TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY
PURCHASE ACT 2004

PLANNING ACT 2008

PLANNING APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF:

VIOLETTA NIKLAS-PECHA

3A-4 CHESTER STREET

WREXHAM

LL13 8BD

Conversion of existing three bedroom Flat into a 1-bed apartment and 1-bed bedsit

SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT (incorporating Design & Access Statement)

PLANNING ANGEL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANCY
GUARDIAN TO YOUR PROJECT

Reference: PAL/5007 March 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREAMBLE

1.1.1 Planning Angel Ltd (PAL) have been commissioned by Violetta Niklas-Pecha to prepare a supporting Planning Statement for the conversion of existing three bedroom Flat on first and second floors, into a 1-bed apartment and 1-bed bedsit (ground floor shop unit at ground floor to be retained) at 3A-4 Chester Street, Wrexham LL13 8BD.

1.1.2 This statement has been produced to explain the rationale of the proposal and to set out the main planning considerations.

1.1.3 This Statement demonstrates how the design and planning objectives respond to the advice contained within the Planning Policy Wales (PPW), and the relevant policies of the adopted Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 to 2028 (adopted 20th December 2023).

2 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 THE SITE

2.1.1 The application property is a three storey building with A1 Shop at ground floor with existing residential above at first and second floors, located facing Chester Street and a side/rear alley.







2.1.2 The property is located within the town centre, on a busy commercial street, many of which have residential flats on the upper floors.



2.1.3 The rear alley that wraps around this building is owned by the applicant and where currently bins are stored and there is access via the back door. The alley will remain used to store bins and Sheffield bike stands will be provided.

2.1.4 The property has no vehicular access and no on-site parking. There are bus stops nearby directly outside the site in the town centre, allowing residents the option to walk or use public transport.

2.1 Built Form of the Surrounding Area

2.1.1 The site is situated within a street that is interspersed with a variety of business uses, intermixed with residential. The closest immediate neighbouring properties are a mix of ground floor retail with upper floors in residential use.

2.1.2 Future occupants will, as the current occupants already do, have access to shops/supermarkets, public open space (Bellevue Park), employment, public transport and a primary school within walking distance for the property.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1.1 Summary

3.1.2 Flat 3 in the existing building and part of first floor landing will be converted to be 1no. new flat on the first floor and 1no. self-contained bedsit will be created on the second floor.

3.1.3 The internal layout has previously been altered over the years to accommodate the three bedroom Flat accommodation use, this comprises three bedrooms and a communal kitchen and bathroom. The new first floor apartment will contain a bedroom, bathroom, together with open plan living room/kitchen facilities. The bedsit on the second floor will comprise open plan kitchen/lounge/bedroom and bathroom.

3.1.4 Access to the first and second floors from the ground floor will be using the existing staircase and entrance from the alley off Chester Street. The existing common hallway will serve both units. The upper second floor currently comprises two bedrooms with the staircase accessing a communal kitchen and bathroom, a third bedroom at first floor. Stairs lead down to access onto Chester Road.

3.1.5 The existing use and nature of the site, within a town centre location, results in no external amenity space, or space capable of being provided. The site does however lie within easy walking distance of public open space, including Bellevue Park and other leisure facilities. Similarly, there is no on-site parking provided but the site is in a sustainable town centre location with good access to public transport, facilities and jobs.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 CONTEXT

