TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY
PURCHASE ACT 2004

PLANNING ACT 2008

PLANNING APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF:

VIOLETTA NIKLAS-PECHA

11 LORD STREET

WREXHAM

LL11 1LH

Conversion of existing building to be partially converted to be 1no. self-contained bedsit on ground floor and 1no. apartment and 1no. self-contained bedsit on first floor. Commercial unit facing to be retained.

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 building to be partially converted to be 1no. self-contained bedsit on ground floor and 1no. apartment and 1no. self-contained bedsit on first floor. Commercial unit facing street to be retained at 11 Lord Street, Wrexham, LL11 1LH.

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 Shop at ground and first floor, located facing Lord Street with a rear service area.





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



2.1.3 The rear service yard adjacent to this building has a parking space owned by the applicant and where currently bins are stored, and the cycle rack are proposed to be positioned. 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 is the bus station and bus stops nearby to the site, 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 The ground floor of the existing building has a retail unit facing onto Lord Street and the storage room is to the rear of the unit with separate access out onto the service yard at the rear. There are steps at the back of the ground floor shop allowing access to the retail floor space on the first floor.

3.1.3 It is proposed to retain the shop facing Lord Street, but the storage area at the rear will be blocked off. The ground floor storage area floorspace will be reconfigured to create a self-contained 1-bed bedsit. Access will be via the existing door at the rear of the shop unit and a communal hall will be created to allow occupants to access the bedsit and apartment proposed at first floor. No external alterations are required.

3.1.4 The new first floor apartment will contain a bedroom, bathroom, together with open plan living room/kitchen facilities. The bedsits will comprise open plan kitchen/lounge/bedroom and bathroom. The apartment will have bedroom with ensuite and separate lounge/kitchen

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. The parking space currently is occupied by bins and this will remain, together with bike racks installed for use by residents.

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

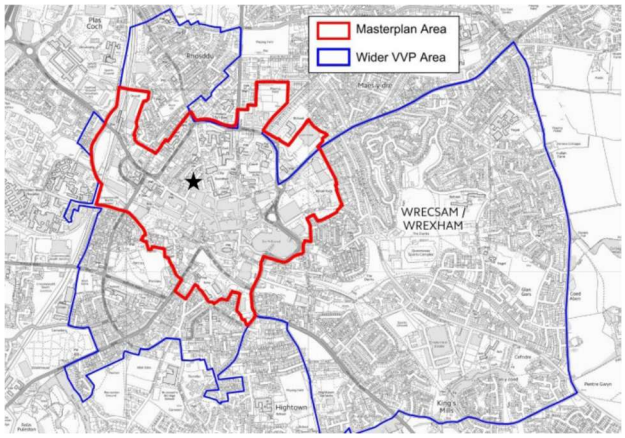
5.1 PLANNING POLICY WALES (PPW)

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 Lord 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 Lord Street.

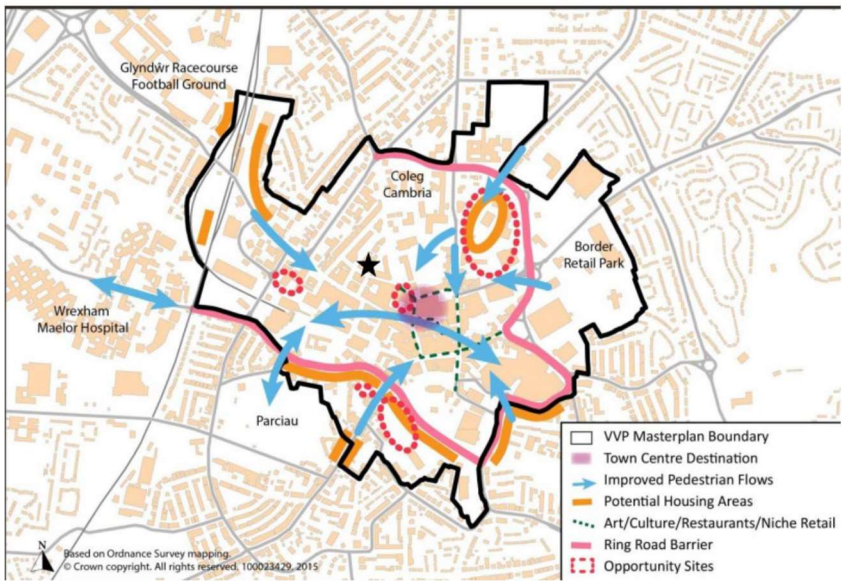
5.2.4 Key objectives of the plan is to:

"5. Provide opportunities for town centre living Provide a range of attractive housing choices within the town centre through the re-use of vacant or underused land and the conversion of vacant office space .." and;

6. "Accommodate the needs of a growing population Provide a range of facilities within the town centre needed to sustain a diverse community within an environment in which it is desirable to live and play e.g. health, schools, nurseries, sustainable transport options, multi-functional recreational spaces and leisure facilities."

5.2.5 5.2.4 The Key Spatial Diagram shows initiatives to improve the identity of the town centre to live and work in.

ıre 6: Key Spatial Diagram



5.2.6 The site is not identified as a protected area. With the advent of a post pandemic work the demand for office and retail space has demised and it is recognised that opportunities may be limited and not wishing to see vacant properties sterilised by holding them for retailers that may never come, a diversity of uses which support the vitality and vibrancy of the core area would be supported as mixed uses can drive footfall through the town centre.

5.2.7 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.

5.2.8 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.

5.2.9 Egerton Street is outside the retail core, the masterplan recognises that the loss of retail space or active ground floor frontages would not be considered detrimental to the vitality and viability of the town centre and alternative uses could be supported – especially when it is acknowledged that these weaker areas may no longer be attractive destinations for such uses (clearly evidenced by the numerous "To Let" boards on many nearby buildings).

5.2.10 The masterplan (paras 3.1.9 & 3.1.10) identified that there are sites where deliverability of housing can be demonstrated, and the Masterplan supports the principle of residential development (subject to details) to encourage longer term supply. Specifically the RFA and Masterplan recognise that Lord Street and Rhosddu Road, both streets bounding this site, no longer serve the function of primary shopping streets as defined as such in the Development Plan. Consequently change of use to non-retail would not be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the streets and a wider range of uses that **include ground floor residential** and other uses that may not contribute to footfall (our emphasis).

5.2.11 Key to the overall masterplan is 'to make 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'.

5.2.12 5.2.11 The Actions and Interventions for residential development are:

• Make the town centre an aspirational, attractive and desirable place to live.

• Increase the number of people living within and on the town centre;

• Increase the number of people living on the edge of the town centre & improve accessibility to the centre;

• Provide a diverse range of housing types and tenures attractive to a diverse population;

• Support the provision of facilities and services needed to sustain an increased residential population in the town centre;

5.2.13 This project delivers on these aims and aspirations.

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

5.3.7 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.

5.3.8 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. Cycle Racks will be provided adjacent to the accommodation.

5.3.9 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.

5.3.10 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.

5.3.11 This site has limited external space, but the occupants will make use of the existing refuse storage, and provide new bike racks. 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 unit, with existing recycling bins and general waste bins located in the service yard. The waste collected utilising the council's domestic refuse collection services. The apartment/bedsits are provided with laundry appliances and clothes horse for drying; however a located locally Laundrette can provide Self Service or Service Washes.

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 convert the existing building to be partially converted to be 1no. self-contained bedsit on ground floor and 1no. apartment and 1no. self-contained bedsit on first floor. Commercial unit facing street to be retained.

6.3 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

6.3.1 The proposal seeks to utilise the existing building with no external alterations 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. Whilst there are 3 units proposed, the nature of the existing space in the ground and upper floor of the building lends itself to being easily divided. The apartment and bedsits utilise 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 brings no adverse impact visually on the streetscene.

6.3.8 **Design** – The existing floorspace 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 Internally the apartment and bedsits 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.

6.4.2 The site comprises the building with little external outside space, with the entrance to the proposed development being the existing doorway onto the service area 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 will entail the reconfiguration of the internal space to create apartments, utilising the vacant space that was once occupied by a commercial Use. The proposed change of use retains shopfront commercial space, whilst the residential use does not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring premises.

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 occupiers of neighbouring already converted buildings, 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.