

Planning Statement

**Conversion of First Floor
of Commercial Premises
to create 1No Apartment
at**

**40 High Street
Haverhill
Suffolk
CB9 8AR**

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PLANNING STATEMENT

Document Reference 23-121-PS

Conversion of First Floor of Retail Premises to create 1No apartment at 40 High Street, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 8AR

INTRODUCTION

Sidey Design Architecture have been commissioned to identify potential redevelopment opportunities and planning implications for the above property. This planning statement forms part of a prior approval planning application for part of the first floor to residential use.

PREAMBLE

This is an application to determine if prior approval is required for: Change of Use from Commercial, Business, Services (Use Class E(a)) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) – Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA.

The property subject of this application is a retail premises most recently occupied by Henderson's The Newsagent. This application is for conversion of part of the first floor of No 40 to 1No. residential unit. An existing flat already occupies the upper front have of the first floor.

The extract below is from Government guidance publication on planning for town centre uses:

Planning for town centre vitality and viability

What role can planning authorities play in supporting the management, adaptation, and growth of town centres? For planning purposes, town centres as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework comprise a range of locations where main town centre uses are concentrated, including city and town centres, district, and local centres (and so includes places that are often referred to as high streets). Local planning authorities can take a leading role in promoting a positive vision for these areas, bringing together stakeholders, and supporting sustainable economic and employment growth. They need to consider structural changes in the economy, in particular changes in shopping and leisure patterns and formats, the impact these are likely to have on individual town centres, and how the planning tools available to them can support necessary adaptation and change.

A wide range of complementary uses can, if suitably located, help to support the vitality of town centres, including residential, employment, office, commercial, leisure/entertainment, healthcare, and educational development. The same is true of temporary activities such as 'pop ups,' which will often benefit from permitted development rights. **Residential development in particular can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of town centres, giving communities easier access to a range of services.** Given their close proximity to transport networks and local shops and services, local authorities may wish to consider locating specialist housing for different groups including older people within town centres or edge of centre locations.

Evening and nighttime activities have the potential to increase economic activity within town centres and provide additional employment opportunities. They can allow town centres to diversify and help develop their unique brand and offer services beyond retail. In fostering such activities, local authorities will also need to consider and address any wider impacts in relation to crime, noise and security.

PLANNING HISTORY

E/75/1682/P Shop with living accommodation: Stock room on first floor. **Application Granted.**

E/77/3080/P Minor internal alterations to provide additional shop storage accommodation.

Application Granted.

E/79/2877/P Erection of two temporary storage buildings. **Application Granted.**

E/80/3199/P Temporary storage buildings to provide additional shop storage capacity. **Application Granted.**

E/82/2872/P Renewal - 2 temporary storage buildings. **Application Granted.**

E/84/2585/P Alterations and erection of extension to provide first floor retail shop area and second floor shop storage as supported by letter and plans dated 14th August 1984. **Application Granted.**

84/3417/P Section 32 Application - Continued siting of 2 temporary buildings for storage purposes. **Application Granted.**

E/87/1302/P Section 32 Application - Continued siting of two temporary buildings for storage purposes. **Application Granted.**

E/87/2161/P Installation of small receive only satellite dish aerial as supported by plan received 9th September 1987. **Application Granted.**

E/89/2638/P Section 32 Application - Continued siting of two temporary buildings for storage purposes. **Application Granted.**

E/92/2491/P Continued siting of temporary building for storage purposes on roof. **Application Granted.**

E/96/1651/P Erection of 1.2 metre satellite dish. **Application Granted.**

E/98/1095/P Continued use of first floor accommodation as residential flat. **Application Granted.**

E/98/1125/P Continued siting of temporary storage buildings (2 no.) to provide additional shop storage capacity. **Application Granted.**

DC/20/0996/FUL (i) convert existing shop (Class A1) into 2 no. units (Class A1) and (ii) change of use of existing first floor storerooms (Class A1) to form dwelling (Class C3). **Application Withdrawn.**

