



Planning Statement & Market Appraisal

Tealwood, Sultan Road, Emsworth

December 2014

Planning Statement & Market Appraisal

Tealwood, Sultan Road, Emsworth
December 2014

Prepared for:

M J Budd

Prepared by:

D Ramsay MRTPI

Tel: 023 8082 0900

M: 07775 862913

E: dramsay@vailwilliams.com

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION
2. SITE DESCRIPTION
3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
4. DETAILS OF PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS
5. ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING POLICY
6. MARKET APPRAISAL/CONSIDERATIONS
7. DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS
8. CONCLUSIONS

1.00 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This application, submitted on behalf of Mr M J Budd, is for a conversion / change of use of the premises located between Sultan Road and Seagull Lane, Emsworth.
- 1.02 As the Design & Access Statement refers, this application proposes the conversion of the existing office accommodation into 3 flats and the workshop replaced with a single house with gardens and parking.
- 1.03 The remainder of the Statement is set out as follows:-
- 2 Site Description
 - 3 Proposed Development
 - 4 Details of Pre Application Discussions
 - 5 Assessment of Planning Policy
 - 6 Development Considerations
 - 7 Conclusions
- 1.04 The policy context is noted below, together with market commentary in respect of the letting potential of the building in its current form.
- 1.05 The current occupiers, Tealwood and Co, are one of the Borough's success stories. The company has outgrown the current building and, due to its expanding business, has relocated to much bigger premises in the Borough. This will enable them to continue to expand and maintain employment in the area.

2.00 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.01 A detailed site description and context is provided within the Design and Access Statement by Harrington Design and Bloomfield Architects which accompanies the planning application.
- 2.02 In summary, the site is located within Emsworth town centre. The main elements of the site are the existing building which covers the majority of the site.
- 2.03 The site is located amongst existing residential development, with further commercial buildings to the south and residential properties to the north.
- 2.04 The wider area is formed of a typical mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses with the predominant use being residential.
- 2.05 The site is located within Emsworth Town Centre, within easy walking distance of shops and facilities. It is also within walking distance of public transport routes which provide connections to the wider area.

