

**TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990**

**Planning, Design and Access
Statement**

**Residential conversion of the
upper floors office into two flats**

**9 High Street
West Draydon
UB7 7QG**

**Statement on behalf of
SME Group Plc**

June 2024

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1. Letter from letting agent relating to the existing office accommodation

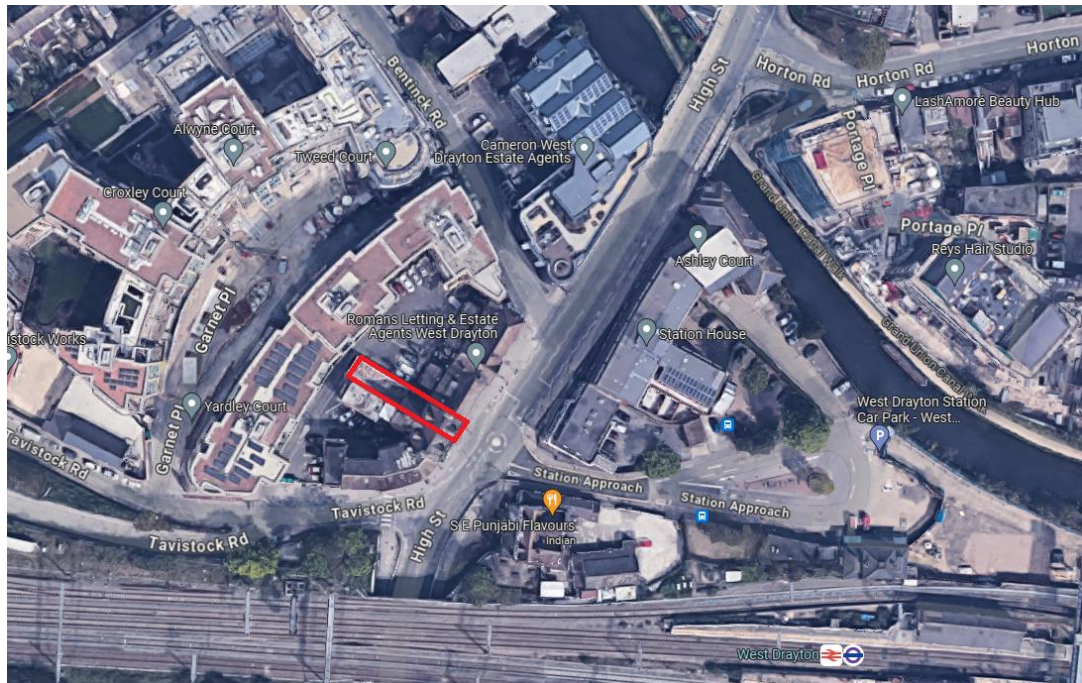
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 My name is Hayden Todd and I am an Associate Director with Aitchison Raffety, Chartered Town Planning Consultants. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental and Resource Planning (Hons) and am a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.
- 1.2 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the residential conversion of the upper floors into two apartments at 9 High Street, West Draydon UB7 7QG.
- 1.3 The proposed development optimises this site by providing much needed housing in an underutilised commercial building, in a highly sustainable area. It is noted that the office has been vacant for approximately 3 years and it is clear that a new active use is required for the building.
- 1.4 This Statement demonstrates why the development is acceptable having regard to local and national planning policies and guidance.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDINGS

Application Site

- 2.1 The Application Site is located on the west side of the High Street, near the junction with Tavistock Road and directly opposite Station Approach in Yiewsley/West Draydon Town Centre. The Site is sustainably located on a main bus route and approximately 100 metres northwest of the West Draydon Railway Station. It has a PTAL rating of 3.



Location and approximate extent of the Application Site outlined in red

- 2.2 The Site is in mixed use with a Costa Coffee occupying the ground floor and an office on the first and second floors. The office has been vacant for approximately 3 years and is the subject of this application.
- 2.3 The Site comprises a three storey Edwardian building with a modern shop front and attractively detailed brick façade. Front and rear pitched roof dormers serve the loft space. It has a traditional two storey linked rear projection and a modern flat roof ground floor extension, which extends the full depth of the plot. The building is constructed in brickwork with a tiled roof.



Streetview of the Application Site

Surroundings

- 2.4 The Site forms part of a parade of shops. Directly to the north of the Site, is a café with residential accommodation in the upper floors. To the south is a retail unit with residential accommodation on the upper floors. On the opposite side of the road is a supermarket and restaurant. To the rear is a service yard and large block of apartments. This is a Town Centre location consisting of a mixture of uses with a diverse character.

