

DESIGN AND ACCESS and PLANNING STATEMENT

Client: Mellor & Smith Funeral Directors.

Location: The Prince of Wales, Fairfield Road, Buxton.

Proposal: Proposed extension, alteration and conversion of former public house to funeral home and creation of 2 no. first floor residential flats.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the extension, alteration and conversion of a former public house to a funeral home and creation of 2 no first floor residential flats at The Prince of Wales, Fairfield Road, Buxton.
- 1.2 This is a second attempt submission which follows approval of a previous application for a similar scheme earlier this year under reference number HPK/2014/0160. The application was approved on 5th June 2014 subject to a number of conditions. This application seeks to make amendments to the pre-development conditions by front loading the application and providing the details as part of the application process thereby negating the need to discharge these conditions at a later date. In addition the application also proposes to substitute the approved timber windows for a good quality uPVC equivalent. Unfortunately the window materials were not conditioned on the decision notice and therefore cannot be varied through the usual route of a S73 application. The resubmission of the original application will allow this element of the scheme to be amended through a formal process. Further details of the conditions to be amended and window materials will be discussed later in this report.

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site is located within the town of Buxton, sitting on the eastern side of Fairfield Road (A6) close to its junction with the A53. The site is surrounded by roads on three sides with the fourth side to the north adjoining a row of terraced houses. To the rear of the site is Windsor Road and to the south a small road which is accessible by cars from both Fairfield Road and Windsor Road but is blocked with bollards so that through access is not possible. The application has two accesses one to north off Fairfield Road and the second to the south onto the small access road. The site is surrounded by residential properties on all sides although there is a row of shops and commercial buildings on the opposite side of Fairfield Road.
- 2.2 The application building comprises of a two storey building constructed from a mixture of coursed gritstone and random rubble limestone walls sitting under a blue slate roof. The main section of the existing building is a rectangular form building onto which there is a rear projection which has a double gabled roof running at right angles to the main roof. The main block has a parapet wall on the southern gable topped with gritstone coping stones. The property has three chimneys one on the southern gable, one mid way along the roof line and one on the ridge of the rear projection. To the south of the main building are a range of single storey buildings within the yard. These are a mixture of stores, toilet buildings and drinking shelters.
- 2.3 The boundaries of the application site are defined with limestone walls which, to the southern and western sides form the walls of the building on the site. To the front of the building is a tarmaced access way joining the two accesses across the front of the site and to the north of the building is a tarmaced parking area. There are no trees or soft landscaped areas currently within the site.

- 2.4 For the purposes of the development plan the site lies within the town settlement boundary. It also lies outside but within close proximity to a designated conservation area.

THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application proposes the alteration, extension and conversion of a former public house. The ground floor of the building will be converted and extended to form a funeral directors premises on the ground floor whilst the first floor living space will be reconfigured to form two independent self contained residential flats for the rental market.

BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Prince of Wales public house ceased trading towards the end of 2011 and has been dis-used since then. The applicant's Mellor and Smith purchased the property in July 2012 with a view to converting the property to use as a Funeral Directors.
- 4.2 Mellor and Smith Funeral Directors are an established local business with existing premises within Buxton located on Waterswallows Road. Due to recent growth of the business the premises are no longer suitable for their needs and so they are looking to relocate to the Prince of Wales site. The Waterswallows Road premises are also rented and their current lease expires in 2016 and so the move to owner premises will be of financial benefit to the business and will also give them more long-term security. The funeral directors business will be run on the ground floor of the building as this will provide the floor space required and the nature of the business means that being all on one floor is a practical requirement. The first floor of the existing public house, which was used as living accommodation when the pub was open, will be split into two self contained residential flats and will be let out to tenants.

DESIGN AND ACCESS

- 5.1 The conversion of the public house will involve minimal alteration to the existing fabric of the main pub building. The two storey original part of the pub will remain almost exactly as it currently exists externally with the only changes being to the rear elevation where a new doorway and window will be added, the doorway providing access to an internal hall serving the two flats and the window providing light into one of the flats. The existing valley formed between the two gables on the rear elevation will be in-filled with a hipped roof to provide for two practical issues. Firstly to prevent people from climbing onto the roof as the valley is at a relatively low level compared to Windsor Road and secondly to provide headroom internally to allow movement between the two sections of the rear of the property.
- 5.2 The front (west) and the side facing the car park (north) will remain physically unchanged. The painted finish to the heads, cills, and quoins on the front elevation will be removed. The south elevation and the existing outbuildings and yard is the site of the most significant physical external change to the building. The yard currently comprises of a lean-to extension to the rear of the main pub building, a lean to abutting the rear section of the pub together with a lean-to building abutting the rear boundary wall of the site which form the male toilets and the corridor used to access them. To the south east corner of

the site is a further lean-to building abutting the boundary wall and to the south boundary a range of three small stores with pitched roofs adjoining each other and forming a valley between the two. The external access to the pub cellar sits in the centre of the southern gable and the area surrounding this is covered with a corrugated plastic roof forming a covered bottle store area. Much of the remainder of the yard is covered with another corrugated plastic shelter which provided a covered smoking area when the pub was open.

- 5.3 All of the buildings and shelters in the yard area of the pub will be removed and replaced with a single storey extension to the main building. This extension will have a double gable, similar to that which appears on the existing two storey section to the rear of the main building. Again, an in fill hipped roof will be formed in the valley between the two gables to prevent people climbing on the roof and reduce the amount of valley gutters which collect litter and cause maintenance problems. The main gables will be significantly lower than the main building as this section is single storey and therefore the extension is of an appropriate scale and doesn't attempt to dominate the existing building. The in fill hipped section between the two will be lower still and so will not be seen from the front or rear of the building. The painted finish to the stonework on the existing southern gable will be removed as part of the development.
- 5.4 The walls of the proposed extension will be predominately left blank. The wall to the rear and to some extent to the side (south) elevation are below ground level anyway and so no windows or doors are feasible. To the front elevation the wide opening which currently has large double doors providing access to the beer cellar will be retained although this will be widened and fitted with sliding doors to provide access to an internal parking area for the removal ambulance - a vital feature of the premises as this area needs to remain enclosed and private.
- 5.5 The existing yard area features a mixture of building of varying shapes and heights, roofs orientated in all directions and at a range of pitches and covered with a mixture of blue slate, corrugated cement fibre sheeting, corrugated plastic sheeting and glass and offers very little in terms of architectural merit and aesthetic value to the building and its setting. The proposed extension will provide a much more traditional roof form, formed with roofs of uniform pitch and all covered with natural blue slate to match the main existing building and the vast majority of buildings in the surrounding area. The replacement of these buildings and structures in the yard area with the proposed extension will undoubtedly result in a visual enhancement of the property and its setting.
- 5.6 The changes to the main building are minimal and will have no effect on neighbouring properties. The replacement extension on the south side of the main building will result in a slightly higher roof in places, but the ground level outside the site rises steeply from the front to the rear of the site so that the neighbouring properties to the south and east are positioned at a higher ground level and so will not be adversely affected by the development.
- 5.7 The existing access onto Fairfield Road will be retained allowing an in and out system enabling all vehicles to enter and exit the site in forward gear so that no vehicles need to reverse onto the A6 when leaving the site avoiding any safety hazards on the road. The existing car park provides parking for approximately 4 cars. As part of the development the applicants hope to re-arrange the parking layout to maximise the available parking.

spaces. One parking space will be assigned to each flat should the occupants have a need for a parking space with the others used by clients of the funeral directors business. The development will also create an additional parking space for the removal ambulance within the new extension at the southern end of the property. The site lies close to Buxton town centre, within walking distance of the train station and with a bus stop just a few metres away and so it is considered that parking within the site is not vital and the flats would suit occupants who do not own a car.

- 5.8 The access to the funeral director premises will be via the existing front door of the building. This currently has a step up into the building and a small ramp will be constructed outside the door to provide level access into the premises. Once inside the door the entire funeral directors premises will be on one level and access to all areas will be possible.
- 5.9 The application site lies within a flood risk zone 1 and therefore a flood risk assessment is not required.
- 5.10 Much of the site is tarmaced and this will be largely kept, albeit possibly with the tarmac repaired or relayed. The applicants also propose to introduce some areas of planting to make the site more pleasant for their customers.

ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Although the previous planning application HPK/2014/0160 was approved this was subject to a number of pre-development planning conditions being imposed. The purpose of this application is to front load this application in order that the pre-development commencement conditions can be amended to negate the need for a separate discharge application. The conditions to be considered as part of this application are 2, 3, and 4 and these are discussed in further detail below:-

CONDITION 2

- 6.2 Condition 2 of planning permission HPK/2014/0160 stated that
"No development shall commence until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the approved development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details."
The reason provided for the condition was
"In the interests of visual amenity, in accordance with Policy GD4 (and Policies BC5 and BC8 in respect of developments in conservation areas/listed buildings) of the High Peak Saved Local Plan Policies 2008."