DC/20/1429/FUL (i) convert existing shop (A1) to 2no. (A1) units and (ii) change of use of existing first floor storerooms with an extension to form dwelling (A1) to (C3) (Previous Application DC/20/0996/FUL). **Application Withdrawn.**

DC/22/1541/FUL A). Changes to existing ground floor retail units B). Three storey extension above existing retail units to provide seven residential units (following demolition of existing first floor residential unit). **Application Granted.**

LOCATION

The property lies outside of the two Conservation Areas in Haverhill. High Street is primarily a Pedestrian Zone with one-way vehicle access from its northwestern end, joining with Market Hill which runs in a southeasterly direction ending at the junction with Duddery Hill.

USE

The extant use of the building subject of this application is commercial. The ground floor was formerly used over the last 15+ years as a newsagents. The property has been vacant for over 3 months and has been in commercial use within the last 2 years.

It has become apparent that the demand and need for residential is far greater than larger retail/commercial space. This has also been identified with recent government advice and permitted development rights that exists to encourage change of use of empty retail/commercial spaces to residential use.

PLANNING POLICY

Class MA allows change of use of Commercial, Business, Services to Residential.

This proposal meets all the criteria for this type of application including being within the maximum floor space allowed; acceptable environmental impacts; acceptable highway impact; flood risk; natural light to all habitable rooms; acceptable fire strategy; no impact on the conservation area.

LAYOUT

Conversion of this premises totals less than the 1500sq m of floor space allowed under this type of application. The proposed conversion is the first floor staff facilities and storage space. There is a dedicated bike and bin stores proposed. These are indicated on drawing 23-121-01.

NATURAL LIGHT

Each habitable room has a minimum of 10% natural light when comparing the amount of glazing as a ratio over the floor area as indicated on the submission drawings. This is clearly marked on proposed floor layouts. 10% light was a previous target percentage requirement in the Building Regulations for all habitable rooms however there is no minimum light requirement in the current Building Regulations. There are a limited number of taller buildings adjacent the property, but these are more than compensated by the natural light provided by the existing/proposed windows.

SCALE

The scale of the building will be unchanged. No extensions are proposed, and conversion is wholly within the existing building footprint/volume.

DESIGN

Careful consideration has been given to the design of the proposed alterations with great emphasis made on retaining the character of the existing building. The front façade of this building is not affected by the proposals. We believe the proposal would have an acceptable impact on this property.

The proposal does include two additional windows which do not cause overlooking or any other issues and believe these can be considered as part of the prior approval application.

Vacant buildings can become dilapidated and do not have a positive impact on the local area, therefore having part of this building in use is beneficial for the surrounding area and the building itself to prevent it being dis-used and falling into a state of dis-repair.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Obviously, this property is in the town centre where there is a regular activity and background noise. It is presumed that any potential occupier would take this into consideration.

SUSTAINABILITY & ENERGY APPRAISAL

The proposed works will be designed to accord with current building regulations Part L1A. The flat will have a carbon index less than the current building. Proposed sources of energy efficient measures are to include energy efficient lighting and equipment. Heating will be by high efficiency electric radiators. It will be a well-managed project encouraging minimum waste.

DESIGNING OUT CRIME

A security alarm could be fitted to the property. The occupied property will naturally make the immediate area safer and more secure.

FLOOD RISK

The site is not within a flood plain as shown on the map below. The site is the red rectangle. The proposed change of use will have no impact based on the flood maps.

Figure 1. Flood map – Seas & Rivers – site in red.