Designations

- 2.5 The Site is in the West Draydon/Yiewsley (District) Town Centre and Secondary Shopping Area. The building is not subject to any type of Listing nor is it in a Conservation Area. The Site is in Flood Zone 1.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of an upper floor office into two apartments.
- 3.2 The apartments would be accessed from the single entrance on the High Street and the change of use would not require any external alterations. The first floor would be converted into a 1-bedroom, 2-person apartment (56.9 square metres). The second floor and loft space would accommodate a 2-bedroom, 4-person apartment (98 square metres). The proposed apartments would have flexible living arrangements that far exceed London Space Standards.
- 3.3 The proposed development would only require minor internal changes to the existing layout to provide a functional living environment. The internal changes relate largely to reconfiguring walls and installation of new fixtures.
- 3.4 Given the nature of the building it would not be possible to provide outdoor amenity space. The proposal is for a car free scheme.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application Site

Change of Use (21027/APP/2018/3025)

- 4.1 A planning application for change of use from retail (Use Class A1) to a mixed use comprising retail and restaurant/café (Use Classes A1/A3) involving alterations to shop front and rear elevation was granted conditional permission on 21 November 2018. This application established the existing ground floor café use. The assessment confirmed that no extraction or cooking equipment was required for the new use (no noise or odour impact).

Other relevant applications

Residential conversion at 20 High Street, Uxbridge (1337/APP/2021/3348)

- 4.2 A planning application for a change of use of the first and second floor from office use (Class E) to two x 1 bed flats and two x 2 bed flats (Class C3) and associated internal and external alterations was granted conditional permission on 2 September 2021. This application followed a previously approved scheme for a similar form of development. In the assessment of these applications the Council raised no concerns with the lack of amenity space and confirmed that this was common in Town Centre locations.

Extensions to create a HMO at 164-170 High Street, Yiewsley (17076/APP/2022/3201)

- 4.3 A planning application for upward and rear extensions to create a five bedroom HMO was granted conditional permission on 16 February 2022. This application followed a dismissed appeal for a similar form of development. In the assessment of these development proposals, the Council and Inspector confirmed that amenity space was not required given the close proximity of the nearby recreational ground.

5. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Local Planning Policy

- 5.1 The starting point for assessing development proposals is always the Development Plan. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states *'if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'*.
- 5.2 The Development Plan for Hillingdon, relevant to this application, is made up of the London Plan and the Hillingdon Local Plan: Parts 1 and 2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also an important material planning consideration.

London Plan (2021)

- 5.3 The London Plan is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. The following policies are relevant to the assessment of this application:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Policy GG1 | Building strong and inclusive communities |
| Policy GG2 | Making the best use of land |
| Policy GG4 | Delivering the homes Londoners need |
| Policy SD6 | Town centres and high streets |
| Policy SD8 | Town centre network |
| Policy D3 | Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach |
| Policy D4 | Delivering good design |
| Policy D6 | Housing quality and standards |
| Policy H1 | Increasing housing supply |
| Policy H2 | Small sites |
| Policy H10 | Housing size mix |
| Policy E1 | Offices |
| Policy T1 | Strategic approach to transport |
| Policy T2 | Healthy Streets |
| Policy T3 | Transport capacity, connectivity and safeguarding |
| Policy T5 | Cycling |
| Policy T6 | Car parking |
| Policy T6.1 | Residential parking |

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1

- 5.4 Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1, was adopted in November 2012 and sets out the long-term strategic vision for the Borough. It highlights the main issues facing the Borough and includes strategic policies as to how these issues are to be addressed within the lifetime of the document. The policies most relevant to this proposal are set out below:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Policy NPPF1 | Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development |
| Policy E1 | Managing the Supply of Employment Land |
| Policy E5 | Town and Local Centres |
| Policy H1 | Housing Growth |

Policy BE1 Built Environment

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2

- 5.5 Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2, was adopted in January 2020 and sets out the Local Planning Authority's detailed policies for managing development in the Borough. The policies most relevant to this proposal are set out below:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Policy DME 2 | Employment Sites Outside Designated Employment Areas |
| Policy DME 3 | Office Development |
| Policy DMH 2 | Housing Mix |
| Policy DMH 3 | Office Conversions |
| Policy DMHB11 | Design of New Development |
| Policy DMHB 16 | Housing Standards |
| Policy DMHB 18 | Private Outdoor Amenity Space |
| Policy DMT2 | Highways Impacts |
| Policy DMT 5 | Pedestrians and Cyclists |
| Policy DMT 6 | Vehicle Parking |

