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Planning and Retail Statement Erection of Drive-Thru Coffee Shop

Land at Broad Street, Leek,
Staffordshire ST13 5NR

Thistlewood Properties

August 2025



RTPI

mediation of space - making of place

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning and Retail Statement has been prepared on behalf of 'Thistlewood Properties' to support a full planning application for the redevelopment of land at Broad Street, Leek, comprising a drive-thru coffee shop.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to explain how the site is proposed to be developed in accordance with local and national planning policies.
- 1.3 The application is supported by a suite of supporting plans and documents to enable the Council's swift determination of the application.
- 1.4 A design and access statement is no longer required for this type of application in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (DMPO), which came into force on 15th April 2015. Article 9(1) in Part 3 of the Order confirms that a design and access statement is only required for major development; or certain minor development in a Designated (conservation etc.) Area.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site lies a short distance to the south-west of Leek town centre and is on the north side of Broad Street, the A53 road, the main road leading into Leek from Stoke on Trent. It is about 50 metres south-west of the traffic lights on the St Edward Street/Compton Street junction.
- 2.2 The plot has been vacant for a number of years although there is a white rendered flat-roofed storage building at the back of the site. It was formerly a garage/filling station.
- 2.3 A 'Tool Station' retail unit (formerly Halfords) lies to the west side and Victorian dwellings facing the main road, lie to the east.
- 2.4 Leek Masonic Hall, a Victorian red-brick building lies directly opposite the site on the other side of the road to the south.
- 2.5 To the rear of the site to the north lie 1930's semi-detached dwellinghouses which face the Eversley Avenue cul-de-sac.
- 2.6 The Leek Conservation Area lies to the south side of the main road with the boundary running along the southern edge of the road.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a drive-thru coffee shop (Use Class E) with a loading area, car parking, 'drive-thru' lane, hard and soft landscaping; and other associated works.
- 3.2 The building has a gross internal floor space of 171 sqm, with the drive-thru element located to towards the north, east and west of the building.
- 3.3 The front elevation, located on the southern side of the building, contains the main entrance. A row of 7 parking bays, including 1no. disabled bay and a waiting bay are proposed in front of the building. To the south of the building, a further row of 11.no parking bays are proposed, which includes 2no. EV charging bays.
- 3.4 Two Sheffield cycle stands, providing four cycle parking spaces, will be brought forward as part of the proposed development.
- 3.5 The vehicular access to the proposed development is via Broad Street.
- 3.6 Refuse is to be stored in a utility yard to the east, attached to the proposed building.

4 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is **the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan** (adopted in September 2020).

Local Planning Policy

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

- 4.2 **Policy SS 1 (Development Principles)** states that development should positively contribute to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands. The Policy goes on to emphasise the importance of having good quality local services and opportunities for employment, among other things.
- 4.3 **Policy SS 2 (Settlement Hierarchy)** identifies Leek as a 'Town', which is the highest-ranking position in the hierarchy. Towns are defined as large settlements which contain services and facilities. Future growth in the district should be focussed on Towns, which have fixed development boundaries.
- 4.4 **Policy SS 5 (Leek Area Strategy)** sets out the Council's desire to consolidate the role of Leek as the District's primary service centre. It states that new development opportunities should be established in accordance with the town centre masterplan, and sensitive improvements to increase the quality of supporting town centre uses should be supported. The Policy also refers to Leek's special character and heritage, requiring the conservation and enhancement of sites and areas of heritage importance, with distinctive, high quality and sustainable buildings. Moreover, the setting and historic character of the town should be protected and improved.
- 4.5 **Policy TCR 2 (Primary Shopping Frontages)** emphasises that proposals for changes of use to A1 retail will be supported in primary shopping frontages. Development in other use classes will also be permitted as long as it would not generate an over-concentration of non-shopping uses, change the retail character of the area, or affect the town centre's vitality or viability.
- 4.6 **Policy TCR 3 (Retailing and other Town Centre uses outside Town Centres)** states that town centre uses of 200 square metres or more on sites outside of town centres and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan will require a Sequential Assessment and/or Impact Assessment. Preference will be given to sites in the town centre, followed by edge of centre sites. Moreover, if a development would have an impact on a defined centre, developer contributions may be requested to mitigate this.
- 4.7 **Policy DC 1 (Design Considerations)** requires development to be well-designed so that it reinforces local distinctiveness and positively contributes to the character of the area. Design should be of a high quality, respect the site and its surroundings, and promote a sense of place. In addition, design concepts for buildings should reduce the impact of development, the amenity of the area must be protected, and the maintenance, enhancement and restoration of biodiversity and geodiversity should be promoted where appropriate. There should be safe and satisfactory access, with a contribution towards meeting the parking requirement arising from the development. New developments should be well-integrated for car, pedestrian and cycle uses, with sustainable transport links.

