

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement is prepared in support of a planning application which seeks planning permission for change of use from disused single storey building to one-office unit (Class E) together with the erection of a first floor extension at 36 Tottington Road, Bury, BL8 1LL. The aim of the statement is to briefly describe the background history of the site, explain the proposal in detail and highlight the design principles which have been taken into consideration in preparing the scheme. The statement also demonstrates how the proposal accords with the overarching principles of the adopted national and local planning policies.

1.2. In addition to this Statement, the planning application accompanies the following supporting documents:-

- Site Location Plan shown as edged in red.
- Proposed Site layout plan.
- Proposed internal layout of both floors of the building.
- The existing and proposed front, rear and side elevations of the building.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The application site comprising a single storey detached building is located at 36 Tottington Road, Bury. Whilst the history or previous use of the building is unknown, however from the Council website, it appears that planning permission ref. 47030 for use of the building as a Private Hire Booking Office, was granted subject to conditions on 23rd November 2006. The applicant believes that the permitted use never materialised and planning permission therefore has expired.

2.2 However the building has remained vacant and unused for a long period of time. Due to the lack of maintenance, neglect and vandalism, the building is of unattractive/ derelict appearance which presents a negative impact upon the character of the area and appearance of the street-scene. Furthermore the building is situated in a prominent location at an important Gateway into the Bury Town Centre close to the intersection of Walshaw Road, Tottington Road (B6213) and Crostons Road (B6214). In its present condition, the building acts as a black spot affecting the character and environment of the area. To improve the character of the area and the street scene, it is necessary that the visual appearance of the application site and the building is improved and that the building brought back into a suitable use.



2.3 Since the application site is constrained due to the restricted size, lack of on-site parking, parking restrictions on the access road (Tottington Road) etc, it is considered necessary that the future use of the building, by virtue of the operation, does not generate a significant level of trips or parking demand in the area. In view of these considerations, it is considered that the proposed use of the building as an office is appropriate and that it would neither give rise to unnecessary vehicular movements nor cause parking problems in the area.

3. THE SITE

3.1 The application site comprising a single storey detached building, approximately 5.1m wide, 3.2m deep and 3.9m high, is located on the northern side of Tottington Road (B6213). Although the front and one side of the building are presently covered in plaster, the building is constructed with brick facing external walls.

3.2 The site is located on a linear piece of land along Tottington Road with no immediate development on its either side. There are a number of small trees/bushes on both sides of the building along Tottington Road. Although the site fronts onto Tottington Road but there is no vehicular access available to it. Parking on several sections of Tottington Road including the one in front of the site, is controlled by way of double yellow lines. A regular bus service runs along Tottington Road.

3.3 The site lies within a predominantly residential area with residential development along both sides of Tottington Road. To the rear of the site, the ground level drops sharply and the land used for industrial purposes.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The proposal involves change of use of the disused building to a one-unit office (Class E) together with the erection of a first floor extension.

4.2 The proposed first floor extension, approximately 5.1m wide, 3.2m deep, would be constructed with brick facing external walls and covered with a tiled mono pitched roof. Due to the proposed mono pitched roof, the height of the front elevation of the building would be approximately 5.9m and the rear elevation 4.8m.

4.3 The plaster from the front elevation facing Tottington Road would be removed and new access door at the ground floor and windows at both floors would be fitted in aluminium framing. The front elevation of the building would be covered with steel metal cladding. Similarly the existing plaster from the side elevation of the building would be removed and facing brick cleaned up.



4.4 Internally, the ground floor of the building would be laid out to provide a reception counter, storage space and other associated facilities such as toilet/WC, as shown on the submitted drawings. The first floor would be used as a single office unit.

4.5 The proposed office would be run and managed by one person only. It would be used for website designing and the business conducted on-line. Since the business would be carried out on-line, it is anticipated that very few customers would visit the office on a daily basis.

4.6 It is proposed that the office will be opened between 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday only. It will be closed for business on weekends and Bank Holidays. It is anticipated that the proposed development would create employment opportunity for two staff members.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 The following application is considered relevant.

Planning application No. 47030: For use of the building as a Private Hire Booking Office on Tottington Road, Bury. *Approved on 23rd November 2006.*

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The central theme to the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. The Government states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

The Framework underlines a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. This means approving development, without delay, where it accords with the development plan and where the development is absent or relevant policies are out-of-date, to grant planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF.

Para 120(c) advises that planning policies and decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;



Section 12 'Achieving Well Designed Places' states that 'the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130 states:

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.



Paragraph 134 goes onto state that:

Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

6.2 Local Development Framework

Unitary Development Plan and Policies for Bury

The following policies of Bury UDP are considered relevant to the proposed development.

EC5 – OFFICES: States that the Council is concerned to attract new office development and will support proposals for such development in appropriate locations.

EC5/3 - Other Office Locations

Outside town and district centres, and sites identified for office use, development for further office uses will not be permitted except for:

small scale developments providing a direct service to a local area;

refurbishment or conversion proposals which would result in the retention of buildings of architectural or historic interest;

proposals for office-type homeworking where existing residential amenity would not be adversely affected.



EN1 - BUILT ENVIRONMENT: States that the Council will seek to protect, preserve and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the Borough's built environment.

Policy EN1/2 - Townscape and Built Design: Seeks to ensure that any proposals would not have an adverse impact on the particular character and townscape of an area. The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals which do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the particular character and townscape of the Borough's towns, villages and other settlements.

EN1/7 - Throughroutes and Gateways: States that the Council is concerned to improve the quality of development along throughroutes and at gateways, and will require new proposals fronting major throughroutes and at the identified gateways to display a high standard of design and landscaping.