4.1.1 The site has no recorded planning history.

4.1.2 The permitted Rights for this property remain intact.

5 PLANNING POLICY

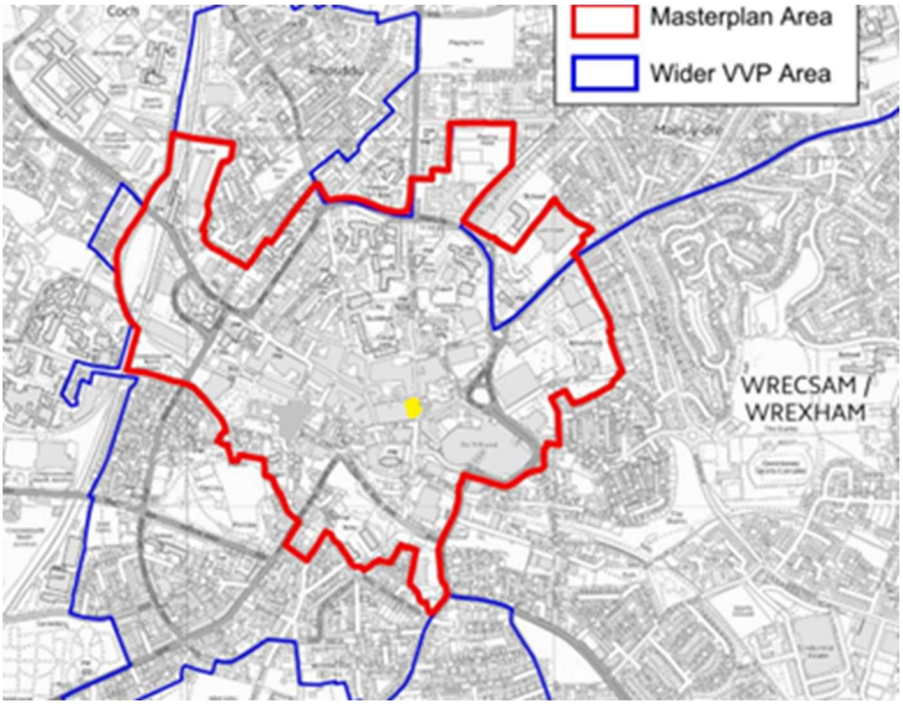
5.1 PLANNING POLICY WALES (PPW)

5.1.1 The Edition 12 February 2024 PPW sets out the Government's planning policies for Wales and how these are expected to be applied and re-iterates that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.1.2 It also sets out the Welsh Government's objectives and approach to new housing provision. The principles of sustainable development underpin the policy context within PPW, and the guidance requires proposals to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Place making, sustainability and accessibility are central to the guidance in PPW, as is creating vibrant town centres. Creating new residential units in a town centre location is a key element of this and will help to improve the potential for these elements in Wrexham town centre. Section 2 of PPW does embrace the concept of placemaking to improve the wellbeing of communities. The planning system should create sociable, accessible, secure, and welcoming environments.

5.2 WREXHAM TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN (ADOPTED APRIL 2016)

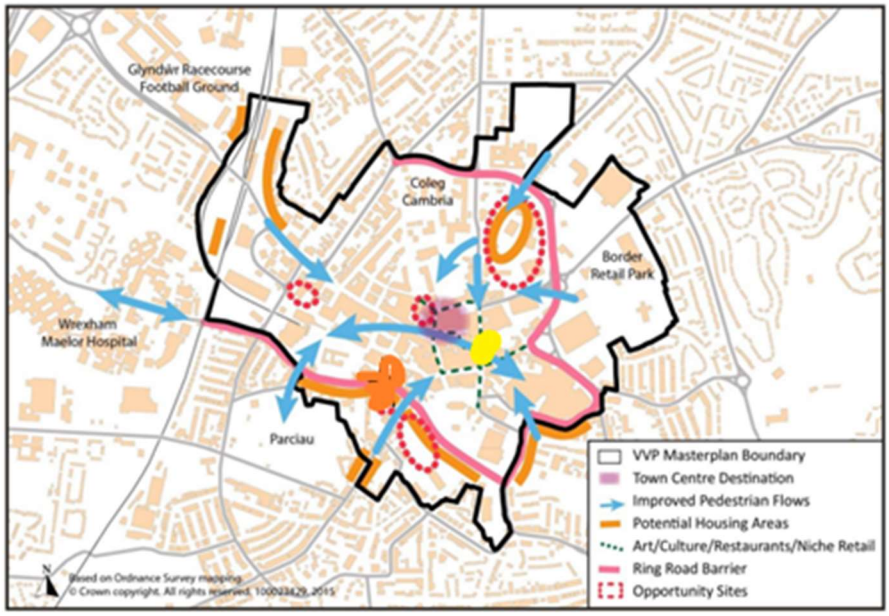
5.2.1 Chester Street falls within the masterplan area.



5.2.2 The findings of the Masterplan informed the adopted LDP providing the evidence base to guide how it shapes development proposals in the land use planning system. The statutory planning framework is set by the development plan (LDP).

5.2.3 The Key Spatial Diagram shows a focus of Potential Housing Areas in the vicinity of Chester Street.

Figure 6; Key Spatial Diagram



5.2.4 The site is not identified as a main retail area, it is within a niche retail/restaurant/arts/culture area, and it is recognised that diversity of uses support the vitality and vibrancy of the core area and would be supported as mixed uses can drive footfall through the town centre.

5.2.5 The masterplan recognises that by increasing the town centre population and edge of centre population this creates a demand for retail, leisure, restaurant uses and other services that link into the objectives for visitor attractions, evening economy and the needs of a growing population while also supporting retail. There are also opportunities to enhance the town's sense of identity through design and place making.

