

Pre application Enquiry
For
Development of Britannia Chambers, West Street, Leek, ST13 8AD .

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT.



Client:

Mr R Siaghi

Location:

Britannia Chambers, West Street, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8AD

Nature of the works.

Description:

Byatt Oliver Associates have been instructed by the client to submit a planning application enquiry for the development of the former office known as Britannia Chambers.

Assessment:

Physical.

The site is located in Leek within the Staffordshire moorlands. The site is situated approximately 300m west of the core town centre and is positioned at the junction of West Street and Salisbury Street. West Street is accessed off Church Street (A523). Salisbury Street is a thoroughfare running through residential streets linking the south of the town centre, both roads are frequently used.

The Building is identified on the diagram, hatched red. 'Taken from the Town Centre Master Plan 2012'.

The site is located on the perimeter of the Leek town centre boundary but still falls within the conservation area.

The surrounding areas comprise of a mixture of commercial and residential properties made up traditionally of 18th Century buildings, varying from 2 and 3 storeys.

Typical construction for the surrounding properties is facing brickwork under plain clay tiled roofs.





The Building:

The Property Comprises of a detached three storey 1970's concrete framed building. The concrete frame is clad with facing brickwork, pebble dash render and textured rendered panels. It has a mixture of timber and powder coated steel windows and has a flat roof. The design is iconic of its era. The Building offers a mixture of open plan and individual office space over the three floors. Externally parking is available for up to 10 vehicles on site and the car park is accessed from West Street. In addition to the parking there is a rear yard which is secured by a steel gate and enclosed brickwork boundaries.

Ground Floor

N.I.A	3955 sq. ft	367.6 sq. m.
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First Floor

N.I.A	3665 sq. ft	340.6 sq. m.
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Second Floor

N.I.A	3665 sq. ft	340.6 sq. m.
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The Proposal:

The proposal is to utilise the existing property, by refurbishing the existing structure improving aesthetics and functionality of the build. Preliminary proposals are for the internal alterations and fit out of the ground floor to accommodate a convenience store. The 2 upper floors are to be converted in to high quality affordable residential accommodation.

The preferred proposal will provide the following facilities:

Ground Floor

367.6 sq. m of convenience store utilising the existing plant rooms, external storage areas, car parking and vehicular access.

First Floor & Second Floor

10 - 12 number 1 bedroom apartments all finished to a high standard, served via its own private access from the car park.

Planning Policy.

We understand that the current use class of the property is Business (B1) and as such is important for employment, policy E2 – Existing Employment Area identified in the latest revised Core Strategy (yet to be adopted) The principles are to retain and encourage employment in certain areas and permission will not be granted for redevelopment of such areas for housing, retail or non employment uses, However section 8. 3. 10 does state ‘The employment land study highlights some opportunities on underused sites, derelict buildings and for mixed use developments’ and mixed use developments are considered beneficial in contributing to sustainable development and provides the opportunity to build business units which might not be otherwise viable. Byatt Oliver Associates believe the mixed use development will ensure the building does not become derelict and underused and offers a sustainable solution for the future of the building and the area.

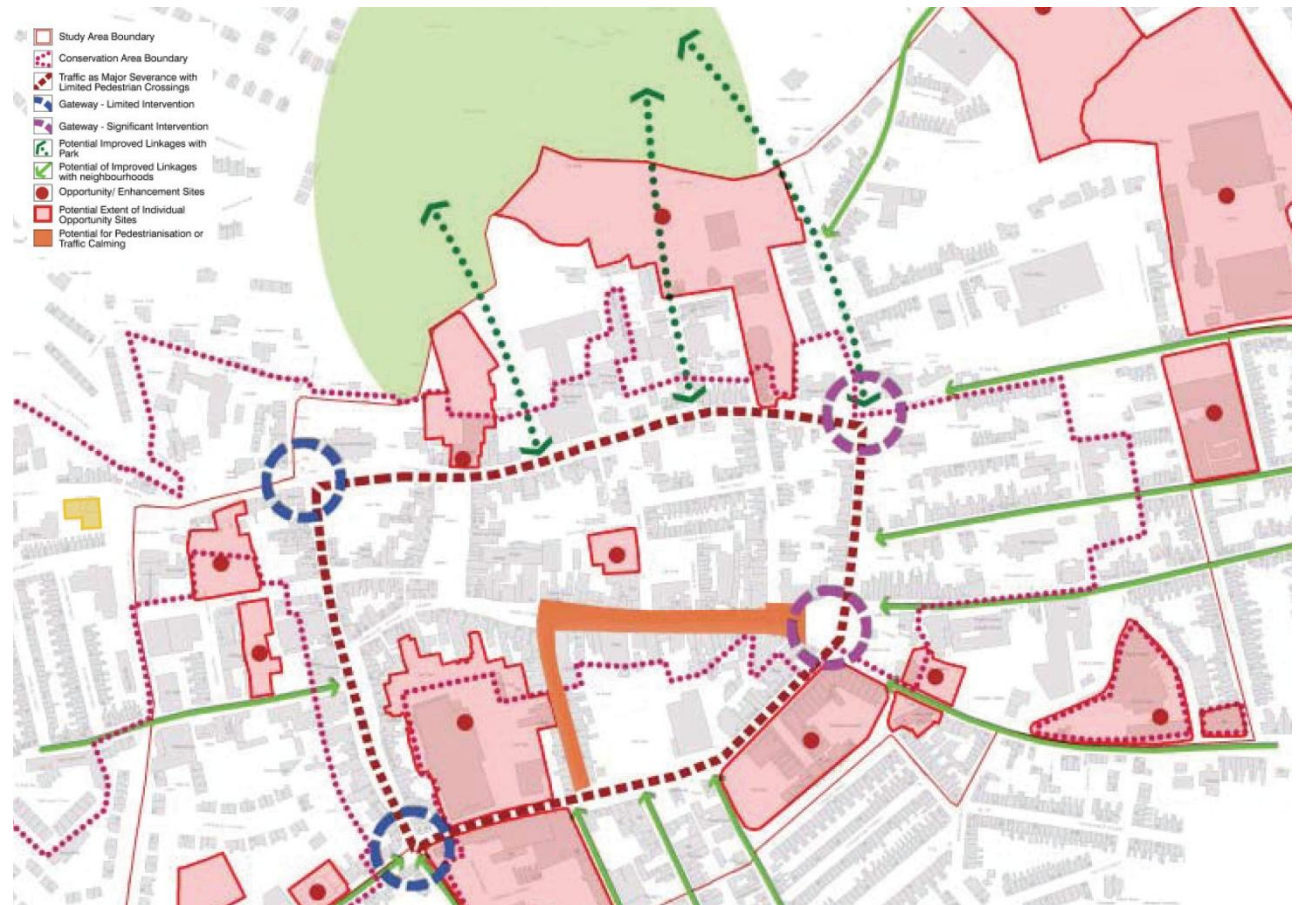
Policy SS5 - Towns.

