

ADVOCO —PLANNING

BLOCK A
WELLINGTON WAY
SHOPPING CENTRE
WATERLOOVILLE
PO7 7ED

DESIGN ACCESS
AND PLANNING STATEMENT

MARCH 2023

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design, Access and Planning Statement has been prepared by Advoco Planning on behalf of Questmap Limited and is to explain and support a detailed planning application for the erection of a first floor extension and the reconfiguration of this floor to provide an additional four flats.
- 1.2 In the interests of submitting clear and concise information, the national and local requirements for both a Design and Access Statement and Planning Supporting Statement have been combined on this occasion, although care has been taken to ensure that the formal requirements for both documents are met in this single submission.
- 1.3 This statement will comprise the following:
 - Section 2 – Site and Surroundings
 - Section 3 – Planning History
 - Section 4 – Proposed Development
 - Section 5 – Planning Policy Context
 - Section 6 – Examination of the Principal Issues
 - Section 7 - Conclusions

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site comprises Block A which forms one of four blocks which make up the Wellington Way Shopping Centre. The overall development was constructed in the late 1950s to early 1960s and was an early example of a town centre precinct which provided purpose-built shops in a pedestrianised location, along with a limited residential offer. In this regard, Block A is the only one of the four blocks that currently contains residential units. The following image shows the application site with the rest of the shopping centre marked in blue.

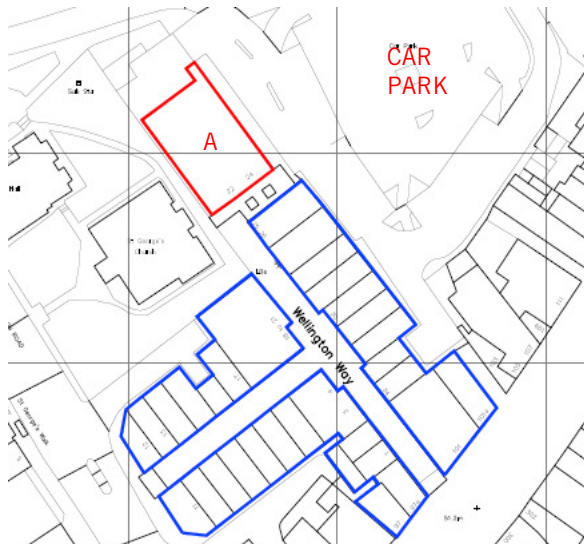


Figure 1 Shows Block A with the rest of the shopping centre shown.

- 2.2 The residential element currently consists of 3 large flats comprising 2 x 3 bed and 1 x 2 bed and these are all located at first floor level with a stair access in the northern corner of the building, as shown in the image below. The flats are located above a Class E retail unit which currently trades as Iceland supermarket.



Figure 2 Shows the application site in the foreground with the rest of the shopping centre in the background and to the left (google maps)

- 2.3 The site is located within and on the edge of Waterloooville town centre with pedestrian access directly from London Road to the south and from Wellington Way to the north as shown in Figure 2. The shopping centre also has pedestrian access onto Hambledon Road to the west.
- 2.4 The existing building has a small yard area to the north which is shown in Figure 2 above. This is the service yard for the Class E retail use on the ground floor. The upper floor flats have no assigned parking although the site immediately adjoins the Wellington Way car park. This is public surface car park with a capacity of circa 100 cars. There are a further 28 spaces which are for permit holders only and these are located on the outer perimeter of the main car park.
- 2.5 The site is gently sloping which is apparent from Figure 2 above. The upshot of this is that the building appears as a conventional 2 storey building when viewed from the shopping centre, but from the north the partial lower ground floor level is present. This provides ancillary retail space for the ground floor shop.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 The Council's online planning history register indicates a large number of minor applications relating to individual shop units within the shopping centre including changes of use and advertisements, which for the purposes of this assessment are not itemised here.
- 3.2 Of most relevance are the following applications, the final three of which are submitted by the applicant and relate to Permitted Development provisions on Blocks B, C and D. Each to provide additional residential units at the upper floor levels whilst continuing to allow retail to function at ground floor level. These three applications are currently under consideration and therefore yet to be determined.
- 3.3 The applications are therefore as follows:-

APP/18/00234. Demolition of existing shopping parade and redevelopment of the site to provide a nine storey building consisting of 264 No. 1 bed/studio build to rent apartments and associated amenity facilities, an A2 unit (Financial and Professional Services) together with associated parking and landscaping. Withdrawn

20.02.2023.

