

50 Broad Street
Leek
Staffordshire
ST13 5NS

E: mail@dbdconsultants.co.uk

W: www.dbdconsultants.co.uk

T: 01538 383 118



Design and access statement

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING STORE/COMMERICAL PREMISES
AND CONVERSION OF UPPER FLOOR TO MINDFULNESS/YOGA EXERCISE SPACE FOR:**

246 Uttoxeter Road, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-On-Trent, ST11 9LY



Photo courtesy of google earth

Design and Access Statement

Planning application for the refurbishment of existing store/commercial premises and conversion of upper floor to mindfulness/yoga exercise space

Background/Introduction

The building is situated adjacent to a junction leading to either Cheadle, Uttoxeter, Stoke on Trent or Stone. It is a suitably positioned property situated in a predominantly commercial area and sits comfortably in its surroundings.

The building is two storeys with both floors currently half way through renovation works. However, previously the property has been subject to a lot of commercial use, with the top floor also being situated as domestic / commercial. From planning history, it is believed the first floor was a sunbed centre from the late 1980's onwards. However, from the 80's up to 2014, there is evidence the first floor was used as a domestic flat. The ground floor has had many uses, all history stating commercial use. This floor has taken on the roles of a café, shops, micropub etc.

Besides the new barber shop taking up the proposed Unit 2, these remaining areas have been vacant for some time thus rendering the building empty and vulnerable. However, the client is willing to bring the building back to life with a commercial outlook throughout; due to the high capacity of commercial buildings within that small area.

Proposal

The current building is the mixture of commercial units and redundant areas, previously used as a micro-pub, flats etc. The proposal is to create a space for exercise classes upstairs where Flat 1 used to be, whilst refurbishing the downstairs proposed Unit 3 to allow for future let / use. This application is directly in referral to the previously approved application for the 'change of use from café (A3) to form new chiropodist (D1) with the creation of an additional commercial unit at ground floor level – hairdressers (A1) and subdivision of first floor flat to form two self-contained flats and alterations to elevations' – Approval reference: SMD/2015/0297

Since this application which was approved on 21/07/2015, the hairdressers has been created in the proposed Unit 2. However, all other approved changes have not had any action towards them. This application is submitted to change the approved use of the upper floor from domestic to an exercise area that would benefit from commercial gain.

Use/Amount

The refurbishment of the property and the implementation to convert the upper floor with a change of use would generate many full time / part time employment opportunities. Depending what the specific exercise classes are used for upstairs, whether that be yoga, Pilates, meditation, or many different etc, each classes are to have at least 1-2 staff per class.

The opening times are as below:

Monday – Friday: Approximate two hours slots of 9 to 11am // 3 to 5pm // 7-9pm will be allocated.

Saturday – Sunday: Closed

This means the upstairs could be used for exercise classes from 9am – 9pm Monday to Friday.

NOTE: no loud exercise that would disrupt the commercial areas below would be allocated to the building. All music would strictly be low volume, and mainly used for background music for the use of meditation or mindfulness exercise etc.

Layout

The layout of the building shall change internally and externally from the previously approved plans. To create an easier access to the first floor. A door is proposed to be positioned on the far right of the front elevation. This allows for the creation of a private corridor towards the stairs. The new stairs would be located within the same area as the current stairs on the far right wall.

Once upstairs, the layout has been designed with one large area for the exercise classes, and small divided rooms used as either toilets or a reception / store.

Besides keeping the stairs in the existing place instead of proposing them for Unit 2, the ground floor layout remains similar to the approved application.

Scale

The scale of the proposed development will be no different to the previously approved application (SMD/2015/0297) of slightly increasing the footprint by levelling out the ingressing ground floor front elevation.

Appearance

As approved in the previous application, the front elevation is to have a new pitched roof over the existing bay windows. The previous asbestos main roof has been carefully removed by qualified specialists and replaced with insulated Kingspan panels, as approved within the previous application.

In change to the approval details, the new proposed plans within this application show a more uniform and neat front elevation. In relation to the internal layout, the front elevation is now proposed to have equally sized / spaced windows / doors on each floor. There will be signage for each unit subject to separate applications at a later date.

Site and Landscaping

As stated in the SMD/2015/0297 application, the property boasts parking areas to the front of the retail units with existing provision for 5 vehicles. These will serve all the commercial elements of the property and will remain undisturbed.

Access

Access to the building is directly off Uttoxeter Road. The existing access into the site is well established and works efficiently for the amount of parking spaces that the property has. Depending on how busy the upstairs classes would get, there is a public carpark over the road from the property situated within the premises of Blythe Bridge Library with approx. 22No. Car spaces. There is also substantial existing roadside parking available on the opposite road known as 'A521 Cheadle Road'. Shown below.

246 Uttoxeter Road



Available roadside parking Public Transport

The nearest mainline railway station is in Blythe Bridge itself which is served via the previously mentioned bus routes.

The Developer will provide a timetable of all public transport routes within the entrance lobby. There are a number of bus stops within short walking distance of the property.

Sustainability

It is considered that the refurbishment and conversion of this building will have many environmental, social and economic benefits. The building and site is brownfield and so the conversion would mean there would be no loss of any Greenfield site.

The building therefore may become susceptible to disrepair and dereliction as the maintenance and running costs associated with the present use relative to profit means that retaining the building with its current planning usage is now financially unviable.

Indeed the new owner/applicant will dramatically upgrade the fabric of the building providing more efficient and sustainable units. The electric and heating installation needs a major overhaul and the fire alarm/escape system falls way below required standards and needs major upgrading together with new internal decoration throughout, putting back much of the fabric of the building which has long since been removed from the premises.

Introducing an exercise class into the area would encourage locals to live more of a healthy lifestyle, with anybody getting the chance to fulfil the minimum recommendation of at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week.