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 5.6 Central Government advice relevant to this application is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The most relevant aspects of the Framework are summarised below.
- 5.7 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.8 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Paragraph 8 identifies the three dimensions to sustainable development, which are economic, social and environmental.
- 5.9 Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development as the central aspect of planning policy and decision taking. In terms of determining development proposals, this means approving schemes which accord with the Development Plan without delay. Where there are no relevant Development Plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*
- 5.10 Section 4 'Decision-making' requires Local Planning Authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Paragraph 38 states that

decisionmakers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

- 5.11 Section 7 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres' at paragraph 90 recognises that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourages residential development on appropriate sites.
- 5.12 Section 9 'Promoting sustainable transport' at paragraph 115 confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.13 Section 11 'Making effective use of land' seeks to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. Paragraph 124 gives substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes. Additionally, it promotes the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (*'for example converting space above shops'*).
- 5.14 Section 12 'Achieving well-designed places', at paragraph 131 states that creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It notes that 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.

6. PLANNING APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The main issues to consider in the assessment of this proposal are the principle of development, housing mix, quality of environment, character and appearance, amenity, highway safety and the natural environment.

Principle of Development

Loss of Office Use

- 6.2 The NPPF recognises that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourages residential development on appropriate sites.
- 6.3 Policy E1 of the London Plan confirms that the change of use of surplus office space to housing, will be supported, subject to considering the overall need for the workspace. Policy SD7 of the London Plan states Councils should have regard to Town Centre classifications in Annex 1 and identify sites for delivering housing above existing commercial uses. Annex 1 of the London Plan confirms that West Draydon/Viewsley Town Centre has a low commercial growth potential (due to a lack of demand) and high residential growth potential.
- 6.4 Policy DME 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 confirms that the loss of employment land will be permitted if it complies with one of the listed exceptions, which includes sites where there is no realistic prospect of land being reused for employment purposes, or if the new use will not adversely affect the functioning of any adjoining employment land.

- 6.5 Policy DME 3 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 states that proposals involving the loss of office floorspace within designated Town Centres should be supported by evidence of continuous vacancy and marketing over a 12 month period.
- 6.6 The Application Site comprises a small office on the upper floors of a building in a designated Town Centre. The office floor space is dated, restricted in size, divided into a series of small rooms and spread across three floors. The general arrangement of the site provides poor quality office floor space for modern use, with tenants generally preferring large open plan layouts in purpose built buildings with high energy ratings. The office has been vacant for approximately 3 years and it has become clear that there is no demand for this type of poor quality office floor space in this location. The office is surplus to local needs and a new active use is required.
- 6.7 The applicants have been trying to find a new commercial tenant for approximately 3 years and despite extensive marketing and offering flexible terms, have not received any interest. The Agent responsible for marketing and finding tenants for the office has confirmed that there is very little prospect of finding future tenants for the premises due to its location, layout and a challenging office market, which has been impacted by a significant rise in homeworking and other factors such as the energy crisis. This situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future and the limited potential of this area for commercial development is recognised in the London Plan. Please refer to the Letter prepared by the acting Agent for a more detailed explanation of the marketing of the property ([Appendix 1](#)).
- 6.8 The office adjoins residential accommodation on either side and the proposed residential conversion would not have any implications on the continued operations of any nearby commercial businesses.
- 6.9 The proposal would not result in the loss of high quality employment floor space and it has been demonstrated, through extensive marketing, that there is no demand for the existing office. As such, the principle of the proposed change of use is acceptable and complies with the provisions of the Development Plan and NPPF.

Much needed new housing

- 6.10 The NPPF seeks to significantly boost the supply of homes and recognises that small sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirements of an area. The NPPF promotes the development of under-utilised buildings and gives significant weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes. It specifically recognises the importance of converting space above shops to help boost housing supply.
- 6.11 The London Plan identifies the urgent and pressing need to increase housing supply, to address substantial population increases and worsening affordability. Policies GG2 and GG4 of the London Plan identify the importance of making the best use of brownfield land and seek to ensure that more homes are delivered. Policy H1 of the London Plan seeks to increase housing supply by setting out the minimum requirements that all Boroughs must achieve. Policy H2 of the London Plan pro-actively supports well-designed new homes on small sites, which it recognises are needed to address housing shortages.

