting Statement is prepared in respect of a full planning and listed building consent application for change of use of 10 Stockwell Street, Leek, ST13 6DS to five apartments together with a first floor rear extension.

1.2 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the suite of drawings and documents which comprises the submission as follows:

- Location Plan (PL-) 01
- Existing Plans and Elevations (PL-) 02
- Proposed Plans and Elevations (PL-) 03
- Design and Access Statement prepared by Wake Architects
- Schedule of removal of walls prepared by Wake Architects

1.3 The purpose of this report is to consider the proposals generally against policies in the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and, in particular, to set out the necessary analysis required for the proposals in this location.

1.4 This report addresses the key planning issues as follows:

- Section 2 provides a description of the site, its location and history
- Section 3 describes the development proposals
- Section 4 sets out the planning policy context for the application including the key Development Plan policies and national planning guidance against which it should be assessed
- Section 5 presents an assessment of the proposals against relevant policies and guidance
- Section 6 presents the overall conclusions.

2.0 Site Description and History

2.1 This section describes the sites location, its surroundings and sets out the previous planning history for the site.

Site Location

2.2 The application site comprises 10 Stockwell Street which is an attractive three storey brick built detached property.

2.3 The property is a Grade II Listed Georgian Property on the edge of Leek Town Centre and Leek Primary Shopping area but within Leek Conservation Area. There is a bus stop outside and is walking distance of the all town centre services. A copy of the listing is included within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

Site Description and Surroundings

2.4 The site is situated between two similar Georgian detached properties.

2.5 The property has already been extended at the rear with a modest ground floor flat roofed extension.

Site History

2.7 A search using the Council's planning website has revealed a number of planning applications, however, this list may not be exhaustive.

- SMD/2014/0784- Change of use from B1 (Office/residential) to D1 (non-residential training and education services). Approved
- SMD/2005/1137 - Formation of disabled access, WC and general refurbishment. Approved
- SMD/2004/0431 - Conversion and extension to form retail/public house unit (A1, A3), erection of two town houses and change of use of listed building for office or residential use. Approved

- SMD/1998/0681 - rear of college admin block Stockwell Street Leek - first floor extension to college. Approved
- SMD/1990/0875 - listed building application for demolition of side extension and outbuildings. Approved

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 The proposal is to change the use of the property to five apartments and to construct a first floor extension above the existing flat roofed rear extension.

3.2 The property is currently empty, having previously been occupied as a beauty college but it was originally a rather grand town house built in the late 18th century but which over time has been used as offices (B1) and non-residential training and education services (D1).

3.3 Although the property has been on the market to let as offices/for commercial use, there has been little viable interest. It is therefore the owner's desire to convert the building into five self-contained one bedroom apartments, all accessed from a central circulation core.

3.4 The proposals are described in further detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

4.0 Planning Policy and Guidance

4.1 The planning policy context in which the application should be considered is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) together with policies of the development plan which, in this case, comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014) and the Saved Policies from the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (1998).

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 identifies that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014)

4.3 The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Development Framework (LDF) is a District wide development plan which replaces the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan to provide a framework for delivering development to 2026. The Core Strategy is the District Council's third LDF document. The Statement of Community Involvement and the Biddulph Town Centre Area Action Plan are the other LDF documents that have been produced and adopted to date. The Council intends to publish the Preferred Options Local Plan for public consultation during Summer 2017

4.4 Adoption of the Core Spatial Strategy results in changes to the statutory development plan. This includes replacing many policies in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. Policies that have not been 'saved' are deleted and are no longer in use. In the absence of deleted policies development proposals will be considered against relevant national planning policy guidance.

4.5 The following Core Strategy policies are considered relevant to the current application:

- Housing Policy SO4 – To provide new housing that is affordable, desirable, well designed and meets the needs of residents of the Moorlands.

- Design and Conservation Policy SO8 – To promote local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection and enhancement of the historic assets.
- Design and Conservation Policy DC1 – Development should be well designed and promote local distinctiveness
- Design and Conservation Policy DC2 – To safeguard and enhance where possible, the historic environment.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (1998)

4.6 The Local Plan proposals map shows the site is located within a Conservation Area and also within the Leek Town Centre Masterplan boundary, although it is not an identified opportunity site.

National Planning Policy Framework

4.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are to be applied. The document constitutes guidance for local planning authorities.

4.8 Central to the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for the planning system to support economic growth. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the application of the policy for decision-making:

"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".

4.9 One of the core principles within the NPPF which underpins decision-taking is that planning should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (paragraph 17).

4.10 The Government also attaches “great importance” to the design of the built environment and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 58 of the NPPF sets out a number of considerations for plan-making and decision-taking to ensure that developments:

- *“Will function and add to the overall quality of the area;*
- *Establish a strong sense of place;*
- *Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
- *Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *Create safe and accessible environments;*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”.*

4.11 Furthermore, paragraph 60 of the Framework confirms that:

“Planning policies and decision should not attempt to impose particular architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.”

4.12 Policy 12 of the NPPF which relates to Conserving and enhancing the historic environment is set out at paragraphs 126-141. The NPPF emphasises the need for alterations to heritage assets, including new build additions, to make a demonstrably positive contribution to the historic environment’s local distinctiveness (paragraphs 126 & 131).

