

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

**SMD/2017/0531/
532
Valid 25/09/2017**

**31 HIGH STREET
UPPER TEAN**

**PART CHANGE OF USE FROM
POST OFFICE SHOP RETAIL
(A1) TO RESIDENTIAL (C3)
AND LISTED BUILDING
CONSENT FOR INTERIOR
PARTITIONING TO
SEGREGATE THE USES AND
PROVIDE WC AND KITCHEN
FACILITY TO RETAINED SHOP
AREA.
(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Heritage – Grade II Listed Building
- Heritage – Conservation Area
- Economic

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

This two storey Listed Building in the Upper Tean Conservation Area forms part of the terraced frontage to the High Street with Listed Buildings adjacent and opposite. The building has long served as the village Post Office to the ground floor front rooms with residential accommodation at the ground floor rear and at first floor above. The Post Office business transferred from the premises in June 2017 moving some 50 metres west along the High Street to combine with and operate from an established Pharmacy.

The building frontage has two distinct parts at ground floor with an obvious traditional shop frontage with windows to either side of the entrance door. A further more typically domestic sash window is to the right and there is a further door into a single storey element to the right again which has served as the private residential access.

The interior ground floor space served by the windows either side the shop door and the sash window has for some time operated as a single retail space. It is accepted however that the space rear of the sash window was previously a separate room serving the dwelling and not part of the retail premises. The floor level of the space rear of the sash window is a step up from that of the space rear of the shop windows and it is evident that a dividing interior wall was removed – understood to have been done in the late 1960's – to create the enlarged space of 42.7m².

PROPOSAL

To re-instate the interior wall which originally divided the ground floor space and to create within the retained shop area a partitioned toilet and kitchen – these elements are subject to Listed Building consent. There are no exterior alterations and it is the

proposed partial change of use of retail space to residential which is the basis for the planning application.

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

SS6a Larger Villages Area Strategy

DC1 Design Considerations

DC2 The Historic Environment

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 to 17

Section(s) 12 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2003/1199 //1200 – Planning and Listed Building applications for alterations and re-instatement of windows and doors – approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: N/A

Neighbour consultation period ends: 1st November 2017

Press Advert: 15th November 2017

Public Comments

One representation in support from a neighbouring business trader of 44 years who reports the Post Office to have gone through many proprietors. Now that it is successfully part of Tean Pharmacy she thinks a smaller retail / commercial space would be more attractive than the current larger available space. Tean has a mix of 14 businesses within and nearby the High Street – considers that the reduced space will facilitate its prompt re-letting.

Town / Parish Comments

Checkley Parish Council – strongly object to this application as we feel that the loss of commercial/retail premises on our High Street will impact our community and community facilities.

Checkley Parish Council are currently in the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan and during this process we have engaged with the parish residents and stakeholders to find out what they like and dislike about where they live. More

amenities on the High Street was a prominent factor as a large number felt that the current amenities were extremely lacking.

Checkley Parish Council are listening to our residents and stakeholders by trying to help revive our High Street by supporting our local traders and supporting community events along the High Street.

Conservation Officer

No objections to this proposal. The application proposes to reinstate a partition wall within the ground floor which will enhance the historic legibility of the floorplan. The only other change is to install a toilet within an area of stud-partitioning at the rear and a kitchenette. I would therefore suggest a condition to submit details about soil pipes and vents.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Subject to an assessment of the implications for heritage and subject to consideration of the implications for the role of Upper Tean as a rural service centre (SS6a) the development is acceptable in principle.

Design

With no external changes no external design considerations arise.

Heritage

The interior re-instatement of the dividing wall is considered positive for the historic integrity of the building. The addition of the proposed partitioned area for a toilet and kitchenette would not harm the building fabric and would amount to a reversible change. It can be recognised too that the toilet and kitchenette would be essential to facilitate the letting of the retail / office unit as a stand-alone from the residential parts of the building.

With no external changes no adverse implications for the Conservation Area arise.

Amenity

No adverse consequences for neighbour or street scene amenity. Although not part of the description the applicant specifically wishes to have the option of letting the shop space as an artist's studio. This would fall under planning use class B1. Not all B1 uses may be suitable in terms of neighbour amenity nor indeed for that of the residential part of the application premises. It would be appropriate to limit by condition the B1 use to artist's studio.

Rural Service Centre

The Post Office had been marketed through a commercial agent (Everett, Massey and Furby) for nearly a year through 2015 to early 2016. The property was marketed again from April 2016 by Fisher German with good interest but mainly as residential, not as a business.

The application sets out a reasoned appraisal of why the reduced commercial space is proposed: 'Taking this information [the marketing] into consideration, we feel that an attempt to let the current commercial space of 42.7 sqm would be difficult, indeed impossible given that the same was marketed for some time without success. We feel that the proposed commercial space (of 22 sqm) as an office for a small business or as an art studio would result in a successful let whereas the larger space of 42.7 sqm would prevent such. The monthly letting rate for 22 sqm is more in line with small business budgets than the larger space of 42.7 sqm. We are not completely against the proposed commercial space being retail in its activity however, we would prefer it to function as an office space or art studio as we feel these functions carry less security risks (than purely retail) given that the commercial space is within 31 High Street (as a family dwelling).

The applicant points out that Tean has not lost its Post Office which was the primary service function of these premises. On this basis it can be seen that there is no overall loss to the community.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

But for the addition of the proposed toilet and kitchen unit this proposal might be judged to have no harm for heritage. The modifications to form the toilet and kitchen would at most result in less than substantial harm (NPPF paragraph 134). There is an identifiable public benefit in that the applicant is seeking to optimise the chance of securing a continued employment / service use within that part of the premises previously so used albeit over a reduced floor space. The greater part of the premises is residential but retention of the full extent of retail / commercial space has proved likely to deter continued custodianship of the building. Further, in terms of the building's heritage the proposed re-instatement of the room divide represents an enhancement of the building's heritage value by re-instating a former layout .

As a Planning Unit the building can perhaps best be regarded as mixed use residential (C3) and A1 retail which includes Post Offices. The application seeks to retain this arrangement albeit with a smaller scale retail floor. Given that the Post Office has been relocated nearby there is no loss of service to the community from this proposal.

Part 3 to the GPDO Class D provides for change of use from A1 to A2 which incorporates financial and professional services. As such therefore the future use of the retained smaller retail space as an office space fitting the description A2 of the Use Class Order would be acceptable as being Permitted Development not requiring further consent. An artist's studio is placed in planning use class B1 and a condition should be added to limit usage to B1 offices and artist's studio.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **approve**

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 6th December 2017

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council