

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0084
Valid 21/02/2024

3 ALTON CASTLE TAPE
STREET
CHEADLE

CHANGE OF USE ON PARTIAL
GROUND FLOOR AND FIRST
FLOOR FROM CLASS E TO
CLASS C5 SHORT TERM LET
TO ACCOMMODATE 7 UNITS.
PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY
EXTENSION AND DORMER TO
FIRST FLOOR AT REAR.

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

The principle of the development
The impact on the character and appearance of a Conservation Area.
The impact on residential amenity.
The impact on highway safety.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is on the east edge of the town centre and also within a Conservation Area. It comprises the former Alton Castle public house and is now occupied by Domino's Pizza on the ground floor. There is a small taxi office attached to the south wall of the building. The premises is on the corner of Tape Street to the west and Queen Street to the north. There are Victorian terraced buildings attached to the east wall, comprising another take-away, a hairdressers and a shop. There is a two-storey rear projection to the building on the site which expands along the rear wall of these units. To the north on the other side of the road is a car park for a commercial premises. To the west on the other side of Tape Street is a row of Victorian terraced dwellings. To the south is a wide walkway leading to Morrisons supermarket (to the south-east) and a community hall. The building on site has white rendered walls facing the roads with brickwork behind. To the south of the taxi office is the vehicular access off Tape Street leading to a rear parking and deliveries area. The site is in a "High Risk" former Coal Mining Area.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application to convert the ground floorspace behind the pizza takeaway and the floorspace above it on the first floor into seven units of accommodation. There would be some rear single-storey extensions with pitched roofs and a rear east-facing dormer at first-floor level. The application forms state a change of use to "C5" (short term lets not used as a main residence) and ticks "yes" to there being a gain, loss or change of use of residential units also ticking "social, affordable and intermediate units". The Design, Access & Heritage Statement describes a change of use to "C1" (hotels, boarding and guest houses but not

hostels) although the application forms tick “no” to hotels, residential institutions/hostels and the D&A Statement continues by stating a provision of “highly furnished boarding or holiday houses”.

The units are as follows:

- 2 x ground floor studios within existing floorspace to the rear of the take-away and proposed rear extensions;
- 3 x studio's on the first floor;
- 1 x 1-bed unit on the first floor;
- 1 x 2-bed duplex on the first-floor in the rear part of the building but with bedrooms at second floor level within a roof.

The access to all the units would be off the rear parking area/delivery yard. One of the ground floor units would have its own external entrance off the rear parking area. The other six units would be accessed via a communal entrance off the rear parking area and internal communal passages and stairs.

The site plan does not show a parking area for the units.

A “Geological and Mining Appraisal” report has been submitted.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (Adopted Sep 2020)

SS7 Cheadle Strategy
H1 New Housing
E4 Tourism Development
DC1 Design Considerations.
DC2 The Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023)

Sections 5 (Housing), 6 (Economy), 12 (Design) and 16 (Historic Environment).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2021/0058: Change of use from public house to take-away. Approved and implemented.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16.4.24
Neighbour consultation period ends: 16.4.24
Press Advert: 20.3.24

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

None.

Local Highways Authority

No objection.

Environmental Health

No objection subject to conditions including the requirement for sound insulation.

SMDC Waste Collection Service

No issues regarding waste collections.

Coal Authority

No objection.

OFFICER COMMENTS

It is not clear from the application what type of accommodation is offered for the seven new units. Reference is made to boarding or holiday houses but residential uses are also referred to i.e. "C5" use class and "residential" ticked on the application forms.

The principle of the change of use of the part of the former pub (now takeaway) building in this location, also a very sustainable location, into either dwellings or temporary holiday lets is acceptable.

However, if the units are intended for residential use, even as short-term rental units, then the floorspace of Unit 4 (a studio with 35 sq.m) and Unit 6 (a 2-bed duplex unit on the first and second floor with 62 sq.m of floorspace) would not meet the minimum floorspace thresholds set out in the governments Nationally Described Space Standards which require 37 sq.m and 70 sq.m respectively.

Furthermore, the two bedrooms contained within the roofspace of the duplex Unit 6 do not appear to have any windows and there is also doubt as to whether Building Regulations Approval would be achieved aside from this factor due to the internal height from ground to the roof apex being at a maximum, just 2.2m.

I therefore consider that the proposal would lead to unsatisfactory living conditions for those two units to the detriment of the residential amenity of the area contrary to Policy DC1 of the Local Plan.

With regard to other impacts, it is considered, despite no comments being received from the Conservation Officer, that the proposed works would not harm the visual amenities of the area including the Conservation Area as the external works are

restricted to the rear of the building and largely screened from views from the road and elsewhere in the public realm. The more prominent primary elevations facing the road are unaffected and the traditional window design would not be changed.

The use of the units would also not lead to any harmful level of overlooking into the windows or gardens of nearby dwellings or flats.

There is no objection from the Environmental Health Section despite the presence of the ground floor take-away unit.

The local highways authority does not object as the site is in a sustainable location close to public transport and the town centre shops and food stores, there is some parking available in the rear parking and delivery area if needed, the entrance into and out of this area onto Tape Street is deemed to be safe and there are ample public car parks within a short walk of the site.

Finally, the site is in a High Risk Coal Mining Area, categorised as “High Risk” due to ground stability issues caused by historical coal mining. The application includes a Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report due to the proposal involving extensions that would be ground intrusive. However, the Coal Authority consulted on the application raises no objection to the proposal on the basis of the impact of the extensions on ground stability in the area, due to the findings in the report.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed development which could involve the use of the proposed units for residential purposes, would not be suitable for such uses as some of the units would not provide satisfactory living conditions to the detriment of the residential amenities of those units. This is contrary to the policies of the Council’s Local Plan, in particular Policy DC1 which aims to protect the residential amenities of both existing and future residents of the area. The proposal is also therefore not line with Sections 5 and 12 of the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 17.4.24

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council