

# **C S V Developments Ltd**

Ladygate Farm, Briargrove Rd, Birch Vale, High Peak SK22 1AY

## **Planning Policy, Heritage, Design and Access Statement for**

**Hurst Lea House, Hurst Lea Road, New Mills, SK22 3HP**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This statement is submitted by CSV Developments Ltd for the conversion of the former New Mills Police Station into four self contained flats (three one bedroom flats and one 2 bedroom flat).

The statement assesses the application proposals against the relevant policy tests set out in the Development Plan and National Policy guidance.

## **2. SITE LOCATION AND HISTORY**

2.1 The site is located on Hurst Lea Road within the built up area boundary near the centre of New Mills and is within the New Mills Heritage Area.

The building is close to the junction of Albion Rd and Union Rd

2.2 Hurst Lea House was originally built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century originally as a private dwelling.

Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (believed to be around 1926) it was used as a Liberal Club which included the adjacent Liberal Club Hall (which is now in private ownership). In 1964 the 2 storey part of the building (Hurst Lea House) was sold to Derbyshire County Council and then used as a Doctors Surgery with the upstairs being a flat for the doctor and his wife. In 1993 Hurst Lea house was converted to the New Mills Police Station which was then its function until spring 2017.

2.3 Hurst Lea House is a two storey coursed stone building with a slate roof with a flat roof annexes to the North, West and South of the building. The building has various office areas, storage, interview rooms (as would be expected of a functioning police station).

The building is of no particular architectural quality, but is of sufficient character to merit retention within the New Mills Conservation Area.

The North elevations has a single storey annex to the front with flat roof and an extremely unattractive disabled access ramp and steps to the main front door. There are large characterless windows with a concrete infill panels below and also a recessed access area to the storage and utility rooms. The South elevation is linked to the former Liberal Club hall at the rear of the building and has a single storey annex. The west elevation is has a small courtyard area, doors for access to the gas meter room and also a set of concrete stairs which provide access to the former first floor flat and the flat roof area. The East elevation overlooks the carpark area and has an entrance to the ground floor via another unsightly disabled access ramp. There are further windows on this elevation.

There are some attractive features to the two storey elements of the building such as stone lintels and cills and the finials on the roof. The single storey annexes are less attractive with exposed concrete slab roof topped with asphalt.

2.4 The building is accessed from Hurst Lea Road (which is a private unadopted road) to the private carpark for the building (which overlooks Union Road). On-site parking is available for four vehicles.

## **3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 High Peak Borough Council has confirmed that the site has the following planning history: -

Planning application number - 032317

Change of use from Doctors surgery to Police Station – approved 27.04.93.

#### **4. THE APPLICATION**

4.1 This section explains the design principles of the proposal under the following headings: Use; Amount; Scale; Layout; Access; Landscaping and Appearance

##### **Use**

4.2 Hurst Lea House was last used as a police station but is now closed and no longer available for use. Whilst no certificate of lawful use is in place the previous use of the hall would suggest that its use falls within Use Class D1 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 2012, however the first floor flat was clearly residential.

##### **Amount**

4.3 Our proposal is to convert the building into a total of 4 flats (one 2 bedroom flat to the first floor and three 1 bedroom flats to the ground floor).

##### **Scale**

4.4 The re-use of the existing building structure means that there is no change to the scale of the existing building.

##### **Layout**

4.5 The three 1 bedroom apartments to the ground floor would consist of open plan lounge, kitchen and dining area, bathroom, bedroom and a utility room. The 2 bedroom apartment to the first floor would consist of an open plan lounge, kitchen and dining area, bathroom, 2 bedrooms and a utility room. A small existing roof terrace on top of the existing flat roof will be available for use by the first floor flat. There are four existing parking spaces at the property (one for each flat).

##### **Landscaping**

4.6 The existing disabled ramp to the North Elevation will be removed and replaced with a terraced planted area. The existing disabled ramp to the East will be removed and the car park area extended slightly to help with vehicle movements. A new 1m high timber fence is proposed along the Eastern boundary of the site along Union Road.

##### **Appearance**

4.7 The design of the scheme has been influenced by the desire to provide high quality living space whilst recognising the limitations of the existing building. Physical alterations to the building include: -

1. A replacement of the existing external set of stairs/handrails for the first floor flat.
2. Bin stores located in a recessed area within the raised planting area (behind a gate to hide the bins from the view off Hurst Lea Road).
3. A new mansard style roof to the existing flat roof on the Northern Elevation with slate roof tiles and timber finials to match the existing pitched roof. This will enhance the architectural features when viewed from the North and hide the flat roof (due to the existing windows on the first floor it isn't possible to turn this into a pitched roof entirely). This will have some railings to the top where adjacent to the first floor access stairs to tie in architecturally.