5.2.6 The town centre currently has limited residential properties directly within it, yet town centre living can be an attractive and sustainable option for a wide range of people including young professionals and an ageing population. With a number of vacant and underused

buildings in the town centre there are opportunities for alternative uses. A diverse town centre population can help bring life into the town, create passive surveillance, support exiting businesses, an evening economy and new town centre uses that can help add vibrancy to the town. In this case the building is already used for residential purposes and the application proposes to reconfigure the living space.

5.3 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (UDP) ADOPTED DECEMBER 2023

5.3.1 The following LDP policies are relevant to the determination of this application and are considered to align with the principles, aims and objectives of the PPW and are considered to carry significant weight.

Policy SP1: Housing Provision

Policy SP2: Location of Development

Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations

Policy H6: Conversion of Buildings to Self-Contained Flats or Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

Policy T1: Managing Transport Impacts

5.3.2 Both PPW and the Local Development Plan are considered to offer support in principle for the provision of mixed use development on this site comprising, as proposed in this application.

5.3.3 Strategic polices SP1 & SP2 generally direct development to the defined settlement limits and seeks that development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/ townscape character, open space or the quality of the natural environment.

This proposal complies

5.3.4 Policy DM1 All new development should: -

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;

This proposal complies

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;

This proposal complies

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

This proposal complies

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

This proposal complies

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

This proposal complies

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

This proposal complies

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;

This proposal complies

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 proposal complies

ix. On sites which have previously been developed, new development proposals should make use of existing suitable building materials wherever possible for appropriate uses in order to re-use recyclable materials and reduce the amount of imported materials; and

This proposal complies

x. Ensure that any risks arising from past coal mining, as indicated on the constraints map, can be adequately managed.

This proposal complies

5.3.5 In respect of Policy DM1 (Development Management Considerations) the following in particular should be noted. There are no building works proposed, and no enlargement or rebuilding is necessary. The fabric of the building on site will not materially change and is therefore considered to accord with the character of the site and will ensure it continues to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality. Visually the status quo remains the same.

5.3.6 The nearest neighbouring properties are adjacent to the site, they being apartments and accommodation above commercial. The re-purposing of the floor area of this property into 1 apartment and a bedsit with commercial at ground floor presents no more people on site (indeed fewer as we go from 3 to 2 bedrooms), as would be expected should the existing 3 persons occupying the 3 bedrooms in the Flat, or a conventional family unit occupy the existing accommodation over the business premises. The proposed development will not generate any more traffic generation than 3 persons or a family living above the shop would generate. Given this arrangement and development mix proposed, the proposed reconfiguration of floorspace would have no impact on the residential amenity on any neighbour, status quo remains.

5.3.7 The site is located on a bus route, with the nearest stops on adjacent roads or the Bus Station.

5.3.8 Policy T1 (Managing Transport Impacts) sets out that the Council's guidance on parking standards is to ensure development does not affect road safety or local amenity. It recognises that, occasionally, full compliance may neither be practicable or appropriate. The Council Local Planning Guidance Note No.16, on Parking Standards, sets out the maximum amount of car parking appropriate to various uses.

5.3.9 In this case the existing use should provide 2 spaces for a 3 bed unit. There is no space provided, which is clearly acceptable due to the sustainable location. The site is within walking distance to frequent public transport and accessible to a range of employment, shopping and leisure facilities.

5.3.10 Alternative modes of travel to the site will be promoted to the future occupants and it should be noted the site has good accessibility to rail and there are also bus stops close by.

5.3.11 The approach proposed to parking will maintain both road safety and local amenity. Therefore, the proposals comply with LDP Policy T1.

5.3.12 Policy H6 requires compliance to the following:

Proposals for the conversion of existing buildings to self-contained flats or Houses in Multiple Occupation will only be supported where:

i. Conversion is possible without major alterations or extensions which would significantly alter the character and appearance of the building and locality; and

This proposal complies

ii. In order to ensure that the cumulative impact of development would not lead to the over concentration of HMOs in the locality to the detriment of community cohesion or residential amenity:

N/A

a) The proposal does not result in more than 10% of all residential properties within a 50m radius of the boundary of the application site being HMOs; and

N/A

b) There is a gap of at least two class C3 dwellings or other buildings not in use as HMOs between the development and any existing HMOs; and

N/A

iii. The proposal does not have an adverse effect on local parking provision; and

This proposal complies

iv. The proposal will not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties or adversely impact upon the operation of nearby business premises; and

This proposal complies

v. Provision is made for a satisfactory standard of amenity for the occupiers of the development, including the provision of internal secure cycle parking area, a drying area, bin storage and private outdoor amenity space.

