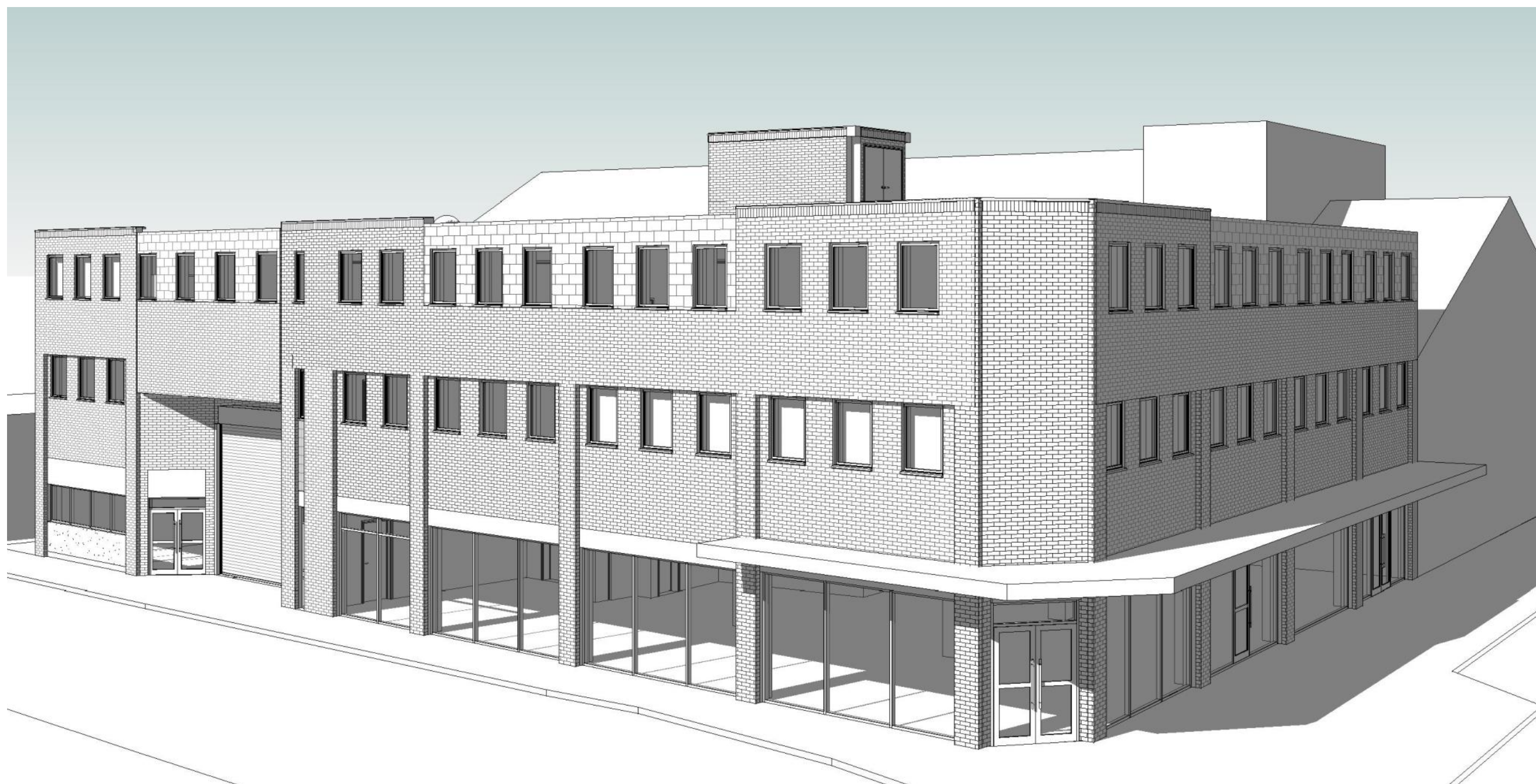


2217 | PROPOSED STUDIO APARTMENTS | IMPERIAL HOUSE |
KING STREET | WREXHAM

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
CHANGE OF USE OF FIRST FLOOR & SECOND FLOOR TO 14 APARTMENTS (USE CLASS C3)



Planning Issue | May 2022

M1 INVESTMENTS LTD | DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Project Team

- Client — M1 Investments Ltd
- Architects — ctd architects

Documents forming Planning Application

- Drawings — ctd architects
- Design and Access Statement — ctd architects

DOCUMENT CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	04
	1.1 Role of this document	04
	1.2 An overview of the brief	04
2.0	SITE AND SURROUDING CONTEXT HISTORY	05
3.0	PLANNING HISTORY	06
4.0	GROUND FLOOR USAGE & HOUSRS OF OPENING	06
5.0	PLANNING POLICY	06
6.0	USE & AMOUNT	07
7.0	LAYOUT	07
8.0	SCALE	08
9.0	ACCESS	08
10.0	MATERIALS	08
11.0	LANDSCAPE	08
12.0	SUMMARY & CONCLUSION	09
13.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY	10

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Role of this Document

This document addresses the design decisions that have informed the scheme, provides information about the site and surrounding context and the precedents for the development.

This report has been prepared by ctd architects on behalf of M1 Investment Ltd.