APP/23/00105*. (Block B) Prior Approval for development consisting of works for the construction of 15No. 1 and 2 bed dwellinghouses immediately above the topmost storey on a terrace building where that development comprises rebuild of first floor together with any associated works.

APP/23/00106*. (Block C) Prior Approval for development consisting of works for the construction of 11No. new 1 and 2 bed dwellinghouses immediately above the topmost storey on a terrace building where that development comprises rebuild of first floor together with any associated works.

APP/23/00107*. (Block D) Prior Approval for development consisting of works for the construction of 14No. new 1 and 2 bed dwellinghouses immediately above the topmost storey on a terrace building where that development comprises rebuild of first floor together with any associated works.

- 3.4 The * identifies the suite of three Prior Notifications which are currently under consideration. These propose a total of 40 additional flats.

4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 This planning submission forms part of a wider package of proposals which seek to renovate and update the existing shopping centre and optimise its residential offer. The shopping centre, whilst structurally sound, is in a poor state of repair and has been neglected for many years. As a result of this the overall appearance and perception of the centre is poor and vacancy rates within the individual units are high.
- 4.2 This planning application relates solely to Block A, whilst there are separate planning submissions on blocks B, C and D as detailed in Section 3 above. The proposal is for a first-floor extension to the western side of the building to infill and existing area which is currently partially enclosed by external structural supports. The exposed external concrete frame is a design feature of the shopping centre and is shown below, albeit in relation to Block B.



Figure 3 Shows the distinctive external concrete supports which are a feature of all four blocks, including Block B as shown. The photograph also shows the poor condition and vacancy of the ground floor retail units.

- 4.3 The existing first floor contains three large flats. The proposal also includes the re-configuration of these flats along with the newly proposed space to provide a total of

7 self-contained C3 flats, comprising 1 x 2 bed and 6 x 1 bed units.

5.0 Planning Policy Context

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

5.2 The site is located within the boundaries of Havant Borough Council. The Development Plan comprises the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) adopted March 2011 and Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) adopted July 2014.

Designations and Allocations

5.3 A review of HBC's online Interactive Policies Map and the Environment Agency's online Flood Map for Planning identifies that the site is subject to the following designations and allocations:

- Local District Town Centre (Black line);
- Primary Shopping Frontage (Red line);
- Regeneration Area (Blue dashed line);
- Mixed Use Allocation (Yellow shading); and
- Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding)

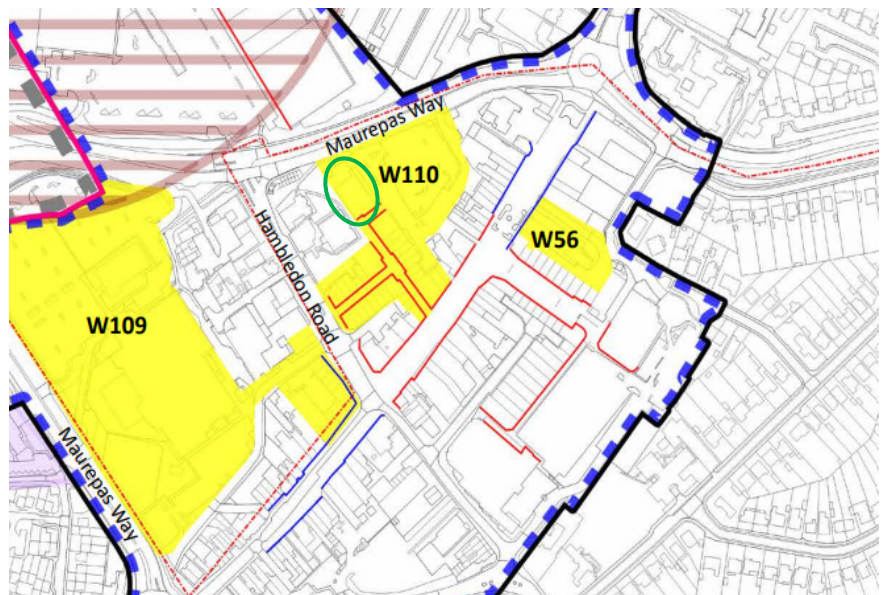


Figure 4 Local Plan Map extract with site location identified with green oval

Policies

5.4 The key HBC policies for consideration for this planning application are considered to be as follows:

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011

- CS9 (Housing)
- CS14 (Efficient Use of Resources)
- CS16 (High Quality Design)
- CS17 (Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas)
- CS20 (Transport and Access Strategy)
- DM10 Pollution)
- DM11 (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)
- DM13 (Car and Cycle Parking on Residential Development)