4.13 The NPPF stresses that great weigh should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (paragraph 132), emphasising the need to avoid substantial harm in terms of: demolition, alteration or the compromise of its setting.

5.0 Planning Considerations

5.1 Having reviewed the adopted planning policy framework in the previous section of this Supporting Statement, there are a number of considerations that are material in determining whether the proposals are acceptable. This Section appraises the proposed development including the heritage impact, design and residential amenity.

Principle of the Development

5.2 The site is a Grade II Listed Georgian Property on the edge of Leek Town Centre and Leek Primary Shopping area but within Leek Conservation Area. There is a bus stop outside and is walking distance of the all town centre services.

5.3 The established use of the property is as a training and education facility falling under use class D1. This use class (D1) is not identified directly in the NPPF as a town centre use, but it was permitted on the basis that it would add to the general uses within the area and would not affect the viability or vitality of Leek Town Centre.

5.4 Prior to the current use the building was on the market since August 2010 so the use of the building as an office falling within B1 use class is evidently not attractive to potential buyers. Also the property is not within the Prime Shopping Frontage area so there is no requirement to maintain shopping frontages along key streets.

5.5 The proposal to convert the property into five apartments is considered preferable to other potential uses and also considered to add to the general uses within the area and address the shortfall of affordable, town centre living accommodation which is vital in maintaining a 24 hour town centre.

5.6 The proposed change of use will not detrimentally affect the integrity or the setting of the listed building and no physical alterations which would detrimentally affect the proposals are proposed as detailed below. In view of the above it is concluded that the development complies with national policy set out in the NPPF regarding

sustainable development and policy SO4 in the Local Plan relating to the provision of new housing.

Impact on Heritage Asset

5.7 The proposals are for the conversion of the current building, using much of the original wall positioning and general layout to provide five apartments each with a double bedroom, living/kitchen /dining areas and a separate bathroom.

5.8 The apartments are all similar in size but range from 47 m2 to 62 m2 dependant on the existing floor plans. The cellular nature of the original floor layout means that the whole building splits comfortably into five apartments spread over the three floors, without having to rearrange spaces significantly and therefore not harming the special character of the building, especially the exterior.

5.9 In order to adequately gain two apartments on the first floor, it is proposed that a small-scale extension is built over the current flat roof GF extension. The proposed extension will pick up the footprint of the ground floor extension with windows positioned and sized to reflect existing openings. The overall floor area of the extension is 23 m2.

5.10 By working with the existing structure, there has been no need to create additional openings in the exterior of the listed building, and other than the proposed rear extension, no exterior changes are proposed, safeguarding the character of the property. All of the interior changes are listed in the accompanying Schedule and mainly affect non-structural walls but where structural walls are affected will not damage anything of any architectural or historical merit.

5.11 It is considered that the proposed development complies with national policy set out in the NPPF at paragraphs 126 to 141 and in particular paragraph 132 and policies S08 and DC2 of the Local Plan.

Design

5.12 The proposed re-use of the building will provide an opportunity for enhancement and if left the property is likely to deteriorate as other uses of the building has been exhausted. The existing building has been added to over the years with a rear ground floor flat roofed extension which whilst fairly benign is not very in-keeping with the form of the main building and which would be greatly improved by the proposed extension which in itself is very minimal at only 23 sq m but which will enhance the appearance of the property overall by removing the flat roof. The current flat roof is incongruous to the main building and therefore adding the pitched roof extension will help to harmonise the rear elevation. The roof pitch follows that of the part of the building, which it sits against and the roof will follow through seamlessly with a double pitch with a valley gutter being created by the new extension.

5.13 The windows reflect existing fenestration size, shape and design to the rear so that they will fit with the existing architectural appearance, whilst providing necessary light and ventilation to Apartment 3.

5.14 The material palette is taken directly from the extant built form with red brick walls to match the existing and a plain slate roof which will key into the existing roof as depicted on the proposed elevations.

5.15 It is considered that the proposals are in accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF and policy DC1 as they will enhance the overall appearance of the site and the locality in general.

Residential Amenity

5.16 The property is on the edge of Leek town centre but within a mixed use area. The surrounding properties are in use as colleges and civic buildings but there are also restaurants, offices and residential uses in the vicinity. It is considered that the proposed use of the property, which is a detached property, is appropriate for this location which has a bus stop outside and is within walking distance of Leek and its

services and facilities, meaning the site is highly sustainable and a residential use is appropriate for this location.

5.17 To the rear of the property there is a small garden which will be tidied and rationalised for use by residents as a communal outdoor area. Although there is no dedicated car parking available to the property it is considered that the location is highly sustainable and for the target market which would be aimed at e.g. students in association with the nearby college, town centre based people on lower incomes, a car parking space would not be particularly necessary. Nonetheless there are car parks within walking distance of the site if required.

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 This Planning Supporting Statement has confirmed that the proposed development can be achieved in accordance with the relevant planning policy context.

6.2 The proposals will ensure that the existing building and site is re-used for residential use. The proposals also represent an opportunity to make improvements to the current/previous external appearance of the site and the surrounding area which is designated as a conservation area. In addition, the proposed use is considered to be compatible in this location which is highly sustainable and where a residential use would add vitality and viability in maintaining a 24 hour town centre.

6.3 For the reasons set out in this Planning Supporting Statement we respectfully request that this application for full planning permission is granted without delay.

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Commercial Development Projects Ltd June 2017