Policy HT2/4 - Car Parking and New Development states: States that the Council will require all applications for development to make adequate provision for their car parking and servicing requirements in accordance with the Council's car parking standards.

EN7/2 - Noise Pollution

In seeking to limit noise pollution the Council will not permit:

development which could lead to an unacceptable noise nuisance to nearby occupiers and/or amenity users;

development close to a permanent source of noise.

7. PLANNING APPRAISAL

Principle/Sustainable development

7.1 The NPPF encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land). The application site is a previously developed site currently occupied by a disused building. The building is located along a main traffic corridor (Tottington Road) linking Bury town centre with different communities to the north/north-west. Tottington Road has been identified as a main through route under Policy EN1/7 (Through routes and Gateways) of the UDP and the site, by virtue of its location, lies at a prominent gateway to Bury Town Centre



7.2 The building has been vacant/disused for a long period of time and due to lack of maintenance, neglect and vandalism, presents not only a visually unattractive and oppressive feature in a prominent location at an important gateway to Bury Town Centre but but also has a detrimental impact on the street scene and character of the area. In order to improve the characteristics of the area and the appearance of the street scene, it is necessary that the building is upgraded and brought back into a suitable use.

7.3 It is considered that the proposed use of the building as an office is appropriate and suitable and if developed, would result in re-investing, bringing back the building into a use and injecting some employment into the area. Whilst it is accepted that the proposed office use represents Out of Centre Development in accordance with policy EC5/3 of the UDP, however it is considered that the proposed use, due to small scale and limited activities, would not have an adverse impact upon the function, vitality or viability of the nearest centres. In view of these considerations, it is considered that the proposed use of the disused building is sustainable and should be accepted in principle. The applicant would like to point out that suitability of the re-use of the building as an office, by virtue of planning permission granted in 2006 (ref.47030) for a Private Hire Booking Office office, has already been acknowledged by the Council.

Visual amenity/appearance

7.4 The proposal involves the erection of a first floor extension over the existing building. The first floor extension would be built with brick facing external walls to match the existing. The existing window in the front elevation would be boarded up and new access door at the ground floor and windows at both floors would be fitted in aluminium framing. The front elevation of the building facing Tottington Road would be covered with steel metal cladding. The finished two storey building would be covered with tiled mono pitched roof and would be approximately 5.9m high in front and 4.8m high to rear.

7.5 It is considered that the proposed development, due to its design, scale and materials, would present an appropriate and befitting feature in the area. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed use would regenerate the site and uplift the appearance of the building to help enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the built environment. The proposal would help enhance greatly the street-scene to the benefit of visual amenity. As such it is considered that the proposal complies with the NPPF and UDP policies EN1(Built Environment) and EN1/2 - Townscape and Built Design.



Residential Amenity

7.6 As stated previously, the site comprising a disused building is situated on the northern side of Tottington Road with no immediate development of its either side. The nearest residential properties are situated on the opposite side of Tottington Road, approximately 15m away fronting the site. Given the typical traits of the proposed office use and the likely low levels of activity – that would result as a consequence of the proposed website design business and that very few customers would visit the office on daily basis, it is highly unlikely that such a daytime use adjacent to a busy carriageway would have any material impact, in terms of noise and disturbance, upon the nearest residential properties on Tottington Road. As such it is considered that the proposal is in compliance with the NPPF and UDP policy EN7/2 - Noise Pollution.

Car parking/Highway safety

7.7 It is clear that the application site is limited in size and cannot accommodate on-site parking within it. Hence no parking provision has been proposed in the submitted scheme. It is also acknowledged that due to the parking restrictions and other traffic management measures along Tottington Road, on-road parking in close proximity of the site, is not feasible. In view of these constraints, the applicant has tried his best to secure a parking area/facility in close vicinity of the site to be used in connection with the proposed development. This however has not been successful.

7.8 It should be realised that the proposal involves the creation of “one office unit” which, the applicant points out, would be used for website designing and the business conducted on-line. The business would be run and managed by one person and it is anticipated that very few customers would visit the office on daily basis.

7.9 It should also be pointed out that the site is located in a high access area to public transport and is well served by regular bus service. In view of the parking restrictions on Tottington Road and lack of on-site parking, the Management of the site would take necessary steps and strongly advise the potential customers/visitors to either use public transport or cycle/walk whilst visiting the site. Necessary notices would be displayed on the building to that effect.



6.10 With regard to the delivery of goods/services, it should be pointed out that due to the nature of the proposed business, it is anticipated that the delivery of goods would take place once or twice a month and would not involve delivery vehicles visiting the site. It is anticipated that the delivery vehicles would be parked within the safe and unrestricted part of Tottington Road or nearby streets and the goods brought to the office manually.

Refuse Storage

7.11 It is proposed that the refuse bins would be stored inside the building within the area shown on the submitted drawings. The bins would be brought out of the building on to Tottington Road on the collection day by the Council. Since the refuse bins would be stored within the building, this would not impact the visual amenity of the area nor the street scene.

8. CONCLUSION

- The disused building, due to neglect and vandalism, is in a derelict state and presents an unpleasant/depressing feature in a prominent location along a main traffic corridor leading to Bury Town Centre. To improve and enhance the character of the area and the street scene, it is necessary that the site is re-instated and brought back into a suitable use.
- It is considered that the proposed development would significantly improve the appearance of a site which could otherwise be left to further deteriorate and will provide a decent quality development which will create improvements to visual amenity. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposal would make a positive contribution towards strengthening the economy and creating employment opportunities in the area.
- In terms of the scale, design and appearance, the proposal is considered to be in compliant with the main thrust of the national and local policies.