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) 2014

- AL1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
- AL2 (Urban Area Boundaries and Undeveloped Gaps between Settlements)
- Policy AL3 (Town, District and Local Centres)
- Policy WA2 W110 Allocations for mixed-use development
- DM18 (Protecting New Development from Pollution)

5.5 Though falling outside the confines of the Development Plan, the following are also considered to be of some relevance:-

- Havant Borough Council Borough Design Guide SPD December 2011
- Havant Borough Council Parking SPD July 2016

Impact of the National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.6 The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2021 ('the NPPF') and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The document, and the Government's supporting Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') which amplifies aspects of NPPF policy and due process, are both material considerations in planning decisions. The 2012, 2018 and 2019 versions of the NPPF have been archived and carry no planning weight.
- 5.7 The NPPF identifies that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of 'sustainable development' (Paragraph 7). Achieving this means that the planning system has three overarching objectives - economic, social and environmental - which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives (Paragraph 8).
- 5.8 These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the NPPF but are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. (Paragraph 9).
- 5.9 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and therefore any policies which might seek to resist further housing may be considered out of date.

6.0 Examination of the Principal Issues

- 6.1 The following section will comprise two parts namely the analysis which would otherwise be contained within a freestanding Design and Access Statement and a section which addresses other planning issues and compliance with the policies cited in Section 5 above.

Design and Access Issues

Principles

- 6.2 Local and Government planning policy is broadly supportive of housing within Town Centre locations, which are typically highly sustainable in their nature and occupy brownfield land; both of which are true of this site.
- 6.3 The design objective was to optimise the housing potential provided by the existing building envelope and to provide new, well-designed flats which are more suitable for this location and would increase local housing supply.
- 6.4 A further overarching design objective was to improve the appearance of the entire shopping centre and this planning application forms part of a package of proposals which are being designed to achieve this objective.

Use

- 6.5 The proposed use of the upper floor of the building for residential purposes is already established. The proposals seeking seek to optimise and improve the number of units provided.

Amount

- 6.6 Block A currently provides a total of 1,141 sq.m. comprising retail and ancillary retail on the ground a lower ground floor totalling 870 sq.m and an upper floor of residential accommodation totalling 271sq.m. The upper floor residential accommodation is divided into three flats which are abnormally larger, averaging circa 90 sq.m. each. The total proposed floorspace would be 1.219 sq.m. which includes the addition of a further 78 sq.m.
- 6.7 Through the reworking of the existing and proposed first floor accommodation, this would allow the creation of 7 self-contained flats, comprising 1 x 2 bed flats and the remaining 6 as 1 bed. The additional floorspace is therefore modest in both absolute terms and in the context of the existing building.

Layout

- 6.8 The overall layout is largely pre-determined by existing building. The proposed extension seeks to build over an existing first floor terrace area which is partially enclosed by the distinctive external concrete structural supports, as explained in para. 4.2 above. The proposals therefore do not extend the footprint of the existing building nor seek to developed areas beyond the overall building envelope as defined by its external concrete supports.

Scale

- 6.9 The proposals have a very limited impact in terms of any change to the scale of the building. This is largely due to the nature of the existing building with its exposed external concrete structure which serves to define the outer envelope of the building. The proposal would be within this envelope thereby limiting any perception of any increase in scale.

Landscaping

- 6.10 The proposals offer limited scope for landscaping. That said, landscaping may be

possible as part of the overall upgrading of the shopping centre and the applicant will be happy to discuss options for this which might be secured through negotiation rather than any formal planning imposition.

Appearance

- 6.11 The proposed works will not significantly change the appearance of the building but will add some subtle enhancements through the use of materials. Currently the existing building is visually harsh, and this appearance is compounded by the general decline of the shopping centre. The proposal will add some new materials, textures and colours which will both upgrade and soften the appearance of the building, which is currently very austere.