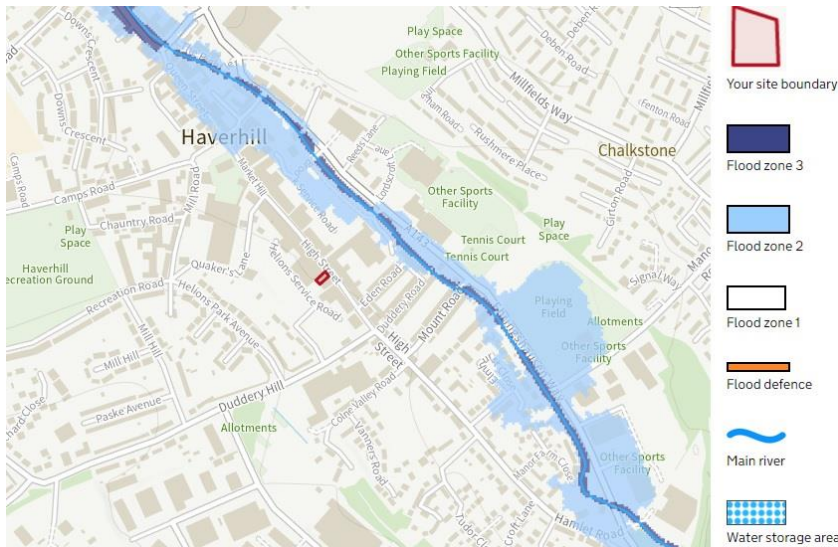
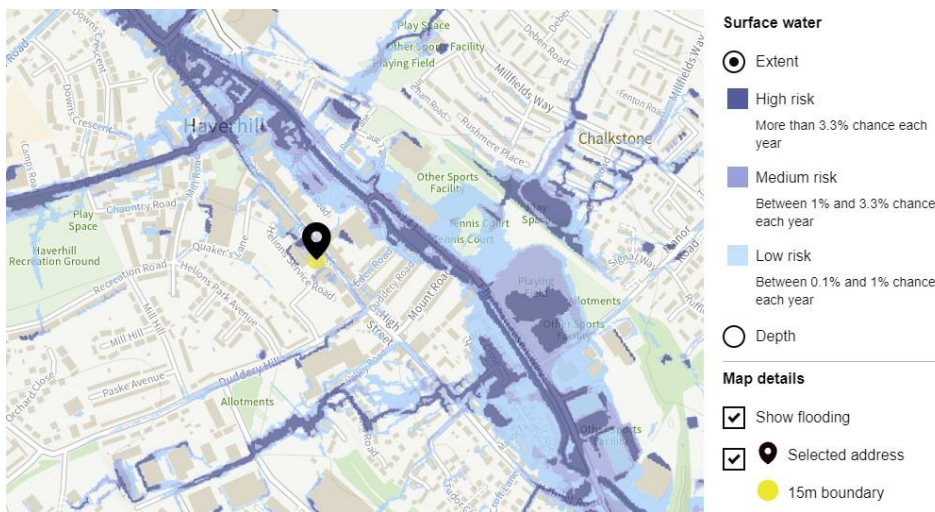


Figure 2. Flood Map – Surface water – site is black marker.



WASTE

Waste and recycling provisions will be stored in the existing bin storage area.

HIGHWAY MATTERS

Overall the total GIA of the commercial premises is 301.5 m. This area proposed to be converted is 38sq m would equate to 1 off road parking space based on typical guidance of 1 parking space to 30sq m of retail area. The one-bedroom apartment proposed would equate to 1 space. Therefore, this development would have equal or less impact on the highway network.

In this instance car ownership is not essential given the proximity of local facilities and transport links. Also, there is ample public car parking available in the immediate surrounding area. There are ample spaces available during the evening and nighttime hours.

LANDSCAPING

There is no landscaping involved with this proposal.

