

07 May 2025

Submitted via Planning Portal (Reference: PP- 14156895)

West Suffolk Council
Western Way,
Bury St Edmunds,
IP33 3YU

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR ALTERATIONS AND MINOR EXTERNAL WORKS TO FACILITATE INSTALLATION OF PLANT AND EXTRACT EQUIPMENT AT 1-5 HIGH STREET, HAVERHILL

On behalf of our client, Loungers UK Limited ('Loungers'), we are pleased to enclose an application to seek full planning permission for alterations and minor external works to facilitate installation of plant and extract equipment at 1-5 High Street. These works will also provide for a new entrance door. The full description of development is:

"Alterations and minor external works to facilitate installation of plant and extract equipment at 1-5 High Street"

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref: PP- 14156895) and comprises the following documentation:

- Location Plan,
- Block Plan (Ref: LNG4962.BP);
- Proposed Elevations (Ref: LNG4962.04C);
- Existing Elevations (Ref: LNG4962.02);
- Existing Ground Floor Plan (Ref:LNG4962.01);
- Equipment and plant proposed section (Ref:B-90/06/2025);
- Planning, Design and Heritage Assessment, and
- Application Form

The fee payable is £673.00 excluding flat rate service charge. This will be paid directly by the applicant.

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THE SITE

The application site comprises 1–5 High Street, formerly occupied by an Argos retail unit (Use Class E(a)), situated on a prominent corner plot within the town centre. The unit ceased operations in 2018 and has since remained vacant.

The three storey property forms part of a terraced building that includes neighbouring commercial uses such as the adjoining 'Peacocks' retail unit. The frontage faces Market Hill and directly faces the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, as well as the adjacent public open space between Market Hill and Camps Road.

Immediately to the rear is a public pay-and-display car park providing vehicular access and parking for the wider town centre.

The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of town centre uses, predominantly within Class E. These include retail shops, cafes, restaurants, financial services, and religious uses such as places of worship. The diverse offer contributes to an active and commercially viable town centre environment.

The site benefits from sustainable transport connectivity. It can be accessible via the pedestrianised Queen Street, which links directly to Market Hill. A number of local bus routes also serve the town centre, further supporting sustainable travel choices.

PLANNING HISTORY

A review of the Council's online planning search indicates that the premises has been subject of numerous planning applications. The most relevant approved applications have been summarised below:

- DC/21/2313/FUL– Planning application a. New openings on the ground floor east elevation for 13 windows and one door; b. infill of doorway on north elevation. Granted 28/04/2022.
- DC/21/2275/P3CMA - Prior approval application under part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - a. change of use from commercial, business and service (class E) to dwellinghouses (class C3) b. part conversion of retail unit to four apartments with one retail unit remaining. Granted 28/04/2022.
- DC/19/0226/FUL – Planning Application (i) Change of use to first floor level from A1 (ancillary retail storage) to C3 (Dwellings) to create 7no. flats including (ii) external alterations with associated parking spaces, cycle storage and refuse and recycling facilities. Granted 05/07/2019.
- DC/17/2539/FUL - Planning Application Conversion of building to provide 14 residential units, including addition of dormer extension, minor operational development and associated car parking. Granted 14/01/2019.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The application seeks planning permission for minor works and alterations to facilitate the installation of plant and extraction equipment at 1–5 High Street, Haverhill.

The proposed supply and extract units will be located on the side elevation of the building. These works include the installation of a new fresh air supply grille and a new extract grille. Existing WC duct penetrations will be reused, each fitted with new external grilles. The scheme also incorporates the installation of condenser units.

Alterations to the front façade include the introduction of a redesigned glazed shopfront and a new timber entrance door featuring reeded glass within the transom panel.

Full details of the scheme can be found in the pack of architectural plans submitted with the application.

No additional floorspace is proposed or provided, and no change of use is required. .

PLANNING POLICY

Development Plan

The development plan comprises the Emerging West Suffolk Local Plan (Regulation 19), and the West Suffolk Local Plan (former Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury areas) (adopted September 2019). The key planning policy considerations relevant to the site are as follows:

- **SP1 Climate and environment emergency and sustainable development** seeks to ensure that developments contribute positively to the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the area. It promotes sustainable growth that responds proactively to the climate emergency and supports long-term community resilience.
- **SP3 Design** requires the district's built environment to be of an exemplary standard and highly appealing in terms of visual appearance. Developments will be required to respect the character, identity and context of the district's towns, villages and countryside and must help to create places where people want to live, work and visit.
- **SP10 Retail and main town centre uses** seeks to support the vitality and viability of town centres by encouraging a diverse mix of uses that contribute to their continued vibrancy. Proposals must demonstrate that they will not harm the primary shopping area or undermine the town centre's overall function. Proposed uses should also be well-connected and accessible via active travel modes, such as walking and cycling.
- **SP14 Historic Environment** requires development proposals to conserve and, where possible, enhance the district's historic environment.
- **LP40 Town centres** promotes the creation of vibrant and economically resilient centres by supporting a diverse mix of complementary uses. This includes encouragement for food and drink establishments that contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- **LP53 Conservation areas** requires development proposals within conservation areas to:
 - a) Preserve or enhance the area's character, appearance, and key views;
 - b) Respect the local scale, form, and design;
 - c) Retain important landscape features and boundary treatments;
 - d) Conserve traditional architectural details;
 - e) Incorporate fenestration that responds appropriately to the setting; and
 - f) Use materials and techniques that are sympathetic to the area's historic character.

- **Policy HV1 presumption in favour of sustainable development** commits the council to adopt a positive and proactive approach that aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework. Proposals should be approved wherever possible to secure development that delivers economic, social, and environmental benefits for the local area.
- **Policy CS2 sustainable development** promotes the principle of sustainable development, which is a foundational element of sound planning practice. Its core aim is to enhance the quality of life for all both now and for future generations. To achieve this, developments must not only meet environmental and economic standards but also demonstrate sensitivity to cultural heritage and uphold high standards of design quality.
- **Policy CS3 design and local distinctiveness** emphasises that proposals must contribute to delivering a high-quality, safe, and sustainable environment. At the heart of this is the requirement for design that not only reflects but enhances local distinctiveness. Proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of the site's heritage context, be sensitive to conservation priorities, and actively integrate historic assets into the overall design vision.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The principle of development is supported by Policies SP1, SP3, SP10, SP14, LP40 and LP53 of the Emerging West Suffolk Local Plan (Regulation 19). This is also supported by Policies HV1, CS2, CS3 of the West Suffolk Local Plan (former Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury areas including Haverhill Vision 2031 and St Edmundsbury Core Strategy).

As the sites current lawful use falls under Class E, no change of use is required to facilitate its occupation as a Loungers restaurant and café/ bar.

Careful consideration has been given to the design of the proposals to ensure they do not harm the character of the Conservation Area.

The proposal is fully compliant with all relevant development plan policies, and there are no material considerations that would justify withholding consent.

We look forward to confirmation of receipt and validation of this application in due course.

Yours sincerely

Jamie Wright

Jamie Wright
Assistant Planner