Accessibility

- 6.12 The existing flats are sub-optimal in accessibility terms as they are accessed via stairs. This can only reasonably be remedied through the installation of a lift which is financial prohibitive in the context of the modest scale of these proposals. Notwithstanding this point, the current flats are of a size which encourage family occupation and therefore raises the issue of access to the flats for children in prams and pushchairs. The proposed flats are smaller and are expressly targeted at younger singles and couples without children. In these terms, the proposals provide a form of housing which is less impacted by the current access limitations of the building and therefore a level of accessibility enhancement is secured.

Other Planning Issues

- 6.13 The following sections address the other planning issues which fall outside the scope of the Design and Access-related headings detailed above. They principally relate to compliance with the Development Plan policies set out in Section 5 above.

Principle of Additional Housing

- 6.14 Planning policy at all levels generally supports town centre housing and the site falls within an allocation for mixed use redevelopment to include housing. The key obstacle to providing housing in this location is seemingly where it might conflict with other town centre objectives, and in particular the loss of retail uses and units. In this regard, the proposals both singularly and in combination with the other schemes under consideration, do not see the loss of retail space or units. Conversely, the proposals seek to enhance the retail offer and complement that commercial element with an increased and improved residential presence.
- 6.15 The proposals are therefore part of a wider regeneration programme which will increase the residential presence in the town centre. This in turn has advantages in terms of security through passive supervision and adds to the vitality and viability of shops by increasing the customer base and footfall.
- 6.16 It should also be noted that the Council currently cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Specifically, latest available figures indicate that the Council can only demonstrate a 3.9 year housing land supply, with a 20% buffer applied. The proposals are considered to be fully policy compliant and therefore the significance of this current shortfall in housing land is not considered to be material in the context of this application, but does serve to illustrate the importance of providing more housing. Further, town centres would appear to be the optimal location for housing which is reflected in the Council's latest position statement on housing land supply, which identifies Waterloo Town Centre as having the potential to provide 600 new dwellings under Policy TC3.
- 6.17 Given the above, it is contented that the principle of additional housing in this location is firmly established and therefore the acceptability of the proposals hinges on its details, including design and amenity, highways and biodiversity impacts. These will therefore be addressed under these individual headings.

Design and Amenity

- 6.18 The broad design approach and features are explained in the preceding DAS section and shows an overall enhancement to the appearance of the building. This coupled with the general renewal and updating of the shopping centre will lead to a significant amenity and townscape enhancement.
- 6.19 The proposed flats all comply with Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) as shown in the following table:-

Flat no.	NDSS Minimum sq.m.	Proposed sq.m.
1	61	66
2	39	47
3	39	47
4	39	42
5	39	49
6	39	50
7	39	48

- 6.20 This is considered to be an appropriate mix having due regard to the town centre location, the accessibility constraints as outlined in para. 6.12 and the targeting of the proposed flats to exclude family occupation.
- 6.21 Each of the proposed flats will have a reasonable outlook which is either comparable or better than currently enjoyed by the existing flats. No private outdoor amenity space is or can reasonably be provided which is highly typical of town centre flats not intended for family occupation. All habitable rooms will have adequate natural light and for 4 of the proposed flats, the outlook will be improved as it will be towards the church grounds.
- 6.22 In terms of any impact on either existing or proposed dwellings, no dwellings currently exist which might be impacted by the proposed development. Regarding the additional flats proposed on Blocks B to D as outlined in Section 3 above, the proposed outlook of these is front and rear, which given that Block A is perpendicular to these proposed new flats, this will ensure that no direct overlooking will occur. Further there will be no material loss of light or any undue overshadowing.
- 6.23 In these terms the proposed flats are considered to provide a suitable level of amenity for future occupiers and will do so without adversely impacting on the amenities of any existing or proposed future flats.

Highways, Parking and Servicing

- 6.24 The existing flats have no allocated parking and therefore occupants will typically not have cars. This is highly typical of town centre living and is reflected in other flats within the town centre including traditional flats such as those above shops. This arrangement also supports sustainable transport options including walking, cycling and the use of public transport. This is also a highly sustainable location with all everyday amenities including shops, medical and social facilities within easy walking distance.