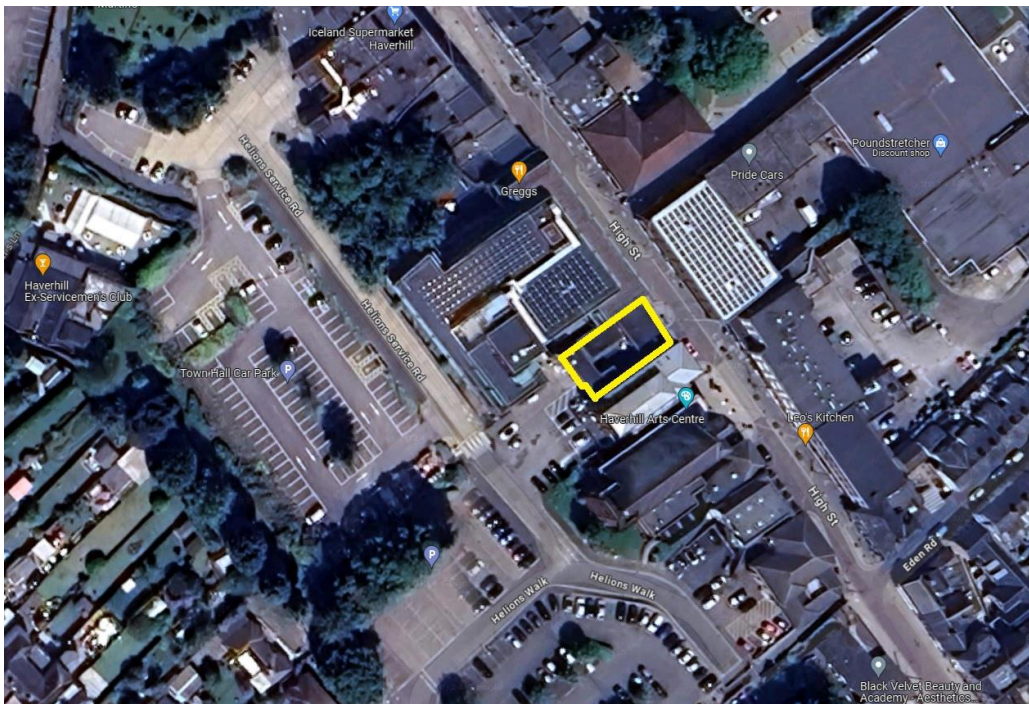
ACCESS

Access is via Hellions Walk. The nearest bus stop is 100 metres to the north of the site at the Haverhill Bus Station on Lord's Croft Lane (A143), which is the main road through Haverhill, it runs east/ west through the town. The nearest north/south routes are the A11, 11 miles to the west and the A131 (routes south) or A134 (routes north) both 14.5 miles east. The nearest railway station is found here at Sudbury for national and international links.

Inclusive Access

The proposed flat is to the ground floor to the rear. Consequently, this would be suitable for ambulant disabled and disabled persons.

Figure 4 - Aerial photo of the overall premises is outlined in yellow.



CONCLUSION & SUMMARY

The application represents a sustainable form of development. It would provide a dwelling with an identified need and would add to the mix of housing available in the area. The impact on the neighbouring properties would be minimal and acceptable in this urban environment. The size of the dwelling meets the national space standards with ample natural light to habitable rooms.

The proposal is fully compliant with the national MA planning policy criteria below:

- Completed form including a written description of the proposed development.
- The appropriate fee £125 per dwelling. (paid to LA).
- A plan which is drawn to an identified scale and shows the direction of North indicating the site and showing the proposed development outlined in red.
- Floor Plans which are drawn to an identified scale (1:50/1:100) Indicating the dimensions and proposed use of each room, the position and dimensions of windows, doors and walls.
- Existing and Proposed Elevations of the dwellinghouses.
- Flood Risk Assessment - only where the application site falls in Flood Zone 2 or Zone 3; or an area in Flood Zone 1 which has critical drainage problems, and which has been notified to the LPA by the Environment Agency.
- A Fire Statement that covers the fire safety design principles, concepts & standards that have been applied to the development [Only required if over 18m / 7 storeys].
- A report from a chartered engineer or other competent professional confirming that the external wall construction of the existing building complies with paragraph B4(1) of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended) [Should be only required under Part 20 applications - not Class MA].
- Confirmation in regard to Agricultural Tenancies.

