Design and Access Statement

Hall Yard Buildings, High Street, Upper Tean, ST10 4DZ

Proposal: Change of use of an existing ground-floor commercial unit from Commercial, Business and Service use (Use Class E) to a self-contained one-bedroom dwelling (Use Class C3).

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an application for planning permission and listed building consent for the conversion of an existing ground-floor commercial unit at Hall Yard Buildings, High Street, Upper Tean, into a self-contained one-bedroom apartment.

It should be read alongside the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment and the following drawings:

- Drawing 001 2026 001 – Floor Plans as Existing and Proposed
- Drawing 001 2026 002 – Site Location and Block Plan

The statement explains the design principles behind the proposal and demonstrates how the development responds appropriately to the site, the existing building, its heritage significance and the accessibility requirements of future occupants.

2. Site and Surroundings

Hall Yard Buildings occupies a prominent position at the junction of Hall Yard and High Street, within the established centre of Upper Tean.

The property is a Grade II listed former mill building, recorded as *Hall Yard Buildings: The Young Generation and Beautiful Homes*, List Entry Number 1374676. It is also situated within the Upper Tean Conservation Area and forms an important part of the historic industrial character of the village.

The building is constructed predominantly in traditional red brick and retains the proportions, architectural detailing and general appearance associated with its former industrial use. Its scale and position make it a recognisable feature within the local streetscape.

The application relates solely to the existing ground-floor commercial accommodation, which has a floor area of approximately 45 square metres. The two upper floors already contain two occupied residential apartments.

The property is located within walking distance of local shops, services, public transport and other community facilities. It is therefore a sustainable and appropriate location for a small residential unit.

3. Existing Accommodation

The ground-floor commercial unit currently comprises two principal rooms, together with an entrance area adjoining the existing staircase that provides access to the upper-floor apartments.

The unit is contained entirely within the existing building envelope. Its existing windows are fixed and do not provide the natural ventilation required for residential occupation.

The entrances serving the adjoining barber shop and the existing upper-floor apartments are separate and clearly identifiable. These arrangements will remain unaffected by the development.

4. Proposed Development

Planning permission is sought to change the use of the existing ground-floor commercial unit from Use Class E to a self-contained one-bedroom dwelling within Use Class C3.

The proposed accommodation will comprise:

- An entrance area;
- An open-plan kitchen, living and dining space;
- A pantry and integrated storage;
- One bedroom with fitted wardrobes; and
- An en-suite bathroom.

The apartment has been designed to make efficient use of the existing floor area while providing clearly defined living, sleeping, cooking and sanitary accommodation.

The proposed dwelling is intended to accommodate the owner of the adjoining barber shop, providing a practical live-work arrangement within the centre of the village. This will reduce the need for regular travel while supporting the continued operation of an established local business.

5. Design Approach

The principal design objective has been to introduce a viable residential use while making the minimum possible intervention into the listed building.

The proposal has therefore been developed around the following principles:

- Retaining the existing building envelope, scale and form;
- Preserving significant historic fabric and architectural features;
- Avoiding extensions or unnecessary external alterations;
- Retaining the established entrances and circulation arrangements;
- Providing a practical and functional internal layout;
- Protecting the amenities and access arrangements of the existing apartments; and
- Securing the continued occupation and maintenance of the ground-floor accommodation.

The conversion represents a sensitive adaptation of the existing building rather than a substantial redevelopment.

6. Amount and Scale

The proposed apartment will have an internal floor area of approximately 45 square metres.

No extension or increase in the building's footprint, floorspace, height or overall volume is proposed. The development will remain entirely within the existing ground-floor unit.

The scale, massing and proportions of Hall Yard Buildings will therefore remain unchanged.

7. Layout

The internal layout has been arranged to respond to the existing structure and available floor area.

The kitchen, living and dining accommodation will occupy the western part of the unit, with the bedroom and en-suite positioned within the eastern section. The arrangement creates a straightforward division between the principal living and sleeping spaces.

The proposal incorporates fitted wardrobes, a pantry and integrated storage to make efficient use of the available space and reduce the need for freestanding furniture.

The existing common entrance and staircase serving the upper-floor apartments will remain in their current positions. The proposed apartment will be accessed from the existing ground-floor entrance area without affecting the operation or security of the upper-floor accommodation.

8. Appearance and Materials

There will be no material change to the overall appearance of Hall Yard Buildings.

No alterations are proposed to the roof, brickwork, principal structural walls or established architectural detailing.

The only external alteration will be the replacement of the existing fixed windows serving the ground-floor unit with openable flush-casement, heritage-style windows. The replacement windows will match the existing units in their:

- Overall dimensions and proportions;
- Position within the existing openings;
- Frame appearance;
- Glazing arrangement;
- Colour and finish; and
- Architectural detailing.

