DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2017/0317	**14 MARKET PLACE**	**ERECTION OF EXTERNAL**
Valid 10/05/2017	**LEEK**	**STAIRCASE**
		(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development
- Design/visual impact
- Neighbour amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is located to the south of the Leek Town Centre Market Place. The ground floor is currently being used as a hairdressers with its most recent former use being that of a travel agents. The upper floors are currently unused but have benefitted from previous planning consent for their conversion to residential accommodation. The site is located within Leek Town Centre and forms part of the Leek Conservation Area.

PROPOSAL

The application is for the erection of an external staircase to provide independent access to the upper floors. The black painted, galvanised metal staircase would be located to the rear/side of the building. A new doorway would be formed at the top of the staircase. Partial views of the staircase may be obtained from the car parks to the south (Wilkinson's etc) but would not be viewed from the Market Place side of the application site.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

SS1	Development Principles
SS1a	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
DC1	Design Considerations
DC2	The Historic Environment.

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 17
Section(s) 7: Requiring Good Design
12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

The site has been subjected to a number of planning applications over the years however the most relevant applications are as follows;

11/00378/FUL Change of use of upper floors to create 3 No. one bed flats. Approved.

11/00828/FUL Two semi-detached dwellings. Withdrawn.

12/00057/FUL Two storey building comprising 2 apartments. Approved.

SMD/2014/0559 Conversion of first and second floors to create 3 x 1 bed flats and 2 storey side extension. Approved.

SMD/2014/0681 Alterations to front elevation. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 30th June 2017.

Neighbour consultation period ends: 20th June 2017.

Press Advert: Expires 5th July 2017.

Public Comments

Non received.

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town Council – Recommend approval. Not unneighbourly.

Conservation Officer

There is no independent access to the upper floors without going through Francesco's. The Council has also offered grant aid for the renovation of the upper floor shop frontage which cannot be implemented until the upper floor access is resolved. I am therefore fully in support of the independent access.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the Leek Town Development Boundary where there is a presumption in favour of development subject to all other planning matters being satisfied. The Conservation Area designation does not preclude this type of development; rather it just adds tighter control as to the development which can be allowed. In this instance the matters to consider are design/visual impact and neighbour amenity.

Design/visual impact.

There are no objections to the proposed design of the staircase, or the intended materials of black painted, galvanised metal. The staircase is functional in its design, the railing gaps ensure that the development would not have an overly 'heavy' appearance and it would sit comfortably against the building it is intended to serve. It is likely that small glimpses of the staircase would be seen from the public car parks to the south but there would be no visual impact harm and it is noted that there are other similar developments in the area. The stairs would be set within an enclave between two buildings and would not be seen from the Market Place perspective. For these reasons it is concluded that the application raises no adverse design or visual amenity objections and would conserve the conservation area.

Amenity

The development would not raise any adverse amenity concerns. This is a simple development which will allow independent access to the upper floors, currently there is only internal access through the hairdressers shop on the ground floor. Furthermore, it is noted that there is an extant planning permission on the site for the conversion of the upper floors to residential accommodation. Part of the approved scheme was for the erection of a side extension to accommodate a staircase allowing access to these flats.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the application is acceptable in terms of design, visual impact (including upon the Conservation Area) and does not raise any adverse neighbour amenity concerns. It is also noted that a staircase has previously been approved (albeit an enclosed one).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Lisa Jackson
Recommendation Date: 6th July 2017.

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council