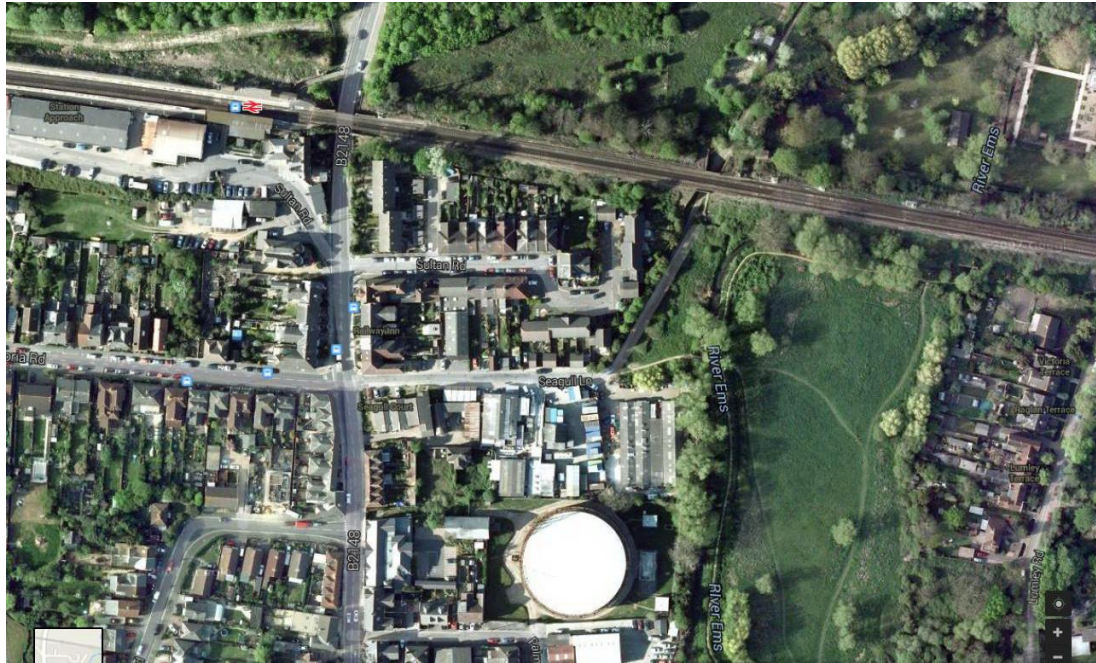


Figure 1 – the site

3.00 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.01 The proposed development comprises the conversion of the existing offices into three no. 2 bed houses. A further 3 bedroom house is also proposed on the site of the workshop.
- 3.02 It is also proposed to fully landscape the site to provide private and general amenity space for the dwellings, including the retention of the protected Yew Tree on site.
- 3.03 Parking at a ratio of 1 space per house is proposed. Given the site's sustainable location on the edge of the town centre and close to public transport interchanges, it is not proposed to provide any on-site parking for the flats.
- 3.04 Tealwood and Co has outgrown its current premises due to increased business which has necessitated its relocation to Waterlooville, where they have purchased a building of 9,500 sqft which was previously empty.
- 3.05 It is clear from the condition of the premises at Sultan Road, that the accommodation is sub market standard and to bring it up to market standard would require significant investment, which would be unviable.
- 3.06 Having assessed the potential to remain on site, the fact that upgrading the current buildings and the lack of expansion space means that the company has been forced to move to alternative premises.
- 3.07 Given the above, the applicants and Tealwood have reviewed the building's potential to accommodate alternative uses and considered that given the investment required to bring the building into good repair, including dealing with the asbestos on site, it was not a viable proposition for commercial uses.
- 3.08 It was then that the potential for residential uses was explored.
- 3.09 Residential use of the site is appropriate because it:
 - ◆ Is in a sustainable location
 - ◆ Constitutes the development of brownfield land in the urban area

- ◆ Will assist with the provision of housing in accordance with the Borough's housing target
- ◆ Will enable the relocation and expansion of a successful local business

This is explored further in Section 7.

4.00 DETAILS OF PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

- 4.01 As detailed in the Design and Access Statement, initial pre-application advice in respect of the proposed development was sought from officers in July 2014. In summary, the advice received was to market the site for 12 months to accord with the employment policies in the Core Strategy.
- 4.02 Given the condition of the building that would require significant investment to be able to re-let, it is not considered economically viable for the building to be maintained in use for commercial uses. It is this that has led the owners to explore alternative uses.
- 4.03 Notwithstanding the above, there is a significant amount of alternative, more modern space available in the market which would be considered ahead of this site, making the prospect of letting the building for commercial uses, very low.

5.00 ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.01 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted as planning guidance in March 2012. The overarching theme to the document is to achieve 'sustainable development'. Maintaining and sustaining the economy is a key requirement. One of the Core Planning Principles (paragraph 17) is to pro-actively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units that the economy needs. The proposed development is located within an urban area in a City Centre location within walking distance of a variety of facilities, bus routes and rail services and should therefore be considered sustainable. The site comprises previously developed land which should be utilised efficiently to avoid any pressure on greenfield land.
- 5.02 Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states that planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.
- 5.03 The NPPF also sets out the requirement for Councils to ensure an adequate supply of housing over the plan period (paragraph 47). Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development which is inherent throughout the NPPF.
- 5.04 Furthermore, Councils should deliver a wide choice of high quality homes and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities (paragraph 50).
- 5.05 The application site is located in a sustainable location, as described above and within the accompanying Transport Assessment. Through the inclusion of 2 and 3 bedroom homes, being family houses, the proposed development provides a wide choice of house types.