The latest figure shown in policy SS5 for Leek town centres housing are 1650 residential units between 2006 & 2026, of this the affordable housing target is 375 units. Employment land should be increase with the addition of 7.2 hectares of land made available and the retail element should increase by 3000 sq. m for convenience and 12,000sq. m for comparison. A mixed use development will ensure a good mix of these elements whilst making the scheme viable for the client.

The attached plan indicated the latest revision of proposals to be adopted in the core strategy; the site can be identified by the Yellow hatching.

The site sits on the perimeter of the town centre development policy.

Neighbouring proposals are principally public car parking, and potential improved access into the town centre.



The Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing for Local People by meeting at least one of the following criteria:

- The Plan attached identified the proposed development areas for Leek Town Centre, with the proposed development shown hatched yellow.

As stated the proposal in essence is to retain the exiting building with a sustainable future. The surrounding areas a mixed use and therefore the development would have no adverse affects. There will be no further impact of the movements to and from the site. Careful consideration will be given to space about dwelling requirements and the acoustic principles of this development.

To ensure the property does not become unusable for inhabitable the economic viability of the scheme requires a percentage of residential accommodation. Whilst the development will have a proportion of retail we would view this as secondary and should not have any impact of the town centre master plan.



STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

REGENERATION

SERVICES

PRE-APPLICATION
CONSULTATION MEMO

To: Rachael Simpkin

Your Ref:

From: Kathryn Poulter

Our Ref: 7551/KP

Direct Dial: 4138

Date: 2/05/2013

Pre application request Britannia Chambers, West Street, Leek

The policy observations contained in this memorandum are based on information available to the author at the time of writing, which may be incomplete. The observations may be revised in the light of new information. Comments are made on policy issues only, and are without prejudice to the final advice given by the case officer or any observations made on any subsequent planning application.

Background

The site lies within the Leek Town Development Boundary. The pre application request relates to reuse of the building to accommodate a convenience store (A1 Use) 367.6sq.m and the first and second floor would be converted to 10-12 number 1 bedroom apartments. The last use of the site was for employment (B1 offices).

Policy Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

- Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (para 2).
- Presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 14).
- Sustainable economic growth should be supported (para 19)
- Local planning authorities (LPAs) should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. They should require applications for main town centre uses to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre (para. 24)
- For larger scale residential developments in particular, planning should promote a mix of uses in order to provide opportunities to undertake day-to-day activities including work on site. Where practical, particularly within large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties (para 38).
- When assessing, applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500 sq m).
- Housing mix and affordable housing (para 50).

- LPAs should normally approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes) where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate (paras 51).
- High standards of design (paras 58 - 64).

The site lies beyond the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (SMLP) defined town centre shopping streets and outside the town centre boundary identified in the Leek Town Centre Masterplan.

The emerging Core Strategy policy TCR2 regarding retailing outside town centres states that “Within the towns, but outside town centres... new or extended convenience retail units of up to 500m2 gross floor space to serve everyday local shopping needs and improve access to retail facilities at a local level will be promoted and supported, provided that they compliment but do not adversely impact upon the vitality and viability of the three town centres and are in sustainable locations.” The proposed retail floorspace is under this threshold therefore no sequential assessment is required. The Inspector found this policy to be sound therefore significant weight can be given to it.

Emerging Core Strategy policy E2 is relevant which seeks to safeguard existing employment sites for such purposes that are well located, provide or are capable of providing good quality modern accommodation and are capable of meeting a range of employment uses to support the local economy. It sets out criteria that proposals for redevelopment for housing retail or other non-employment uses would need to meet including demonstrating that the site would not be suitable or viable for continued employment use. Where redevelopment is proposed preference will be given to mixed use redevelopment schemes which retain an element of employment provision on the site. Where this would not be viable the Council will negotiate for funding to support off-site employment provision. Has the site been marketed for employment use? The Inspector found this policy to be sound therefore significant weight can be given to it.

SMLP Policy E7 is also relevant which seeks to safeguard existing employment sites stating that “Development involving the loss of existing employment sites will not be permitted except where it can be shown that the location is undesirable in environmental or traffic terms and where an alternative site is available.”

The Council has less than a 5 year housing land supply and therefore there is no reason to refuse on housing land supply grounds.

The site is under the Affordable Housing SPG threshold relating to affordable housing requirements.

Consideration should also be given to design, parking etc.

Kathryn Poulter
Planning Policy Officer