The introduction of opening casements is necessary to provide suitable natural ventilation for residential occupation. The change will be visually discreet and will not materially alter the appearance or established rhythm of the elevation.

Further consideration of the building's significance and the effect of the replacement windows is provided within the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment.

9. Access and Inclusive Design

The application relates to an existing listed building, and the access strategy has been developed within the physical constraints of its existing structure.

The proposed apartment is located entirely at ground-floor level, with the principal living, sleeping, cooking and sanitary accommodation provided on a single level.

Access will continue to be taken through the existing ground-floor entrance. No alteration is proposed to the entrance position, frontage or existing approach from the adjoining public pavement.

The proposal does not alter or obstruct:

- The separate entrance to the adjoining barber shop;
- The existing common entrance serving the upper-floor apartments;
- The staircase leading to the existing apartments; or
- The public footway surrounding the building.

Internal circulation will be kept clear and straightforward. Door openings, sanitary facilities and internal fixtures will be designed to provide reasonable ease of use within the constraints of the listed building.

Detailed compliance with the applicable requirements of the Building Regulations, including accessibility, ventilation, fire safety and means of escape, will be addressed during the technical design stage. Where necessary, an appropriate balance will be maintained between improving accessibility and preserving the building's significant historic fabric.

Overall, the proposal will not worsen the existing accessibility of the property and will provide the benefit of self-contained residential accommodation arranged entirely on the ground floor.

10. Highways, Parking and Movement

The proposal does not alter the existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements surrounding the property.

No existing parking spaces will be removed, and no new access, driveway or dropped kerb is proposed. The limited scale of the one-bedroom dwelling means that it is unlikely to result in a significant increase in vehicular movements.

Hall Yard Buildings is located within the established village centre, where shops, services and public transport are accessible on foot. The intended occupant also operates the adjoining barber shop, allowing journeys between home and work to be undertaken without the use of a private vehicle.

The proposal therefore supports sustainable patterns of movement and makes effective use of a centrally located existing building.

11. Residential Amenity

The proposed apartment will provide a practical arrangement of living and sleeping accommodation appropriate to its intended occupation.

The replacement openable windows will provide natural light, outlook and ventilation to the principal habitable rooms. The internal arrangement also allows the bedroom to be separated from the main living area, providing suitable privacy.

The conversion will not result in any new building mass, overlooking or loss of light to neighbouring properties. The established residential units on the upper floors will remain unaffected, with their existing access and circulation arrangements retained.

The proposed residential use is compatible with the existing apartments above and with the mixed residential and commercial character of the surrounding village centre.

12. Sustainability

The proposal represents the sustainable reuse of existing accommodation within an established building.

By working within the existing envelope, the development avoids the environmental effects associated with demolition and new construction. It retains the embodied energy contained within the building's existing structure and materials while securing an active long-term use.

The development will also:

- Make efficient use of previously developed land;
- Provide accommodation in an accessible village-centre location;
- Reduce the need for the intended occupant to travel to work;
- Retain and reuse the existing building fabric; and
- Support the continued maintenance of a designated heritage asset.

Any improvements to the thermal performance or building services will be designed to avoid harm to significant historic fabric and will be considered in detail as part of the Building Regulations stage.

13. Planning and Design Considerations

The proposal has been considered against the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, including the principles of sustainable development, the Larger Villages Area Strategy and the requirements relating to high-quality design and the historic environment. The Council identifies Upper Tean as a larger village where appropriately located development can be supported.

The development responds positively to these principles by:

- Reusing an existing building in a sustainable settlement;
- Providing an additional small dwelling without extending the building;
- Retaining the established scale and appearance of the property;
- Preserving the character of the listed building and conservation area;
- Protecting neighbouring residential amenity;
- Maintaining existing access arrangements; and
- Supporting an established village-centre business.

The proposal will not result in a harmful change to the appearance of the building or the character of Hall Yard and High Street.

14. Conclusion

The proposed conversion provides a sensitive and sustainable new use for the existing ground-floor commercial accommodation at Hall Yard Buildings.

The apartment has been designed to operate entirely within the existing building envelope and requires only limited internal alterations. No extension or change to the building's scale, massing or general appearance is proposed.

The replacement of the fixed windows with visually matching openable heritage-style units will provide the ventilation required for residential occupation while preserving the established character and rhythm of the elevation.

The proposal retains the entrances and access arrangements serving the adjoining barber shop and the two existing upper-floor apartments. It also provides a practical ground-floor live-work arrangement for the owner of the adjoining business.

Overall, the development represents an appropriate, modest and sympathetic adaptation of the Grade II listed building. It will secure the continued occupation and maintenance of the ground-floor accommodation while preserving the special architectural and historic interest of Hall Yard Buildings and its positive contribution to the Upper Tean Conservation Area.