Planning, Design and Access Statement

for

Mr. Peter Wilkinson

in respect of a Proposal comprising:

Change of Use of Vacant Bank Premises (Class A1) to a Gym & Wellness Centre (Class D2)

at

46, High Street,
Cheadle,
Stoke-on-Trent.
ST10 1AQ

April 2019

CONTENTS PAGE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

3.0 PLANNNG HISTORY

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Malcolm Sales on behalf of Mr. P. Wilkinson ('the Applicant') and supports a planning application relating to 46, High Street, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent. ST10 1AF

The planning application proposes the change of use of the application site to a Gym & Wellness Centre (Use Class D2).

The Gym will provide equipment for weightlifting, walking, Jogging & Running, cycling, Rowing, Pull ups, Cable Flyes et., & the Gym & Wellness Centre will provide for classes for activities which include yoga, pilates and meditation.

In addition to the aforementioned classes, the Gym & Wellness centre may provide ancillary physiotherapy services from an on-site professional.

The existing premises was operated as a bank by NatWest Bank plc and had been in operation
since the 1960's, and ceased operating in 2017.

The Applicant is hoping that subject to Planning approval, works on the conversion will take place later in the year and be fully operational before the end of the year.

The proposed Gym & Wellness centre would provide for activities which are impact-free and will not generate any noise levels.

The proposal would provide a leisure use within the premises and provide new full-time and part-time employment provision.

In summary, we consider that the proposed change of use accords with all relevant adopted planning policies and associated guidance at the local, regional and national level.

Accordingly, we would respectfully submit that planning permission should be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate and necessary conditions.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Malcolm Sales on behalf of Mr. P. Wilkinson ('the Applicant') and supports a planning application relating to 46, High Street, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent. ST10 1AF

The planning application proposes the change of use of the application site to a Gym & Wellness Centre (Use Class D2).

1.2 The Gym will provide equipment for weightlifting, walking, Jogging & Running, cycling, Rowing, Pull ups, Cable Flyes et., & the Gym & Wellness Centre will provide for classes for activities which include yoga, pilates and meditation.

In addition to the aforementioned classes, the Gym & Wellness centre may provide ancillary physiotherapy services from an on-site professional.

1.3 The planning application is being made to the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council as the local planning authority.

1.4 In addition to this Planning, Design and Access Statement, the application comprises the following documents:

- Application Form and Certificates;
- Plan & Location Plan

1.5 This Planning, Design and Access Statement is set out under the following sections:

- Site Location and Context;
- Proposed Development;
- Planning Policy Context;
- Planning Considerations;
- Summary and Conclusions.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.1 The application site is located in the High Street in the town centre.

2.2 The application site comprises premises set out on the Ground Floor and First Floor. The existing premises provides a modern environment which suits the proposed activities and provides adequate toilet facilities.

2.3 The premises are flanked by an Opticians on one side and a Chemists on the other side, while on the opposite side of the High Street are a furniture retail shop, Barclays Bank & a Betting Shop.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 There is no recent Planning History on the site.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The summary description of the proposed development is as follows:
The planning application proposes the change of use of the application site to a Gym & Wellness Centre (Use Class D2).

4.2 The Gym will provide equipment for weightlifting, walking, Jogging & Running, cycling, Rowing, Pull ups, Cable fly's et., & the Gym & Wellness Centre will provide for classes for activities which include yoga, pilates and meditation.

In addition to the aforementioned classes, the Gym & Wellness centre may provide ancillary physiotherapy services from an on-site professional.

4.3 The proposed activities are impact-free and will not generate any noise levels. In this regard, noise generation within the premises will be limited to unamplified speech and background music. Moreover, the proposed activities will not involve any impacts on the building structure from gym weights.

4.4 The internal layout of the premises will be structurally changed and will be done to comply with all current Building Regulations and Fire Safety. The external appearance of the premises will remain unaltered.

4.5 There will be an office used for administrative functions associated with the Gym & Wellness centre.

4.6 The proposal would provide new full-time and part-time employment provision.

4.7 The premises would operate with classes held throughout the day, which could be booked by members in advance.

4.8 The opening hours for the new premises would be as follows:

- 06:00 to 21:00 hours on Monday to Friday; and
- 08:00 to 18:00 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 This section sets out the planning policies to provide the context against which the planning application may be considered. The policy context for the site comprises the following document:

- National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019);

5.2 The key policy considerations are set out below.

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

5.3 The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government in February 2019.

5.4 The theme of sustainable development is consistent throughout the NPPF. Paragraph 8 sets out that there are three overarching objectives to sustainable development, as follows:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

5.5 The NPPF retains a "presumption in favour of sustainable development", with Paragraph 11 stating as follows:
"For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."

5.6 Section 6 of the NPPF refers to the economy and Paragraph 80 emphasises the role of Planning Authorities in helping local businesses to invest, expand and adapt:
"Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential."

5.7 Section 8 of the NPPF refers to the promotion of healthy and safe communities, with Paragraph 92 stating as follows:
"To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:
a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services."

5.8 Section 15 of the NPPF refers to the environment and Paragraph 180 states as follows:
"Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:
a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation."

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 This section assesses the planning considerations that we consider relevant to the determination of the application and the extent to which the proposal complies with planning policy requirements.

6.3 The key considerations for the proposed Gym & Wellness centre may be summarised as follows:

- Principle of Use;
- Design and Access;
- Living Conditions and Residential Amenity;
- Employment and Social Benefits.

6.4 The above matters are considered in detail below.

Principle of Use

6.5 The existing premises was in operation as a Bank up until 2017. The principle of a D2 leisure use is therefore considered acceptable and is consistent with the policies of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan.

6.6 The Applicant is proposing the permanent change of use of the premises to a Gym & Wellness centre. The use class of the premises would be D2

6.7 The proposed activities are impact-free and will not generate any more noise levels than those associated with a Bank use.

6.8 The internal layout of the premises will be structurally changed and will be done to comply with all current Building Regulations and Fire Safety. The external appearance of the premises will remain unaltered. There will be an office used for administrative functions associated with the Gym & Wellness centre.

6.9 The proposal for a Gym & Wellness centre use within the premises is a use which has been carefully considered with reference to the existing site context. Should the local planning authority be minded to grant planning permission for the proposed Gym & Wellness centre, we would expect a condition restricting the use of the premises to the activities set out.

6.10 We consider that the principle of the proposed use is consistent with national and local planning policy. The NPPF outlines the importance of leisure facilities with Paragraph 92 stating that planning decisions should “guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs”.

Design and Access

6.11 The existing access arrangements which are in place for the bank will remain in place for the proposed Gym & Wellness centre.

6.12 The internal layout of the premises will be structurally changed and will be done to comply with all current Building Regulations and Fire Safety. The internal layout of the premises will also remain structurally unchanged. The classes will be accommodated in the main ground floor area with Toilet and office facilities on the first floor.

6.13 The activities proposed as part of the Gym & Wellness centre use are impact-free and will not generate significant noise levels. In this regard, noise generation within the premises will be limited to unamplified speech and background music. Moreover, the proposed activities will not involve any impacts on the building structure from gym weights.

6.14 The proposed hours of operation would involve the Gym & Wellness centre opening at 06:00 hours on Monday to Friday and from 08:00 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. These operating hours are essential to ensuring that the Gym & Wellness centre is commercially viable. We consider that there is no valid planning reason to restrict the operating hours for the proposed Gym & Wellness centre.

6.15 We would respectfully submit that the proposed use of the premises as a Gym & Wellness centre is consistent with Paragraph 180 of the NPPF, and the Local Plan.

Employment and Social Benefits

6.16 The proposed Gym & Wellness centre will provide new employment in the form of full-time and part-time positions, whilst the D2 leisure use would provide a valuable social outlet for the local community.

6.16 The NPPF outlines that in addition to an environmental objective, sustainable development also includes an economic objective and a social objective. The economic objective is to “help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy”, whilst the social objective refers to supporting “strong, vibrant and healthy communities”.

6.17 Further to this, Paragraph 80 of the NPPF states that “significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity”.

6.18 The availability of, and access to leisure uses plays an important role in the health and wellbeing of urban areas. In this regard, the proposed Gym & Wellness centre will cater for those living and working in this part of Cheadle. The Gym & Wellness centre will also have a positive role in contributing to and complementing the existing range of town centre uses.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 In summary, the Applicant is applying for planning permission for the use of the application site as a Gym & Wellness centre (Use Class D2). The Gym & Wellness centre will provide a wide range of activities.

7.2 We wish to note the following planning considerations which may form part of the planning balance in determining the current application:

- The principle of a D2 leisure use is considered acceptable and is consistent with the policies of the Staffordshire moorlands District Council Local Plan;
- The proposed activities are impact-free and will not generate any significant noise levels;
- The noise generation within the premises will be limited to unamplified speech and background music;
- Should the local planning authority be minded to grant planning permission for the proposed Gym & Wellness centre, we would expect a condition restricting the use of the premises to the activities set out;
- The proposed Gym & Wellness centre will provide new employment in the form of full-time and part-time positions, whilst the D2 leisure use would provide a valuable social outlet for the local community;
- The availability of, and access to leisure uses plays an important role in the health and well-being of urban areas.

7.3 In conclusion, we consider that the proposed Gym & Wellness centre use accords with all relevant adopted planning policies and associated guidance at the local, regional and national levels.
Accordingly, we would respectfully submit that planning permission should be granted for the proposed Gym & Wellness centre, subject to the imposition of appropriate and necessary conditions.