Core Strategy

- 5.06 The Havant Borough Core Strategy was adopted in March 2011.
- 5.07 The site is located within the urban area and just outside Emsworth Town Centre boundary. The proposed development has been designed in consultation with officers and is in keeping with the character of the area. Its improved design is therefore a significant improvement to the area, removing an industrial use from what is a predominantly residential area and therefore would accord with **Policy CS11**.
- 5.08 Chapter 6 of the Core Strategy is concerned with promoting housing in Havant Borough. This includes identifying enough space for 6,300 homes, with a mixed of dwelling types and houses and including an appropriate level of affordable housing.
- 5.09 **Policy CS9** seeks to encourage new housing development to contribute to the target as discussed above. As the site would generate 4 housing units this is below the affordable housing threshold.
- 5.10 Whilst the policy stance is to protect existing employment sites, the Council recognises in paragraph 3.24 that there is a need for flexibility in order to respond to changes in business requirements. Any proposal to redevelop an existing employment site for non employment uses must provide robust and credible evidence on viability and marketing that the site is no longer fit for purpose as an employment site. The criterion which must be met is set out in **Policy DM3** discussed below.
- 5.11 **Policy CS4** concerns town, district and local centres. This policy identifies Havant and Waterloooville as the district's principal town centres. The site is located to the north of and within walking distance of Emsworth Town Centre, bus routes and Emsworth railway stations.
- 5.12 Specific guidance on the protection of existing employment is set out in **Policy DM3**. The policy aims to protect existing employment uses unless it has been demonstrated that the land or premises are not fit for purpose [as in this case]. Where existing employment uses are to be lost then it is recognised that other forms of development can provide employment opportunities. Only if another type of economic development cannot be found which provides similar quality and quantity of employment opportunity, will other uses then be considered. It is considered that the building is not fit for purpose and would require significant investment (including a new roof) to bring it back into beneficial use for alternative users. This is not viable and therefore the proposed residential use is considered the most suitable alternative.
- 5.13 Given the location, type and quality of the existing building it is not considered that it would be appropriate for re-use. The cost of redeveloping the site for a commercial use is prohibitive in the current market; hence the applicant has considered residential uses.
- 5.14 The most recent occupiers have outgrown the site (having been resident for 39 years) and moved to Waterloooville to a unit twice as big to allow for expansion of the company. It is anticipated that the company could expand by 50% in the coming months due to potential orders. This additional space allows the firm the comfort that they will have sufficient space to fulfil the orders.

6.00 MARKET APPRAISAL / CONSIDERATIONS

Market Commentary

- 6.01 We are now emerging from the recession and as a consequence there has been an improvement in take up in the industrial property. However the majority of take up has been in the logistics and storage sector who have taken high bay warehouses with sufficient loading turning facilities for HGV's and large vehicles.
- 6.02 As demand increases, supply will continue to reduce until such time that investors and developers have the confidence to embark on new, speculative development and the market is not at that stage. Although demand is strong, it is most likely the application site would be rejected by occupiers who would favour the available estates in recognized business locations.

The Property

- 6.03 The subject building has two distinct areas. The first is a building fronting onto Sultan Road which is a two storey structure with a ground floor reception and first floor cellular offices. There are two garage doors providing access straight onto the pavement. The second area is to the rear which is a low height single storey workshop with profiled asbestos roof sheeting. There is access onto Seagull Lane Road and there is a small area for loading and car parking.
- 6.04 The property was occupied by Tealwood for over 20 years. Whilst the property has been maintained to ensure it had a safe working environment and is watertight, the building is not in a marketable condition at the moment and it would be necessary to undertake a significant amount of work to put it into such a condition.
- 6.05 It our opinion, due to the type, location and configuration of the building the likely increase in rental value in the property after the refurbishment will be minimal. Therefore it will not be financially viable to invest in improving the property.

Access

- 6.05 There are terraced Victorian houses surrounding the building. Access to the site by large vehicles and artic will not be possible as the side roads to the front and rear of the building have no through access. It would be necessary for large vehicles to back reverse onto the busy North Street which would cause significant traffic congestion at any time of the day.

User

- 6.06 The building will not suit a logistics or storage operator due to poor accessibility and lack of height in the workshop to allow efficient storage and racking. A manufacturing operator will almost inevitably interfere with the quiet enjoyment of neighbouring residential occupiers. Businesses will not be interested in committing to purchasing or leasing a property if there is a risk of conflict with the local residents. This would be considered as an unnecessary interruption and diversion from the focus of running their business.
- 6.07 The building is not energy efficient and it is likely the property will have to be refurbished by a new commercial occupier to reduce the energy costs and maintain a comfortable working environment. In addition, should an occupier or landlord want to re-let the building after 2018 it will most likely be unlettable without significant works to improve its energy rating. Considering the other issues with the building in terms of location, access and building height, it would not be financially viable to undertake such works.