5.3.13 This site has limited external space, but the occupants will make use of the existing refuse storage, notwithstanding public space and many leisure facilities are within walking distance for occupants to enjoy, including Belle Vue park. Bin storage area will be provided in each flat, with existing recycling bins and general waste bins located in the alley. The waste collected utilising the council's domestic refuse collection services. The apartments are provided with laundry appliances and clothes horse for drying; however a located locally Laundrette can provide Self Service or Service Washes.

5.3.14 The current accommodation enjoys the same level of space and amenity, which they complement with the offsite spaces/facilities that a town centre location offers.

6 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 The relevant development plan policies are contained within the PPW, and the relevant policies of the adopted LDP. The main planning considerations raised by this planning application are:

- Use
- Layout, Scale and Appearance
- Amenity

6.2 USE

6.2.1 This planning application seeks planning permission to reconfigure an existing 3 bed Flat residential use at first and second floors, to 1-bed apartment at first floor and a 1-bed bedsit at second floor.

6.3 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

6.3.1 The proposal seeks to utilise the existing building and install two rooflights as part of the planning permission.

6.3.2 The site is situated in a town centre location close to many facilities and services, with a commercial shop unit on the ground floor and living accommodation above. Whilst there are 2 units proposed, the nature of the existing residential space in the upper floors of the building lends itself to being easily divided. The apartment and bedsit utilises the existing space efficiently and considers the layout of the building and the fenestration.

6.3.3 It is generally accepted that town centre locations are appropriate locations for apartments due to the nature of the built development and the overall density of development, making the best use of land and resources. The site comprises a three storey building which is easily capable of accommodating the proposed use.

6.3.4 The main policy considerations are Wrexham Local Development Plan Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations, Policy H6: Conversion of Buildings to Self-Contained Flats or Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), Policy T1: Managing Transport Impacts.

6.3.5 Policy DM1 of the adopted LDP states, inter alia, that planning permission will be granted for development provided there is no adverse impact on residential amenity or the character of the area and subject to other policies of the Plan.

6.3.6 Local Planning Guidance note no.16 states, inter alia, that Planning permission will be granted for development which accord with the parking standards, with allowance for alternative means of transport.

6.3.7 **Streetscene** - Given the nature of the proposal the status quo remains the same and the new shop front brings no adverse impact visually on the streetscene.

6.3.8 **Design** – The existing residential accommodation will not undergo significant alteration, and the floorspace will be internally divided to create a common hallway, accommodation and retain the character, scale, design, and materials of the existing property.

6.3.9 **Character of the area** – The urban area that the property is located in is truly mixed.

6.4 AMENITY

6.4.1 The application proposes residential accommodation in the form of 2 residential units. Bedspaces will be reduced to 2 (from 3). In terms of use of this building, the status quo remains unchanged.

6.4.2 Internally the apartment and bedsit are laid out in a way which makes best use of the space and existing layout and ensures that both units are well lit by natural light.

6.4.3 The site comprises the building with little external outside space, with the entrance to the proposed development being the existing doorway onto the alley joining Chester Street and this provides the required access into the building. No parking is proposed on the site.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 SUMMARY

7.1.1 This Statement has demonstrated that the proposed reconfiguration of this building is fully compliant with the Planning Policy Wales and the policies set out in the LDP.

7.1.2 The residential use of the upper floors will be retained, the development proposal entails the reconfiguration of the internal space to create an apartment and a bedsit, which does not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses.

7.1.3 The PPW identifies that a good standard of amenity should be provided for future and adjoining occupiers of land. Policies within the LDP all highlight that development needs to respect the living conditions of existing neighbouring residential occupiers and future occupiers. The development is considered not to have a significant impact on the privacy or amenity of surrounding neighbours and provides the same standard of amenity enjoyed by the current occupiers of the 3 bedrooms within the Flat, thereby according with policies.

7.1.4 The proposed use will improve the quality of the current residential environment. It will help meet the Borough's need for one bed accommodation of this type, to meet the needs of individuals and couples.

7.1.5 The site lies within the town centre and is connected and accessible to rail services, public transport, education, services and facilities. It will provide an excellent residential environment for the proposed residents, with no impact on existing neighbours. The ongoing use of the ground floor commercial premises is retained and unaffected by the improvements proposed.

7.1.6 As such the proposed development results in no significant use change of the building and is in overall compliance with policies of the Development Plan. Accordingly, the Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission.