plande

planning consultants

Planning, Design & Access Statement

Change of use from Wine Store (Use Class A1) to Wine Store and Wine Bar, including the consumption of associated snacks on the premises (Use Class A1 & A3) (Retrospective)

35 Henblas Street, Wrexham LL13 8AD

email@plande.uk

0333 444 3433

www.plande.uk

July 2024

Ref: 24097
Rev: #

RTPI Chartered Town Planner

plande is a trading name of HAPC Ltd.
Company Reg No. 06241656
Registered in England and Wales.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Plande has been appointed to submit a supporting statement for the change of use from Wine Store (Use Class A1) to Wine Store and Wine Bar, including the consumption of associated snacks on the premises (Use Class A1 & A3) (Retrospective) at 35 Henblas Street, Wrexham LL13 8AD.



Figure 1: Location Plan

1.2 This statement, which should be read in conjunction with the supporting information submitted with the application, aims to give an appraisal of the planning issues and merits in context with planning and other policies, guidance, and material considerations.

1.3 This planning statement seeks to provide an overall summary of the existing site and surroundings; the relevant planning history of the site, and to provide justification for the proposed works, in the context of the local surroundings, in order to support Wrexham County Borough Council in the determination of this proposal and demonstrate that the proposed works comply with the policies of relevance within the Development Plan. The report is structured in the following format:

- Section 2: Site & Surroundings
- Section 3: Planning History
- Section 4: The Proposal
- Section 5: Planning Policy Framework
- Section 6: Scheme Assessment
- Section 7: Conclusion

1.4 This statement has been prepared for the exclusive use of the applicant as part of their planning application and in accordance with the agreed scope of the project. The document may not be reproduced in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of Plande. The copyright in this document (including its electronic form) shall remain vested in Plande. Plande will not be liable for the contents or use of this document by any person for any purpose.

2. SITE & SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application site is a ground floor retail unit with associated basement storage, which sits within a terraced property of brick construction, close to the junction of Henblas Street and Chester Street.

2.2 The application site is located in an established mixed use area which benefits from a range of commercial uses including retail units, café's, a Public House and a Veterinary Surgery.



Figure 2: External view of the store

2.3 The site sits within the Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area. The small scale buildings on Henblas Street are a mixture of styles but broadly follow a pattern of 2 storey, narrow fronted, domestic scale buildings with sliding sash windows to the upper floors and traditional shopfronts below.

2.4 The application site is highlighted as a building of visual interest or important townscape group, and is locate in close proximity to the Butcher's Market and the General Market, both Grade II Listed Buildings.

2.5 The application site is not located within a flood risk area.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 A planning history search illustrates no relevant planning applications for the application site.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 This application is for the change of use from Wine Store (Use Class A1) to Wine Store and Wine Bar, including the consumption of associated snacks on the premises (Use Class A1 & A3).

4.2 Alticcio Wine Store is an independent wine store that sells wines from all over the world. Most of the wines are natural, organic, biodynamic, and vegan. The store has an online presence at https://www.alticciowinestore.co.uk/.

4.3 The main focus of the business is selling wine for consumption off the premises, however allowing the consumption of food and drink on the premises will enhance the customer experience by letting them enjoy their drinks in a social setting. The shop can hold up to 18 people at a time. The store is a cozy place where people come to relax, chat, and unwind. It is always calm and quiet, with soft background music. Snacks like cheese, olives, pretzels, and crackers are served to accompany the drinks, but no hot food is served. This will encourage longer visits and increase revenue, while also promoting responsible alcohol consumption.

4.4 It is suggested that the A3 use is associated and supplementary but subservient to the main use and is not intended to function as a stand-alone use.

4.5 Within the basement accommodation is a WC and small food preparation area with a sink, dishwasher and aluminium counter top.

4.6 Besides wine, the shop also sells other alcoholic drinks, which can also be consumed on the premises, including natural and organic beer and cider and local gins, vodka, rum, and liqueurs from suppliers in Brynbo and Oswestry.

4.7 The wines sold are not available in supermarkets. They are sourced from English suppliers like Juiced Wine, Swinando, Vintage Roots, and Les Caves, along with wines from Puglia, Italy, which are purchased directly from the vineyards.

4.8 The business hours are from Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00 to 23:30 hours, but the shop usually closes earlier. On weekdays, the shop usually closes around 18:00 hours, with the main focus on selling wine for consumption off the premise. It is very rare for customers to drink on the premises during the week. On Fridays and Saturdays the shop opens later to allow customers to drink on the premises. The store is usually closed at 22.00 hours, it is rare for any customers to stay longer. The shop is closed on Sundays and Mondays.