Alternative Estates

- 6.08 At present there is approximately 750,000 sq ft of industrial space available (Source CoStar) within the general Havant Borough Council boundary. The majority of the space comprises traditional portal framed buildings with dedicated parking and loading doors to allow vehicular access into the building.
- 6.09 Industrial estates such as Clovelly Business Park in Southbourne, Highgrove Industrial Estate and industrial space at the Tanneries all provide affordable industrial and warehouse space which are clearly a much better, more viable alternative in the market for any occupier. These estates are in established business locations, not in residential areas.

Marketing

- 6.10 A marketing board has been erected on the building. We have received one enquiry which was not appropriate. Further marketing will be undertaken on the new year. We do not anticipate generating a significant number of enquiries from occupiers interested in the building from the marketing campaign given the availability of other more suitable business premises in the area. We anticipate enquiries from investors and developers looking to redevelop the site for alternative uses, most likely residential

Tealwood

- 6.11 Tealwood, the former occupiers vacated the building to allow them to grow their business and focus on new business lines. They have purchased a building at 2 The Meadows, Waterberry Drive, WaterlooVille. This is a prominent, detached purpose built warehouse building with dedicated parking and loading. The building is 8000 sq ft, double the size of the subject property comprising a large working space with ground and first floor office space with an entrance reception.

Summary

- 6.12 The modern commercial occupier will want to occupy a traditional industrial building in established business locations, not a building located in a compact residential area with limited parking and loading.
- 6.13 Whilst there is strong demand for industrial space in the region, the subject property does not suit modern business needs and will not be of interest to any commercial occupier looking to establish their business with a plan for growth. It is on this basis that an alternative use has been sought for the site.
- 6.14 The application site measures approximately 4,600 sq ft in floor space and it is clear that Tealwood had outgrown this building. Tealwood has moved to a much larger building (9,500 sq ft) in WaterlooVille, still within Havant Borough. The larger building was required due to the growth (and projected further growth) of the business. This will allow Tealwood to expand in the coming year(s) without having to move again.
- 6.15 Tealwood employed 11 staff at its site in Emsworth. Since relocation it has already employed an additional member of staff and has plans to increase the workforce by up to 50% in the coming months to accommodate a projected increase in orders.
- 6.16 As is detailed within the Design and Access Statement, a key element in funding the move is the redevelopment potential of the existing site in Emsworth for residential units. The sale of these properties would generate the revenue required to fund the move and therefore expand the business.

- 6.17 In economic development terms, this is a great success story. The business has moved within the Borough, is expanding and will go on to substantially increase its workforce in the near future. The redevelopment of the premises in Emsworth is a key component of this growth strategy and, notwithstanding the planning policy analysis above, achieves the key aim of the Core Strategy Policy DM3 which is to maintain and increase employment in the Borough. The relocation of Tealwood will enable the continued growth of the company and facilitate four new dwellings in what is a predominantly residential location.

7.00 DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

- 7.01 The application site is located within the urban area which ensures that it will accord with **Policy CS17**.
- 7.02 To accord with Core Strategy **Policy DM3**, the site is currently being marketed for commercial uses and it is our opinion that this will be unsuccessful given the location of the site, its parking and the poor quality of the accommodation in general, as discussed above. The marketing has involved displaying an agent's board on the site and marketing through a variety of media such as the press and company website.
- 7.03 Notwithstanding that, the market commentary above explains that in the current difficult market, coupled with the poor quality of the accommodation on site, it is unlikely that a suitable occupier will be found, especially given the availability of superior quality commercial accommodation on the market at present.
- 7.04 It is therefore considered that alternative uses should be considered for the site. On the basis that the site has not proven attractive for alternative uses, and the sustainable location of the site within the urban area it is considered that the principle of residential development at the site should be considered acceptable, and in accordance with Core Strategy **Policy DM3**.

Mix

- 7.05 The proposed development comprises a mix of 2 and 3 bed dwellings with one 3 bed detached house accessed from Seagull Lane and a terrace of 3 no. 2 bed houses accessed from Sultan Road.
- 7.06 The proposed houses are 2 and 3 beds and will help address the need for family housing in this sustainable location.
- 7.07 It is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with **Policy CS9**.