- 6.12 Policy H1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 confirms that the Council will seek to exceed its minimum housing requirements.
- 6.13 The proposal optimises an under-utilised building on a previously developed site within a designated Town Centre. The proposed development provides much needed housing in a sustainable area and would make a positive contribution to the Council's housing supply position. The proposed active residential use would also contribute positively towards the viability and vitality of the Town Centre. As such, not only is the proposed residential conversion acceptable in principle but is a planning benefit that attracts significant weight.

Housing Mix

- 6.14 The NPPF requires new development to deliver sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities in accessible locations.
- 6.15 Policy H10 of the London Plan confirms that schemes should generally consist of a range of unit sizes to address the housing needs of the local area. When considering housing mix, the policy confirms that it is necessary to adopt a flexible approach and have regard to the site location and the need to optimise housing potential.
- 6.16 Policy H2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1, requires residential developments to provide a mix of housing sizes that reflects the Council's latest information on housing need.
- 6.17 The proposal is for a small scale residential development that provides a mixture of one and two bedroom units, which is appropriate for this type of flatted development above a shop in a designated Town Centre and Secondary Shopping Area. It is acknowledged that it would be possible to provide a mix that incorporated a family sized unit, where there is presently the greatest local demand. However, given the location and nature of the Site it is considered that the Site was better suited to smaller sized units. The proposal therefore provides an appropriate housing mix for this context and contributes positively towards the supply and diversity of local housing stock in a highly accessible location.

Quality of housing

- 6.18 A core planning principle, as set out in the NPPF, is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This key principle is reflected in the provisions of Policy D6 of the London Plan and Policy DMHB 16 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2, which aim to ensure that all new residential development is of the highest quality design and can adapt to changing needs of residents with appropriate spatial standards.
- 6.19 The apartments have been carefully designed with large functional and flexible living arrangements that far exceed the Space Standards contained in the London Plan (Table 3.1) and the Nationally Described Space Standards. The apartments have dual aspects and all habitable rooms have large clear glazed unobstructed openings, providing good levels of daylight, outlook and ventilation. The east and west orientations of the openings would ensure that the apartments have good levels of light throughout the day. A high quality design has been achieved.

| Type | London Standard (square metres) | Proposed Floor Space (square metres) |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Bed / 2 Persons | 50 | 57 |
| 2 Bed / 4 Persons | 79 | 98 |

6.20 The proposed apartments would not have any outdoor amenity space. However, the proposal is converting the upper floors of a vacant office above a shop in a Town Centre, where a more flexible approach is expected. In this case, the ground floor unit extends the full depth of the plot, affecting the ability to provide useable outdoor amenity space for the new occupiers. The site is located approximately 0.3 miles from Yiewsley Recreation Ground, ensuring the occupiers would have good access to a high quality area of open space, within easy walking distance. The Site is also positioned near other high quality areas of public open space, including Regional Park and Philpot's Farm Open Space. Additionally, there are many nearby walking trails and various other recreational options, including fishing lakes, golf courses and playing fields, providing alternative areas for outdoor recreation and leisure. The abundance, quality and variety of outdoor open spaces, within easy walking distance from the Application Site would mitigate and off-set the onsite shortfall.

6.21 It is important to note that the Mayor of London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance confirms that where it is not possible to provide outdoor amenity space that the apartments should be made larger to address the shortfall. As demonstrated above, the proposed apartments far exceed the required space standards, complying with this exception to local amenity space requirements.

6.22 Furthermore, the above points were all confirmed in a nearby application for an upward extension to provide an HMO at 164-170 High Street, Yiewsley (17076/APP/2022/3201). In the assessment of this application, the Council confirmed that given the proximity of Yiewsley Recreation Ground it was not necessary to provide any onsite amenity space. This view reinforced the findings of a previous appeal decision for a similar form of development at this property where the Inspector stated the following (APP/R5510/W/22/3294687):

Given the close proximity of the nearby recreational ground, it is considered that the lack of external amenity space associated with the proposed accommodation would not have an adverse effect on future occupiers of the proposal. This matter would not outweigh the harm I have identified in the main issues.