4.9 The business is run by the owners, two sisters, who are the only staff.

4.10 The business runs wine tasting events twice a month and offer private wine tasting events when there is demand.

5. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

5.1 In accordance with S.38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, this application should be determined in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of this determination, the Development Plan comprises:

- Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 to 2028, Adopted 20 December 2023
- Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan, Adopted April 2016
- Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan
- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

5.2 This section provides the background to the development plan and identifies the relevant policies below.

WREXHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.3 Policy SP2: Location of Development requires new development to be within defined settlement limits and employment areas as identified on the Proposal Map.

5.4 Policy SP7: Wrexham City states that Wrexham City will be the focus for new development including employment, commercial, retail, leisure, tourism, and the arts in order to strengthen the City's regional function as a settlement of national importance.

5.5 Policy SP15: Historic and Cultural Environment states that development will only be supported where it conserves, protects, preserves or enhances the cultural and historic assets of the County Borough and their setting.

5.6 Policy EM3: Alternative Use of Employment Land and Premises states that development of business premises for other uses will only be permitted if there will be no unacceptable impact on the operating conditions of existing businesses.

5.7 Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations sets out a number of criteria for development proposals to be assessed against, including enhancing the character, local distinctiveness and appearance of the site, amenity considerations, and safety and security considerations.

5.8 Policy R1: Retail, Leisure and Commercial Centre Hierarchy sets out the retail hierarchy of the County Borough, which promotes a 'town centre first' approach.

5.9 Policy R2: Development within Wrexham City Centre Masterplan Area requires proposals to support the regeneration, renewal and enhancement of Wrexham City centre and be compatible with the Wrexham City Centre Masterplan vision, objectives and aims.

5.10 Policy R3: Primary Shopping Streets states that retail will be regarded as the most appropriate ground floor use within the primary shopping streets. Development proposals should not be harmful to the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the primary shopping streets.

WREXHAM TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

5.11 Objective 4 of the Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan is to improve the evening economy. An active town centre beyond the daytime shopping hours will improve the town's vitality and viability, help stimulate investment, increase footfall and improve perceptions of safety. Improving the diversity of evening and night-time uses such as leisure, restaurants and small local convenience stores can make the town more attractive to a wider audience including families, couples, elderly, professionals etc.

5.12 Paragraph 3.1.5 sets out the aim for Wrexham to build on its strong sub-regional position as a major shopping destination, diversifying the offer and developing complementary leisure, restaurant, cultural and arts attractions in an attractive environment. The shopping actions and Interventions are to:

- Attract a more rounded mix of shops, leisure/arts/cultural uses and restaurants that support the retail attractions; and
- Develop niche, specialist offers, including higher quality independents.

5.13 Paragraph 3.1.11 states the intention to encourage speciality retailing and quality restaurants in the historic core, identified in figure 3 below with a green dotted line.

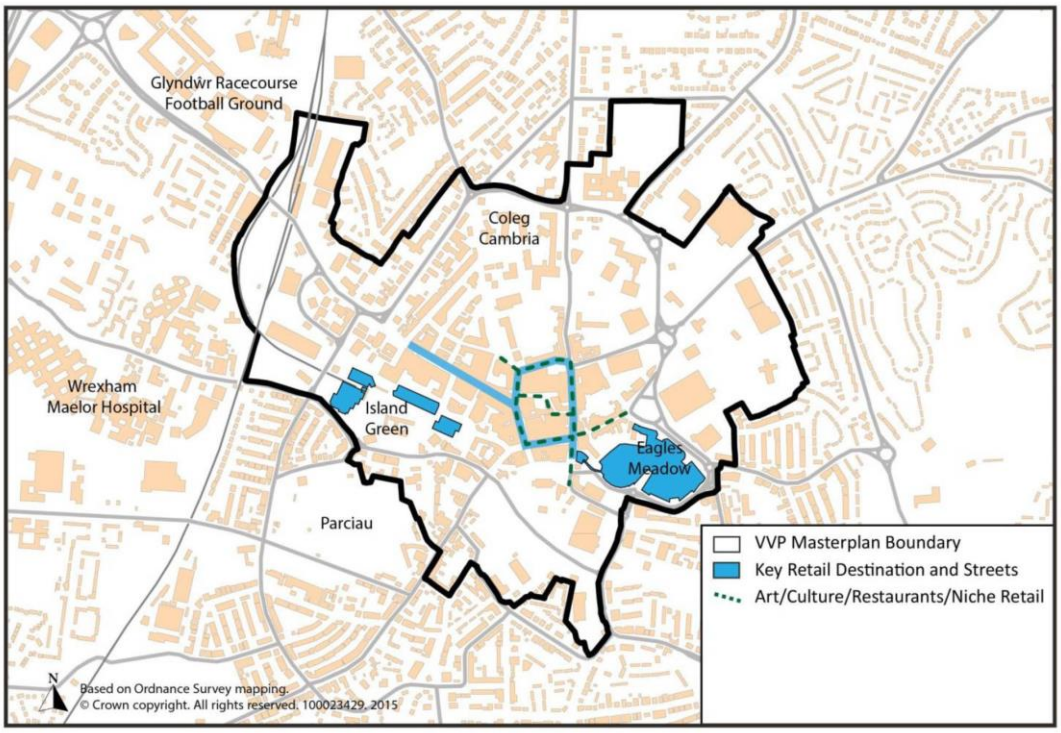


Figure 3: Extract from Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan showing key retail areas.