- 6.3 In reality the development as approved requires very little new build stonework to be provided. This is effectively limited to the provision of a pillars either side of the garage door and the side/rear elevation of the new garage development. Where new stonework is required this will be taken from internal walls so will be a direct match to that on the existing building. The roof has been re-clad where possible with the existing slates. Where new slates have been required these are a natural slate manufactured by Siga. The size is 500mm x 250mm and match the existing in terms of size, colour, form and texture. The photographs below show the new slates mixed with the original slates.

Samples of both the stone to be used for the new stonework and roofing material are available on site to view.



May 2015



CONDITION 3

- 6.4 Condition 3 of planning permission HPK/2014/0160 stated that
"Prior to the commencement of development a plan showing the location and design of a storage area for refuse bins shall be submitted to and approved in writing and shall be installed prior to the commencement of the use hereby permitted and maintained for the lifetime of the development."

The reason provided for the condition was

"In order that the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of the adjacent dwellings shall not be injured, in accordance with Policy GD5 of the High Peak Saved Local Plan Policies 2008. "

- 6.5 The proposed storage area is provided on drawing number 2011-1752-06 which has been submitted as part of this application. The proposed bin store which will provide facilities for both the commercial use and the 2 residential units. It will be located in a recessed area formed by the existing boundary wall and the adjacent outbuilding. It will be rectangular in form and enclosed on three sides by fence and gates formed by 300mm pre-cast concrete boards with 1.5m high vertically boarded panels over fixed in pre-cast concrete posts. Matching vertically boarded gates will be fitted to provide access and all timber will be treated with a clear preservative.

6.6 CONDITION 4

Condition 4 of planning permission HPK/2014/0160 stated that

"Before any other operations are commenced, space shall be provided within the site curtilage for storage of plant and materials/site accommodation/ loading and unloading of goods vehicles/parking and manouvering of site operatives and visitors vehicles, laid out

and constructed in accordance with detailed designs to be submitted in advance to the Local Planning Authority for written approval and maintained throughout the contract period in accordance with the approved designs free from any impediment to its designated use. "

The reason provided for the condition was

"To ensure satisfactory service provision in the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy TR5 of the High Peak Saved Local Plan Policies 2008. "

- 6.7 Condition 4 has already been met with the total confinement of the site to Health and Safety standards. As you can appreciate it is not a large site area so its use has to be maximised but at all times it is secure. The site has been enclosed by harris fencing. Contractors vehicles, which are limited to two vans at any one time, are parked parallel to the A6. All demolition works have already been undertaken and any plant/machinery is taken away from the site at the end of each working day. Adequate space for the storage of materials and loading/unloading of goods vehicles can be provided in the area to the west of the existing building.

SUBSTITUTION OF PREVIOUSLY APPROVED TIMBER WINDOWS WITH UPVC

- 6.8 The final element of this application seeks to substitute the previously approved timber windows with a uPVC wood grain effect. Whilst the submitted plans provided no details in terms of window materials the application form clearly stated a timber finish. The existing windows are timber but are rotten and beyond repair. The proposed windows would retain the overall form and style of the existing windows with sash windows to the front elevation but would be constructed from a good quality wood grain effect uPVC material. This would ensure that the character and appearance of the existing building is maintained whilst reducing the ongoing maintenance and upkeep. In terms of colour the preference would be to opt for a recessive grey / green colour rather than a white/off white finish. uPVC windows and doors are prevalent in the area with the residential properties to either side having white uPVC materials and the commercial properties opposite including the Lightwood Dental Centre having brown uPVC windows.

SUMMARY

- 7.0 The proposal will give a new use to the former public house site and one which is situated to a residential area as the disturbance to neighbouring properties will be minimal. The main part of the existing building will be retained in its current form with physical alterations being largely limited to within the building. The existing yard area which features a random mix of buildings and roof shapes, pitches and materials will be redeveloped to create a single storey extension with a much more simple and uniform roof providing a visual enhancement to the building and its setting. The new premises will enable a local business to continue to grow in the local area and will be better located to serve its customers within Buxton, whilst the two new flats above will add accommodation in a town centre location to a busy rental market.
- 7.1 The visual impact of the development on this building will be positive retaining much of the original building whilst replacing the unattractive mis-match of buildings in the yard area. The change of use gives a new use to the building, appropriate to its location in a largely residential area and its location and existing access arrangements give easy and safe access to the site.