- 6.25 The proposed flats will similarly not have any assigned parking spaces. The existing flats have the greater potential for family occupation, which increases the likelihood of occupation by families with cars. Conversely the proposed flats are not intended for family occupation and therefore the likelihood of attracting occupants with cars is less. Furthermore, if there is no readily accessible or practical parking option available, future occupants will ordinarily make a lifestyle choice to live in this location without cars.
- 6.26 In these terms car free living is considered to be viable and beneficial in this location and therefore should be supported. To aid the sustainable attributes of the proposed flats, secure cycle parking is provided within the existing service yard. This is based on 1 cycle space per dwelling and would be housed within a bespoke secure enclosure, the details of which can be secured via planning condition.
- 6.27 Along with the proposed cycle store is a bin enclosure including bins for general and recycled waste. This will improve and rationalise the existing arrangement of individual bins for each of the flats. They will be collected via the service yard.

Biodiversity

- 6.28 The setting of the application site is within a highly urbanised location with relatively high ambient noise and light levels and an apparent absence of any natural or potential habitat areas, with the exception of perhaps the adjoining churchyard. This area falls outside the application site and will not be impacted by the proposed development. The biodiversity value of the site is therefore considered to be negligible and therefore any gain, however modest, will achieve a level of enhancement.
- 6.27 In addition to the above, the proposed development will not remove what limited biodiversity is currently present. The proposals will increase the roof area which is the only area where potential biodiversity enhancement may be provided. It would appear that the Government is not imposing Biodiversity Net Gain on smaller schemes and therefore this requirement is unlikely to be insisted on here. If enhancements are required, these can readily be secured via planning condition and might include insect refugia or similar; located on the flat roof area. In this location it is not considered that bat or bird boxes would have any reasonable prospect of occupation and therefore the mitigation options are very limited.
- 6.28 Turning to remote biodiversity impacts, the applicant acknowledges the proposed development includes the provision of 4 additional dwellings. This in turn has the potential to add to both nitrates and disturbance to protected area. In these terms this application is likely to require mitigation measures in order to comply with the Habitat Regulations. The applicant accepts this position and is assuming that, as the competent authority, the LPA will carry out an Appropriate Assessment and advise in relation to any mitigation requirements. The necessary nitrogen calculation and other relevant information has been submitted to assist in this assessment process. The applicant contends that any mitigation required will be based on the 4 additional dwellings only.

Noise and Contamination

- 6.29 The site falls within a busy mixed residential and commercial area. The principle of residential uses interspersed with commercial uses is already well established and seemingly occurs without conflict or issue. A Noise Assessment in relation to an earlier planning application on the site provides a suitable assessment of existing noise level and shows that the greatest noise sensitivity relates to Block A.
- 6.30 The proposed new residential units will be located within a pedestrianised environment with Class E uses below, which by definition are broadly considered to be appropriate uses alongside residential. The principle of flats above retail units within this shopping centre and Block A is already established. Compliance with Building Regulations will ensure that noise transmission between flats and

commercial uses is safeguarded. The flats will also have new double-glazed windows which are considered sufficient to mitigate any noise issues, and will result in a better internal living environment than is currently provided by the existing flats whose windows are in need of renewal.

- 6.31 In these terms, it is not considered that any undue issue relating to noise and impact on residential amenity will arise.
- 6.32 Turning to possible contamination risks, the proposals do not require any groundworks or building works which might disturb solid floors or hardstanding areas at ground floor level, nor do the proposals involve the creation or use of soft landscaping areas as gardens or areas where produce might be cultivated. The historic use of the building is for residential and retail use, and there is no known history of any potentially contaminating uses or contamination.
- 6.33 A Contamination Report submitted in relation to a planning application to redevelop the site is also included and, although not designed for the current proposals, continues to provide a robust assessment of any contamination risks.
- 6.34 Based on the above, and the absence of any ground disturbance, it is considered that, even applying the pre-cautionary principle, the risk of contamination is sufficiently low that it may be discounted. Furthermore, if this position is not accepted, any residual contamination risk is sufficiently low that any investigation may be secured via the imposition of an appropriately worded planning condition.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The above analysis shows that the proposed development fully complies with the policies of the Development Plan. Furthermore it will provide new and better housing more suited to this town centre location. The proposals will also contribute to the wider renewal of this neglected and declining shopping centre, which is beneficial to the town centre as a whole.
- 7.2 The LPA is therefore respectfully asked to approve this development.