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Design and Access Statement

Rev A

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A FOUR NEW DWELLINGS IN TWO NEW BLOCKS EACH CONTAINING A GROUND FLOOR AND FIRST FLOOR ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT ON LAND ADJACENT TO WALLBRIDGE PRECINCT, LEEK, ST13 8JF



May 2020

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR FOUR NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS AT WALLBRIDGE PRECINCT, ST13 8JF

Introduction/Context

This design and access statement has been prepared to accompany the application for a pair of two storey dwellings to be constructed on each end of the terrace rows at Wallbridge Precinct, Leek. Wallbridge Precinct was completed in the mid/late 1960's which at first comprised of 10 shop units with two-bedroom flats above. In the 1970's the demand for the shops fell and it was redeveloped to only leave four shop units on the end, with the other being converted into the ground floor flats they are today.

Now only three units remain for retail purposes, Unit 1 is currently a convenience news agent/store/grocery with Post Office, across the other side Unit 9 is an Indian Takeaway, and Unit 10 is a hairdressing salon. In 2016 permission was granted (SMD/2016/0138) to convert Unit 2 into a ground floor, one-bedroom flat due to the low demand for shop units, but high demand for affordable housing.

Proposal

The proposal is to construct two additional two-storey units onto the side of Unit 1 and 10 to provide four additional apartments, two ground floor and two first floor. These are to replicate the design of the current structure to provide four more affordable homes.



Use/Amount

The proposed use is residential to meet the demands of more affordable housing in the area. The majority of the existing public open grass space will be removed, but this is relatively minimal in its contribution to the overall street scene and the areas at the rear of each of the proposed dwellings will be retained.

Layout

The layout of the proposed ground floor dwellings will consist of a single open-plan living space with a kitchen, dining area and lounge space. This will then lead through to a bathroom and one double bedroom at the rear of the dwelling.

The layout of the first-floor apartments is nearly identical to the ground floor apartments; however, it is accessed by a ground floor door at the rear of the building which opens onto a staircase that lands in the living space of the first-floor apartment.



Scale

The scale of the proposed dwelling is suitable for the site, as it replicates the size of the neighbouring shops and dwelling that currently exist. Being less than 5 metres wide, it is not an overly large protrusion from the existing building line.

Appearance

The appearance of the dwellings will match that of the adjoining building, so they will not be noticeably different to look at. The continuation of the flat roof line off the existing buildings must be maintained, and the overall aesthetics of the proposed development are restricted due to the proximity to the existing 1960's style of building. It would not be seen as sympathetic to have a new design/style of building adjoining the existing structure.

Landscape

The proposed dwellings sit on the grassed area between the existing building and the public pavement, so this area will be removed and the external wall to the proposal will sit flush with the pavement. There will be a small yard area at the front and rear of each dwelling similar in size and design to unit 2 which currently has a low brick wall with close board fence panel inserts and gate with concrete flags inside for low maintenance. A prospective tenant would be free to use hanging baskets or planters to provide greenery to the amenity space.

Access

There are no issues affecting the access to the proposal. Each will have a walled area to the front of the dwelling surrounding the front door for privacy, like that found at Unit 2 which was converted into a dwelling from a shop. The site doesn't offer availability for private off-street parking spaces, however it would be unreasonable to assume that inhabitants of the proposed development would need to park vehicles on the public highway, risking obstruction, when there is a large public car park to the rear of the precinct which has available parking spaces and is rarely seen to be anywhere near maximum capacity.

There are existing paved footpaths around the perimeter of the existing building which run parallel to the public footpath up Wallbridge drive. These two paths will become redundant following the development and current only serve of a route to the back yards of the existing premises. The Western block will have a new access pathway running behind the proposed development, which will re-join the public footpath along the boundary with 75a Wallbridge Drive. The Eastern block has an open rear space which goes into the public car park, so this will not require a new access path.

Highways

The proposed development will have no negative impact on any aspect of highway safety in the immediate area. The section of Wallbridge Drive which runs adjacent to the proposed site is a straight road with very good visibility. There currently is a layby alongside the public footpath which is set back from the current building by the grass verge, which is where the proposal is to be built. The proposal will not affect the safety of any road users passing the site, or people using the layby. This is shown in the images below.