5.14 Paragraph 3.2.6 highlights the actions and interventions for visitor attractions:

- Develop the town centre as an attractive place to visit and enjoy with new and enhanced attractions to encourage people to visit more frequently and stay longer when they visit;
- Create opportunities for a diverse evening economy;
- Attract a more rounded mix of complementary shops, leisure/arts/cultural uses and restaurants;
- Develop niche, specialist offers, including higher quality independents;

6. SCHEME ASSESSMENT

6.1 The following section will consider the compliance of the proposal with the Development Plan policies and material considerations for the application. It provides an analysis of the main planning matters related to the principle and a more detailed, policy-orientated assessment of planning considerations.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

6.2 The proposed change of use of the premises continues to be a commercial use within the main town centre area of Wrexham, therefore it is suggested that the proposals are in accordance with Policy SP2 of the Wrexham Local Plan.

6.3 In accordance with Policy R3, the retail use of the site is considered to be most appropriate on the primary shopping street. It is suggested that the dual A1 and A3 use of the property is not harmful to the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the primary shopping street.

6.4 It is suggested that the principle of development can be considered acceptable in this location.

DESIGN AND CHARACTER OF THE AREA

6.5 The proposed change of use makes no alterations to the external appearance of the property. The existing shopfront and signage are of a traditional design that is in keeping with the local area in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Wrexham Local Plan.

6.6 The store is an independent, high quality retail store. It is suggested that the A3 use of the store, which allows the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises, is complimentary to the main A1 use of the store, and allows the applicant to diversify their offer, and expand their business. It is suggested that the development of this niche, specialist offer of a high quality independent retailer supports the aims of the Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan.

6.7 It is suggested that the proposed change of use will allow the evening and night time use of the property, thereby improving the towns vitality and viability beyond the daytime shopping hours, making the area more attractive to a wider audience.

IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

6.8 It is suggested that there are no material differences in relation to overbearing, overshadowing, overlooking or visual intrusion.

6.9 The proposed use will not inherently create any noise or odour that would be detrimental to the occupiers of nearby residential properties.

6.10 There will be no food prepared on site and therefore kitchen extraction which may cause noise emissions or odours is not required.

ACCESS & SERVICING

6.11 No amendments are proposed to the existing access and servicing arrangements and no material increase the same are expected.

6.12 The site is located in a sustainable location with a range of car parks and sustainable travel options available in close proximity. Local Planning Guidance Note 16 states that "*Within the town centre shopping area it will normally be the case that developments involving the change of use (but not to residential) of existing buildings will be adequately served by existing public car parks or will be easily accessible on foot, bicycle and by public transport.*"

HERITAGE

6.13 Although the historical use of the property has been for retail, it is suggested that the proposed dual A1 and A3 use is consistent with the area as a whole and is in keeping with the conservation area.

6.14 The scale of the proposals respects the existing scale of the property, and work within the existing fabric of the building with no extensions to the property required. The proposed change of use does not affect the overall appearance, scale or massing of the building or the wider street scene or how various stakeholders will experience the conservation area.

6.15 No external changes are proposed to the elevations, therefore it is suggested that the proposals will not have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area or the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

6.16 It is suggested that the proposals are in accordance with the requirements of policy SP15 of the Wrexham Local Plan.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This application seeks planning permission for the change of use from Wine Store (Use Class A1) to Wine Store and Wine Bar, including the consumption of associated snacks on the premises (Use Class A1 & A3) (Retrospective) at 35 Henblas Street, Wrexham LL13 8AD.

7.2 The main focus of the business is selling wine for consumption off the premises, however the dual A1 and A3 use of the property is requested as an associated and supplementary but subservient use to the main use and is not intended to function as a stand-alone use.

7.3 No external changes are proposed to the property, therefore it is suggested that the proposals are not detrimental to the character of the area, or the historic environment.

7.4 It is considered that the proposal would align with the Wrexham Local Plan in that it provides for appropriate use and will be a significant benefit to the area. It is suggested that the proposals support the aims of the Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan.

7.5 It is considered that the proposals would represent sustainable development which is consistent with adopted planning policy, and which should be supported in order to deliver the wider social, environmental and economic benefits.

7.6 It is therefore respectfully requested that the application is approved. In the event that Wrexham County Borough Council do not agree with this view, the applicant would seek to engage with the authority to secure a solution.