- 4.8 **Policy DC 2 (Historic Environment)** states that heritage assets and their settings should be conserved and enhanced wherever possible - development should positively contribute to the character of historic environments.
- 4.9 **Policy NE 1 (Biodiversity and Geological Resources)** makes clear that biodiversity and geological resources should also be conserved and enhanced. Where possible, development is expected to deliver a net gain in biodiversity which is proportionate to the size and scale of the development. If adverse impacts cannot be avoided, developers must ensure that impacts are mitigated, with suitable compensation measures towards habitat loss.
- 4.10 **Policy T 1 (Development and Sustainable Transport)** notes that the Council will support development which reduces reliance on the private vehicle and the need to travel. Development should be located where the highway network can accommodate the traffic the scheme will generate, and appropriate parking should be made available. In Appendix 2, for Class A1, the requirement is 1 space per 20 m² gross floor area up to 1000 m² and 1 space per 14 m² thereafter, whilst for Class A5 2 spaces, plus 1 space per 5 m² are needed. Furthermore, new development should facilitate walking and cycling within town centres. If development will generate a significant demand for travel, a contribution towards public transport provision, junction improvements, traffic management, and highway infrastructure may be required.
- 4.11 **Policy T 2 (Other Transport Measures)** states that the Council will support development proposals which encourage electrical battery powered vehicles.

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

- 4.12 The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The following sections of the NPPF are considered relevant to this application:
- Achieving sustainable development;
 - Decision-making;
 - Building a strong, competitive economy;
 - Promoting healthy and safe communities;
 - Promoting sustainable transport;
 - Making effective use of land;
 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places; and
 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.

5 PLANNING JUSTIFICATION

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The site consists of brownfield land, located within the urban area of Leek, which, according to Policies SS2 and SS5, is a principal location for services, facilities, and future growth.
- 5.2 There is an extant planning permission for the site, ref: SMD/2022/0189, which permitted the erection of two units (Class E/Sui Generis) and associated works. One of these units was a coffee shop, the other being a hot-food takeaway. Therefore, the principle of a coffee shop on the site has previously been accepted. Whilst the proposals seek a larger coffee shop than permitted under the previous application, a sole use in one building is asserted to be wholly appropriate for the site.
- 5.3 The site is in a sustainable location. It is within a short walking distance from the town centre and is in a location where public transport provision can be utilised.
- 5.4 Therefore, it is asserted that the principle of development is acceptable.

Design

- 5.5 The materials proposed are contemporary in nature. The materials are considered to respond to their surroundings and do not result in the building appearing out of character with the area which features a mixture of materials and designs. As a result of the design and scale of the proposed development, it will not result in adverse harm upon the appearance or character of the wider area.

Amenity

- 5.6 Due to the siting of the proposed drive-thru within the urban area and with sufficient distance from residential properties maintained, the proposal would not result in adverse harm upon amenity.
- 5.7 Any external lighting can be subject to conditions to ensure that it is acceptable in terms of its siting and brightness and will not disrupt the wider area.
- 5.8 With residential properties an appropriate distance away from the site and with the use of consistent opening times it will not result in adverse harm upon amenity. It is notable that planning permission ref: SMD/2022/0189 is extant and could be implemented on the site.

Highways and Access

- 5.9 The application is supported by a Transport Statement, prepared by WSP.
- 5.10 The access to the site will remain the same as the Consented Development, with access proposed to be served via a simple priority junction on the northern side of Broad Street, approximately 40m west of the Broad Street/St Edward Street/Compton signalised junction. Within the site the access will provide access to the customer car park, loading bay, and drive-thru element of the site.