4. The recessed alcove on the ground floor Northern elevation will be infilled with stone to match existing with the wall in line with the remainder of the wall on that façade. Within this wall a new front door for ground floor apartment 4 will be created and a new window to provide additional light into the apartment.
5. The existing windows will all be replaced with new mock sash uPVC so that all the windows externally all match and provide the same look and feel as those to the two storey parts of the property.
6. The door to the Eastern Elevation will be partially infilled and a new window will be installed. A new stone cill will be installed to match existing.
7. The existing window on the Western Elevation (originally a doorway) will be re-opened up to provide a new front door access for apartment 3 with a new window to the side.
8. The existing redundant disabled ramp will be removed and replaced with a raised terraced planting area.
9. Within the mansard roof two small dormers will be installed to emphasise the entrance to each property and provide further architectural interest
10. The existing concrete panels below the windows on the Northern elevation will be infilled with stone to match existing.

## **5. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

From the pre-application consultation with the planning office (John Williamson) there were a few key areas which were discussed that needed to be addressed and responded to effectively. These are detailed below: -

1. The effect of the proposal on the availability of a community asset.
2. The effect of the proposed access arrangements on vehicular and pedestrian safety along Hurst Lea Road.
3. The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, with particular reference to privacy.
4. The effect the mansard roof to the front of the property will have on the aesthetics of the property with a preference on a pitched roof
5. The proposed number of car parking spaces not meeting the government guidelines of 1.5 spaces per dwelling

### **Loss of a Community Asset**

6.1 The Derbyshire Constabulary vacated the property in Spring 2017 and moved their local presence to New Mills Fire Station and then subsequently placed the property up for sale. There is therefore no loss of community asset as the function still exists.

### **Vehicle Access**

6.2 When the building was used as the Doctors surgery and subsequently as New Mills police station they had four parking spaces that they owned (as now) and they also rented a further four spaces from the adjacent private members club. The surgery and police station

would have been visited on a very frequent basis by the general public or police constables moving to and from the building. Converting the property into four private residential dwellings with only four parking spaces will greatly reduce the number of vehicle movements along Hurst Lea Road and also by default the number of vehicle movements onto Union Rd.

Vehicle access and parking for the building will remain as existing on the driveway to the west of the building. Whilst it is acknowledged that the access into the drive is somewhat restricted by its width, the unadopted nature of Hurst Lea Road means that vehicle speeds and level of use at this point are very low.

The use of this access in connection with the new purpose for the building would not give rise to any highway safety issues.

NB/ A right of way exists from the building to the public highway and the section of Hurst Lea rd that is being used is under our ownership.

### **Effect on Neighbouring Residents**

6.3 The closest residential dwelling to the property is number 3 Hurst Lea Road (to which the gable end of the property faces Hurst Lea House). There are no windows within this gable wall and therefore the additional windows to the West elevation of Hurst Lea House will not affect this property.

There are no properties directly adjacent to the North elevation or East elevation and therefore the additional windows will not affect the privacy of any local dwellings.

### **Architectural Impact**

6.4 The property lies within the New Mills Conservation area and makes a contribution to the character of the area. Our proposal is to change as little as possible to the current external elements (of character) at the property and to enhance some of the existing architecturally lacking features of the property.

The current frontage of the property is dominated by a single storey flat roof which detracts from the charm of the property. By introducing a mansard slate roof to the front with dormers over the apartment doors will help to tie in with the original two storey building and create a more aesthetically pleasing view when the property is viewed from the North, in particular from Union Bridge.

It was discussed during the pre-application consultation that a mansard roof may not be the ideal preference of the planning office (and a full pitched roof would be preferred). However, a full pitched roof would block the existing first floor windows and therefore isn't a viable option.

### **Government Guidelines on Parking Requirements**

6.5 With the property being existing it isn't possible to provide any more than four parking spaces so the guideline of 1.5 spaces per flat cannot be met. However, given the close proximity of the properties to 2 main line railway stations (New Mills Central and New Mills Newtown) just a 3-4 minute walk away, the need for two cars per flat for transportation is lessened. The close proximity to New Mills town centre and local shops etc further enhances the belief.

## **7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework indicates that there are three dimensions to sustainable development; environmental, social and economic. The proposal satisfies the relevant core planning principles within the Framework for the following reasons: -

- In environmental terms the proposed development would sustain and enhance Hurst Lea House as a heritage asset within the New Mills Conservation Area. It would also result in substantial physical improvements to the building which would significantly improve its energy efficiency. The proposal would secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers.
- In social terms the proposal would increase the supply of affordable housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations, with accessible local services. The proposal would add to the supply of housing in the Borough and the appeal site is situated in a highly sustainable location close to New Mills Town Centre. The Framework encourages the change to residential use of commercial buildings where there is an identified need for additional housing.
- LP Policy CF2 and the NPPF seek to ensure, that where appropriate, local facilities are retained. The loss of Police Station does not harm the area as the facility is still available nearby
- There are no alterations to highways use than what is there already and vehicle movements is actually decreased.
- The proposed development also results in an economic benefit. Although not an employment scheme, the development would create construction jobs and housing and thereby contribute to the local economy.