30-32 Chester Street, Wrexham.

Planning Statement.

Proposal - Change of use of existing ground and first floor office use to dentistry practice use.

Introduction.

The application site is located within Wrexham Town Centre and is currently a Financial Services office on the ground and first floor with residential accommodation on the second floor.

The proposed change of use is considered to be acceptable at this location for the planning reasons given below.

The Site.

The site is a 3 storey, modern brick building which is used as a financial services office on the ground and first floor.

The ground floor has an access way to the side to allow 8 no. cars to park to the rear.

Chester Street itself has a range of retail and commercial buildings and also on-street parking. In addition the site is served by numerous car parks in the close vicinity.

Both bus and railway hubs are also walkable from the site allowing easy and sustainable access to both staff and clients.

The upper floor is a separate residential use.

The Proposal.

The need for orthodontic care has been identified by the NHS they have stated that the existing levels of access to Orthodontic care in Wrexham is low and so this is one of the priority areas needing NHS orthodontic care and this proposal therefore aligns with this.

The NHS element of the service will serve children and hence the site was selected as it is well linked and close to secondary schools.

The proposed change of use will provide for a dental surgery practice on the ground and first floor. The second floor residential use will remain unchanged.

A team of consultant and specialist orthodontist and dentists supported by orthodontic therapists, dental therapist/hygienist, dental nurses plus a reception/administration team will operate from site.

The range of clinicians will deliver a comprehensive orthodontic clinical skill set spanning from the management of routine brace treatment to complex multidisciplinary brace treatments

Opening times are initially proposed to be 8.30am to 5.15pm Monday to Friday.

There may be some internal re-arrangements to the layout of the existing rooms but on the whole it will remain as is.

The applicant's current practice has won awards for sustainability so the practice will have a policy and procedures and a carbon reduction plan.

Greenacre Orthodontics efforts in regards sustainability were recognised by Greener Primary Care Wales in July 2023 when we were named 'team of the month' and a tree planted on our behalf in the NHS Forest.

The organisation has been awarded numerous sustainability awards of recognition including the Greener Primary Care Gold Award 2023; Greener Primary Care Innovation for Engagement Special Award Winner 2023 and a Finalist Sustainable Business Awards – Dentistry Awards 2023 and 2024. The Directors have also completed an application for the 2024 Greener Primary Care Award (Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme). The award focuses on helping primary care contractors to improve the environmental sustainability of their day-to-day practice.

In terms of changes to the building itself the existing access door at the front will be changed to a window whist two other windows will be inserted on either side of the building. Access to the building for the proposed use will be via the rear door. The proposed windows will not have any aspect onto any other windows.

Planning Policy.

The relevant planning policies related to this proposal are contained within the recently adopted Wrexham Local Development Plan (WLDP) and the Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan and are identified below.

The application proposal is deemed to be in compliance with these relevant policies as detailed below.

WLDP Policies.

Policy SP8: Economic Growth, Employment and Enterprise.

Para 3.59 of the policy explanation states," One of the objectives of the Plan is to '**support a vibrant, diverse and competitive local economy that provides a range of job opportunities to enable new and existing businesses to grow in Wrexham**'. It is essential therefore that the County Borough has an adequate employment land supply to accommodate the projected growth while allowing choice and flexibility to meet the varying nature of future employment needs and demands."

It is clear that the proposed development will create jobs opportunities within the plan area and provide for a new business to grow in Wrexham.

Policy SP11: Transport and Accessibility.

In relation to this section of the WLDP the accessibility of new developments is considered.

Point vi of the policy states, **" Ensure adequate levels of car parking taking into consideration the location and accessibility of new developments to existing public transport facilities and walking and cycling network",** and, therefore, as the proposed development has existing car parking facilities on site, street and official car parking facilities in close proximity and easy access to both bus and rail transport hubs it readily supports these provisions.

Policy SP19: Green Infrastructure.

The existing nature of the proposed development, particularly being a change of use application, limits the extent to which the proposal can take into consideration the Green Infrastructure. There are very limited opportunities to provide additional areas of greenspace within the site. **However, point iv. Of the policy states " Biodiversity interests including designated sites and the connectivity of priority habitats and species".**

In response to this the applicants are proposing the provision of Swift Nest Boxes on the property to help improve the connectivity of priority species such as Swifts.

Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations.

Development proposals, where relevant, must:

i. Accord with or enhance the character, local distinctiveness and appearance of the site, existing building(s) and surrounding landscape/ townscape in terms of their siting, layout, scale, height, design, density, use of materials and landscaping;

ii. Not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties/land; and provide a satisfactory standard of amenity for the occupiers/users of the development itself;

iii. Safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land, noise, light or air, or land instability, arising from development;

iv. Take account of personal and community safety and security in their design and layout;

v. Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport use ahead of travel by car;

vi. Not give rise to highway safety, pedestrian safety or parking problems on site or in the locality;

vii. Contribute to low carbon communities through energy efficiency, be designed to minimise the use of non-renewable energy, water and the production of waste both during construction and when in use;

viii. Not increase the risk of flooding but make adequate provision for sustainably dealing with foul and surface water drainage and not result in an unacceptable impact upon the water environment;

This policy is an all encompassing in terms of proposed development and the proposal is deemed to fully comply with relevant policies i, ii, v, vii and viii. The change of use will not

materially alter the building characteristics and its character and appearance will remain as is, the use proposed will be similar to the previous financial services operation with people working in a quiet manner and clients visiting on an appointment basis.

The proposed use will also allow both clients and staff to utilise the good transport links to the site and also have no impact upon any flooding issues.

Policy R2: Development within the Wrexham City Centre Masterplan Area

Development proposals within the defined Wrexham City Centre Masterplan area should;

i. Support the regeneration, renewal and enhancement of Wrexham City Centre; and

ii. Be compatible with the Wrexham City Centre Masterplan vision, objectives and aims.

Policy R4: Development outside Primary Shopping Streets

Outside the primary shopping streets of Wrexham City Centre support will be given to ground floor retail, **professional services**, food and drink, offices, hotels, educational establishments, leisure, commercial and other proposals that would enhance vitality and viability. Support would also be given to the conversion of upper floors to residential uses within the City Centre.

Wrexham Masterplan Policies.

Town Centre Strategy

2.2 The vision and objectives will be delivered by establishing the town centre as a thriving destination by encouraging a wider diversity of uses. This will be achieved by:

- building on its strong sub-regional position as a major shopping destination, diversifying the offer and developing complementary leisure, cultural and arts attractions in an attractive environment;
- developing an attractive and distinctive environment with high quality buildings, streets and spaces to enhance the character of the town and support the town centre strategies for retail, visitors and attracting residential development;
- ensuring high quality access to and through the town centre by a range of modes, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, but maintaining high quality road access to the centre;
- **making Wrexham town centre a great place to live with a wide variety of new homes**

attractive to a diverse range of people with supporting social infrastructure for offices and

vacant office space to make a positive contribution to the role and function of the town centre

as a place with a wide and diverse range of attractions; and

 improving the quality of the public realm to improve places for people to meet, use and enjoy

underpins the delivery of Improvements in the quality of retail, visitor, housing and office

provision.

The application complies fully with the provisions contained within the Masterplan and will provide jobs and associated benefits for other services within the Wrexham Town centre areas as well as to visiting members of the public.

Discussion.

The application site is a good example of a relatively modern office/services building within Wrexham Town Centre.

The building will retain its character and appearance following the change of use and the proposed use will provide a valuable service to the residents of the locality and beyond.

It is well located for staff, and clients, to utilise the public transport links available.

The currently vacant office space will be used to create new jobs for the City by a well established dental practice. The benefits to the economy and public health are clear to see.

In addition, the area has been highlighted by the NHS as a priority area for orthodontics and the proposed site, located close to the town centre and schools will help fill this gap in provision.

The proposed development is acceptable in planning policy terms as outlined above.

There are, obviously, limitations to what extent biodiversity and the Green Infrastructure can be enhanced. The proposed Swift boxes are seen as a solution to cater for a priority species and aid biodiversity within the immediate area.

The applicant's track record in terms of sustainability is exemplary and the awards received show the commitment to this element, which again, is in line with policies of the extant local plan.

As the proposal is compliant with the policies of the extant local plan and the Wrexham City Masterplan, will have no impacts upon interests of acknowledged importance and will create jobs and economic opportunities for the area it is contended that the application should be deemed acceptable and approved.