- 5.11 Deliveries for the proposed drive-thru will take place within the car park, in the delivery vehicle parking bay, to the west of the proposed building. Larger goods vehicle deliveries will occur outside of trading hours.
- 5.12 A dedicated pedestrian crossing across the car park to facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians from Broad Street to the entrance of the proposed development unit will be provided. The existing pedestrian network is well used given the local characteristics of the area and will facilitate walking and cycling trips. Additionally, two Sheffield cycle stands, providing four cycle parking spaces, will be brought forward as part of the proposed development to the west of the drive-thru, facilitating cycle trips to and from the site.
- 5.13 It is expected that most vehicular trips for the drive thru will be pass-by in nature. These are trips that are already present on the local road network (e.g. local residents driving to or from work or other destinations), which will turn into the site.
- 5.14 The site benefits from good accessibility to public transport in the form of westbound and eastbound bus stops on the A53 Broad Street in the vicinity of the site, while the bus services provide a reasonable choice for people travelling to and from work at the drive-thru.
- 5.15 Under the local parking standards applied within Appendix 2 – Parking Standards of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan adopted in 2020, the closest classification of the proposed development as A3 Restaurants and Cafes suggests one vehicle space for five square metres of dining and bar areas. By assuming that two-thirds of the GFA will be dining area, the development proposals return a minimum parking allowance for the proposed 171sqm drive-thru of 23 parking spaces. It is noted that SMDC Parking Guidance allows some deviation from the standards with each development reviewed on a case-by-case basis. It is therefore expected that a provision of 18 spaces is sufficient for the proposed development.
- 5.16 The Transport Statement notes that there would 46 fewer two-way trips generated in the Development Peak period and 15 fewer two-way trips generated in the PM peak period by the proposed development compared to the consented development. The proposed development will therefore have a reduced impact on the local road network during these periods compared to the consented development. While there are 19 more trips associated with the proposed development compared to the consented development during the Saturday Peak period, this equates to less than one extra vehicle arriving at the site every six minutes on average. It is considered that traffic will not be materially affected by this uplift and therefore no further analysis of the impact upon the local highway network is required.
- 5.17 Overall, WSP conclude within their Transport Statement that the impact of the proposed development on the local highway network will be minor.

Landscaping

- 5.18 The Proposed Site Layout drawing details areas of landscaping to the site boundaries. The landscaping will consist of low level, native shrub species planting. Full details of the proposed planting/hard surfacing can be secured by an appropriately worded condition.

Waste

- 5.19 To the eastern elevation of the building is an enclosed utility yard which will be used to store waste and receive collections. This will ensure it is well maintained and hidden from public view.

Biodiversity

- 5.20 The application site relates to an existing area of hardstanding.
- 5.21 The proposals do not impact on a priority habitat and impact less than 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat and 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows.
- 5.22 It is not considered that the proposal decreases the site's biodiversity value.

6 RETAIL STATEMENT

- 6.1 The site is close to, but not within, the town centre as it is outside of the town centre boundaries as shown in the Local Plan.
- 6.2 The town centre is shown as being to the east of St Edward Street and north of Brook Street. The Local Plan aims to concentrate retail, food and drink and other town centre uses in the town centre to ensure the viability and vitality of the town centre and ensure that the town centre achieves its purpose and that it functions as a town centre.
- 6.3 In this respect, the application would therefore be determined against Policy TCR3 'Retailing and Other Town Centre Uses Outside of Town Centres' and this states that only proposals for retail and other town centre uses of 200m or more on sites outside town centres and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, a Sequential Assessment will be required. An Impact Assessment will only be required on proposals for town centre uses of 200m² or more (net sales for A1) located outside of the town centres.
- 6.4 The application proposals seek the erection of a building to be used as a coffee shop, which is 171sqm. Therefore, as this is below the 200sqm threshold for a sequential test and for an impact assessment, neither are required.
- 6.5 Furthermore, the site benefits from an extant permission for a larger scale development of town centre defined uses.
- 6.6 The proposals comply with Policy TCR3 of the Local Plan.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This Statement has been prepared to support an application for the erection of a drive-thru coffee shop with associated vehicle parking.
- 7.2 The proposed design of the building and its surroundings is wholly appropriate within its setting. There will be no undue amenity impacts arising from the proposals and the impact upon the local highway network would be minor.
- 7.3 The application proposals are therefore asserted to be acceptable and compliant with both local and national planning policy.
- 7.4 The application should therefore be approved without delay.