Layout

- 7.08 The layout of the proposed development has been designed to accord with policy and make the most appropriate and efficient use of the site in accordance with the NPPF.
- 7.09 Parking is proposed at the Seagull Lane frontage of the site at a ratio of 1 space per dwelling. This is considered appropriate given the location close to the town centre and railway station. Additional on-street parking is available along Sultan Road.
- 7.10 As detailed in the Design and Access Statement, the site is entirely covered in either buildings or hardstanding with no natural features. The proposed development will introduce gardens to all 4 plots which will provide greenspace and opportunity for planting. This is in accordance with **Policy DM8**.

Appearance/Scale

- 7.11 To reflect the prevailing scale of the buildings in the surrounding area, it is considered that two storeys in height across the site is appropriate. The traditional design reflects the existing local vernacular in the area.
- 7.12 The predominant materials for the proposed houses are brick with tiled roofs. Again, this reflects the predominant materials in the area.
- 7.13 It is considered that the proposed development accords with **Policies CS11 and CS16** in that it proposes high quality design which draws upon its surroundings. The proposed development:
- ◆ Responds positively to the local character of the area
 - ◆ Provides new landscape features
 - ◆ Does not cause harm to the amenity of neighbours – indeed it will improve the outlook of the adjacent residential uses due to the non-commercial use
 - ◆ Where possible the site will allow level access to dwellings.
 - ◆ The development layout allows for passive surveillance within the site, particularly of the open space and car park areas, and the introduction of street frontage development along West Street in place of the wall will increase surveillance along West Street. Both will contribute to the prevention of crime.

Access

- 7.14 The accompanying layout plan shows the retention of the existing access from West Street. It is proposed to widen this to approximately 5m.
- 7.15 As shown on the layout plan shows 4 parking spaces for the 4 units.
- 7.16 Cycle parking is provided in sheds for the houses, and within the converted Henry Jones building for the apartments.
- 7.17 Clearly level access to all buildings on the site will be achieved where appropriate.
- 7.18 Storage areas within the curtilage of the various dwellings will be provided for refuse bins. These will be brought forward to the entrance to the site for collection.

Landscaping

- 7.19 The accompanying layout plan shows landscaping of the proposed development which entails the provision of small front and larger rear gardens for the houses together with the inclusion of a number of trees and shrubs in landscaped areas around the site. As officers are aware, there is an existing yew tree on the site which is subject of a Tree Preservation Order and will of course be retained within a landscaped amenity space.
- 7.20 It is considered that the provision of the proposed residential development on the site and the proposals to landscape this built environment will be a vast improvement on the current hard urban built environment in accordance with **Policy CS16**.

8.00 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.01 It is considered that the principle of the redevelopment/regeneration of the application site with residential dwellings should be considered acceptable by officers as it does not result in the loss of *viable* employment/office floor space. It is our considered opinion, given our local market knowledge, that the site would continue to be unattractive to the commercial market were it not to be redeveloped.
- 8.02 The proposed residential redevelopment of the site is considered acceptable given its sustainable location on the edge of the town centre, close to all amenities and transport links. Similarly the provision of 4 parking spaces is considered acceptable on these terms.
- 8.03 Moreover, the redevelopment of the site would provide additional houses on a previously developed site in a sustainable location which would contribute towards the Council's housing target.
- 8.04 The regeneration of the site with residential dwellings will ensure the replacement of the dated, dilapidated buildings with well designed houses in a landscaped environment. Parking is provided in accordance with the prevailing standards.
- 8.05 It has been demonstrated above that the application site can be redeveloped with an appropriate mix of dwellings in accordance with planning policy. We consider that we have demonstrated that the proposed development accords with policies of the Core Strategy and therefore should be granted planning permission.



Making commercial sense of property

Vail Williams LLP, a Limited Liability Partnership, registered in England (number OC319702). Registered office: 540 Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire RG6 1RA.
Any reference to a Partner means a Member of Vail Williams LLP or an employee or consultant with equivalent standing and qualifications.
A full list of Members is open for inspection at the registered office.

Regulated by RICS