6.23 The Council adopted a similar approach when approving the change of use of first and second floors from office use to two x 1 bed flats and two x 2 bed flats at 20 High Street, Uxbridge (17076/APP/2022/3201). In the assessment of this application, the Council confirmed that the 'proposals would provide an acceptable living environment for future occupants, complying with Local Planning Policy, the NPPF (2021) and the updated London Plan (2021).' This reinforced the findings of an earlier assessment for a similar form of development at this site, where the Council referred to other nearby Town Centre schemes and stated the following:

Given the site's town centre location and the lack of family size units proposed, it is however considered that it would be reasonable to apply an exception in this instance, in accordance with the above mentioned guidance. This is typical of town centre sites such as this where

provision of external space is not feasible and it is notable that other examples of similar development exist within the High Street. Indeed, planning permission (Ref: 1538/APP/2017/722) was granted for the change of use of upper floor office accommodation at nos. 6 and 6a High Street, to provide three residential units, earlier this year. That scheme similarly had no external amenity space. It is also notable that two parks, Fassnidge Park and Rockingham Recreation Ground, are located within 0.5 mile walking distance from the site.

- 6.24 The commercial use on the ground floor would not generate harmful levels of noise or odour, particularly in this Town Centre location where a degree of disturbance is expected. It is noted that the ground floor use does not prepare hot food and operates at a relatively low intensity with a closing time of 4pm. The other adjoining uses operate during normal working hours when background noise levels would be at their highest and the potential for disturbance low. There are no other commercial uses in the surrounding area that would harm the amenity of the future occupiers. Furthermore, it is noted that appropriate noise mitigation measures would be required under building regulations and, if required, these details could be controlled by condition.

Character and appearance

- 6.25 The NPPF confirms 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. The NPPF seeks a high quality design and that new development is sympathetic to local character, whilst not preventing appropriate innovation or change.
- 6.26 Policy D3 of the London Plan requires all development to make the best possible use of land by following a design-led approach that optimises the capacity of sites. It states that development proposals should enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to building types, forms and proportions.
- 6.27 Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 and Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2, requires all new development to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design.
- 6.28 Yiewsley / West Draydon Town Centre comprises closely grouped buildings which have been constructed in various sizes, scales and architectural styles. The buildings are in a mixture of uses, which predominantly consists of retail and food premises on the ground floor with residential accommodation on the upper floors. The area has a diverse character which provides a flexible environment for further appropriate changes.
- 6.29 The Application building has an attractive façade but needs refurbishment. The proposed development introduces an active use to the upper floors, which would reduce the risk of this part of the building falling into a state of disrepair from a lack of use or long term vacancy. The proposed residential accommodation on the upper floors would respect and repeat the general arrangement of the surrounding development.
- 6.30 The proposed residential conversion would only require minor internal alterations that would not have any visual implications on the historic façade or external appearance of the building. The proposed development therefore preserves the character and appearance of the host

building, street scene and surrounding area.

Neighbouring amenity

- 6.31 Policy D6 of the London Plan states the design of development should maintain sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context. Policy DMHB 11 of the Local Plan Part 2 confirms that proposals should not adversely impact on the amenity, daylight and sunlight of adjacent properties and open space.
- 6.32 The proposed development is for a residential conversion and no enlargements or new openings are proposed or required. As such, the proposed development would not result in any additional harm to the visual or residential amenity of the surrounding occupiers, as it would not be overbearing, harm privacy, or result in a loss of light.
- 6.33 The proposed residential use would not result in a harmful level of noise or disturbance in this Town Centre location.

Highway considerations

- 6.34 The NPPF seeks to provide safe and suitable access for all users. It specifies that local parking standards should consider the accessibility of a proposed development, the type, mix and use of the development, the availability of, and opportunities for, public transport, local car ownership levels, and an overall need to reduce the use of high emission vehicles. The NPPF clarifies that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 6.35 Policy T1 of the London Plan states that proposals should support the delivery of the Mayor's strategic target of 80% of all trips in London to be made by foot, cycle, and public transport by 2041. It requires developments to make the most effective use of land, in a way that reflects its connectivity and accessibility. Policy T6 of the London Plan states that 'car-free' development should be the starting point for all development proposals in places that are (or are planned to be) well-connected by public transport.
- 6.36 Policies DMT 1 and DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2, seek to ensure that proposals meet the transport needs of the development and address its transport impacts in a sustainable manner.
- 6.37 The proposed development is for a car free scheme which would comply with the sustainability aspirations contained in local policies and the NPPF. With reference to this, the Site is located in a highly sustainable Town Centre where the occupiers would have a very low reliance on private vehicles for transportation. Onsite parking is generally not desirable in this type of central location for small scale residential developments, which would encourage car ownership and have adverse impacts on air quality. The proposed residential use would not result in a greater demand for parking than the existing commercial use. Furthermore, parking is strictly controlled in this area, ensuring the proposal would not harm highway safety or result in severe cumulative impacts on the road network.

- 6.38 The proposal cannot provide any dedicated cycle storage space given the nature of the units on the upper floors above a parade of shops. However, the apartments are large which would allow for internal storage of cycles if required by the future occupiers. There are also nearby Santander Cycle stands on the High Street, which will help compensate for the lack of dedicated onsite cycle storage.
- 6.39 Refuse and recycling would be stored internally and placed on the highway for the weekly collection on Friday, which is the common practice in this Town Centre location. The apartments have been carefully designed to include appropriate internal storage areas, ensuring this arrangement would not have any implications on living conditions.

Natural Environment

- 6.40 The proposal would not have any implications on ecology and given the nature of the site and proposed development, this application is exempt from biodiversity net gain requirements.
- 6.41 The Application Site is in Flood Zone 1 where the proposed change of use of the upper floors would not be at risk of flooding or increase flood risk elsewhere.
- 6.42 The proposal is for a car free scheme, ensuring it would not adversely affect air quality. The dual aspect arrangement of the proposed apartments provides good levels of natural ventilation.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed development is for a residential conversion of a vacant office to provide two apartments with associated minor internal alterations.
- 7.2 The existing office has been vacant for over two years and, as demonstrated by extensive marketing, there is no demand for this commercial premises. The proposed residential use on the upper floors of this parade of shops would contribute positively towards the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. The principle of the proposed change of use is acceptable and complies with the Development Plan and NPPF.
- 7.3 The proposed development provides much needed housing in an underutilised building on a previously developed site in a sustainable area, which attracts significant weight in the planning balance.
- 7.4 The proposal conserves the character and appearance of the host building, street scene and surrounding area.
- 7.5 An acceptable standard of environment would be achieved for the future occupiers.
- 7.6 The proposed development would not harm the visual or residential amenity of the surrounding occupiers.
- 7.7 The proposal is for a car free scheme that would not give rise to conditions prejudicial to highway safety.

- 7.8 For the reasons outlined in this Statement, the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms.

APPENDIX 1

LETTER FROM LETTING AGENT RELATING TO THE EXISTING OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

SME Coffee (4) Limited
Charlwood House
The Runway
Ruislip
Middlesex
HA4 6SE

31 May 2024

Dear Sirs

Re: 9 High Street, West Drayton, Middlesex. UB7 7QG

I refer to our recent meeting and I thought I would write to you confirming my thoughts in respect of the above premises.

You are aware we have been managing the building on your behalf for excess of five years now and it has consistently proved troublesome in respect of finding a suitable tenant for the vacant office on the upper floors.

The main obstacle has been the location of the site in an area with limited demand for this type of commercial property, nature of this dated building and the internal arrangement of the floor space which is not well suited to modern day office use

The premises have not been occupied for at least three years and this is certainly not a reflection on our efforts.

We have marketed the premises extensively and have been unable to find any suitable tenants for this office which is common for offices of this size and location. We have not been quoting a rental figure in order to try and attract interest, as we would have commercially minded discussions with any potential parties, not only in terms of the rent that we would be seeking to achieve but also regarding the flexibility of the length of their occupation.

The ability of letting the office has only decreased following the Covid pandemic as you are aware, as people are now preferring to work from home. Offices of this size are in reality, no larger than parties spare rooms or studies that they have at home, where they do not need to incur not only the rent of the premises but also the cost and hassle of the commute.



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It is my opinion that, unfortunately, these offices will remain vacant for many years to come unless they can be repurposed into an alternative use.

The most logical route forward would be to try and obtain planning consent for them to be converted into a flat, as not only does there appear to be a surplus of demand in the area at present for high quality residential units to let, but economically it would make sense to carry out the conversion in order to receive rent.

If you decide to pursue this route, I am more than happy to speak to your Architects and Planning Consultants as well as the local authority, if required, to confirm all of the above.

Yours faithfully

Simon O'Brien
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