This document will accompany a Full Planning Permission for the Change of Use of the First & Second Floor to 14 No. 1 bed apartments including new replacement windows.

1.2 An Overview of the Brief

Imperial Buildings was constructed in the mid 1970’s originally to provide ground floor retail units below two stories of office for local council use, who have since relocated and as a result the building has been empty (above ground floor retail uses) for a prolonged period of time.

It is proposed to also convert the first & second floor into 14No.apartments (6no. On the first floor, 8no. on the second floor). The intention of the scheme is to provide quality residential accommodation for long term vacant floor space within the town centre. The type/style of development will allow more people to live in close proximity to places of employment, leisure & services.

All 14 apartment units will be for rent/open market.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Context History

The site is at the corner of King Street and Regents Street in the centre of Wrexham. Regents Street is one of the main shopping streets (as noted in the town centre master plan) and the site is at it’s western less trafficked end with good access to the bus station on King Street.

The current building is built on the site of a late Victorian hotel. In 1874 the site was an undeveloped site but by 1899 the site had been purchased for a new hotel. The Imperial Hotel, which gives the current building takes it’s name, was completed in 1901.

The hotel was not popular and by 1929 the hotel was occupied by the local council as offices and used until 1974 when the building was demolished and the current building built to house the local council Department of Employment.

Since then the council have relocated to a new building the upper stories have been empty. The ground floor retail units remain in use and are outside of the proposals.



The Imperial Hotel, opened in 1901, the former building to occupy the site (www.wrexham-history.com)



1874 map of the site showing the undeveloped ‘garden’ plot, however , the form of the King Street and Regent Street are clear de-fined as they exist today. (OS Town Plan Denbighshire XXVIII 12.1 & 12.2 via National Library of Scotland)

3.0 Planning History

As the building was used as council offices from the buildings construction in 1974 there is little planning history for the building and most of the building original windows/doors and internal features.

There have been 2 recent applications relating to the ground floor retail use outside of this planning applications scope.

P/2021/0678 | July 2021 | Granted

Unit 3 –4 change of use of building from class a1 (retail) to class a3 (restaurant and takeaway)

P/2016/1057 | November 2016 | Granted

Installation of new shopfront (in retrospect)

4.0 Ground Floor Usage & Hours of Opening

Unit 1

Town & Country Estate & Letting Agents.

9am—5:30pm Monday to Saturday

Unit 2

Currently Vacant—preciously Vape Co retail shop

Unit 3-4

Proposed A3 Restaurant with takeaway facilities

11am to 12am Sunday to Thursday, 11am to 1am Friday & Saturday

3 King Street

Perfect Pizza—fast food takeaway (also occupies first floor above the unit)

4pm—12am Monday to Thursday, 4pm to 2am Friday, 4:30pm to 3am Saturday, 4:30pm to 1am Sunday

The estate agent and vacant retail unit should not cause any noise issues being open during normal office working hours.

Perfect Pizza & the A3 restaurant could have noise implications in the proposed apartments above, however, it should be noted that this is expected, transient noise that comes from living in a town centre environment and part of the general street sounds.

The building will be acoustically upgraded with high performance double glazed windows, upgrade external wall thermal/acoustic lining and acoustic upgrade to the existing floors above the retail units in accordance with building regulations.

5.0 Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

Under the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes the PPW states *“Prioritises the use of previously developed land and existing buildings” to make best use of resources and to have a “mix of uses” in creating and sustaining communities*

The office space has been empty for a number of years, at least since 2009, therefore is currently an under utilised building in the town centre. The proposals will bring back the use of the space and create a form of living to benefit the economy of the town adding vitality to the centre.

The proposals do not affect or remove any existing ground floor retail units.

Local Planning Policy

Under Cycle Parking (Local Planning Guidance Note No.15) for dwelling there is *“No prescribed standard. However, secure and convenient communal cycle parking areas may be required in appropriate circumstances (e.g. higher density developments with limited, or no car parking).” As there is no off street parking a secure and covered bike shelter will be provided to the rear of the building designed to the standards in the guidance note*

The site is within the civic centre (1b) Wrexham Town Character Area (Local Planning Guidance Note 19) with the strategy of change for “Enhancement” & “Encouragement of Diversity”. This proposal helps bring enhancement to the economics of the town and diversity of the building usage in the town.

Wrexham Town Centre Master Plan

The town centre masterplan (2016) notes the following on the conversion of vacant office units *“Conversion of vacant upper floor office space to residential uses such as at Centenary Buildings, Trinity House, Halkyn House, Queens Square, Regent House is supported in principle. Currently these spaces don’t have development value to interest the market but the strategy for business, retail, living and visitors will help make the town centre an attractive and desirable place to live which will help support an increase in development values and encourage investment in Page 29 of 76 conversion schemes. Conversion of other smaller vacant units to residential is supported subject to satisfactory details.” (3.5.7) and*

“Conversion of vacant office space into residential can help deliver new homes while also supporting the retail market and evening economy.” (3.6.1)

It is important to note that Centenary Buildings also on King Street listed in the masterplan has recently been converted to 52 No. Dwelling (Planning Application no. P/2018/0267) Granted February 2020 giving precedent for this type of development .

6.0 Use & Amount

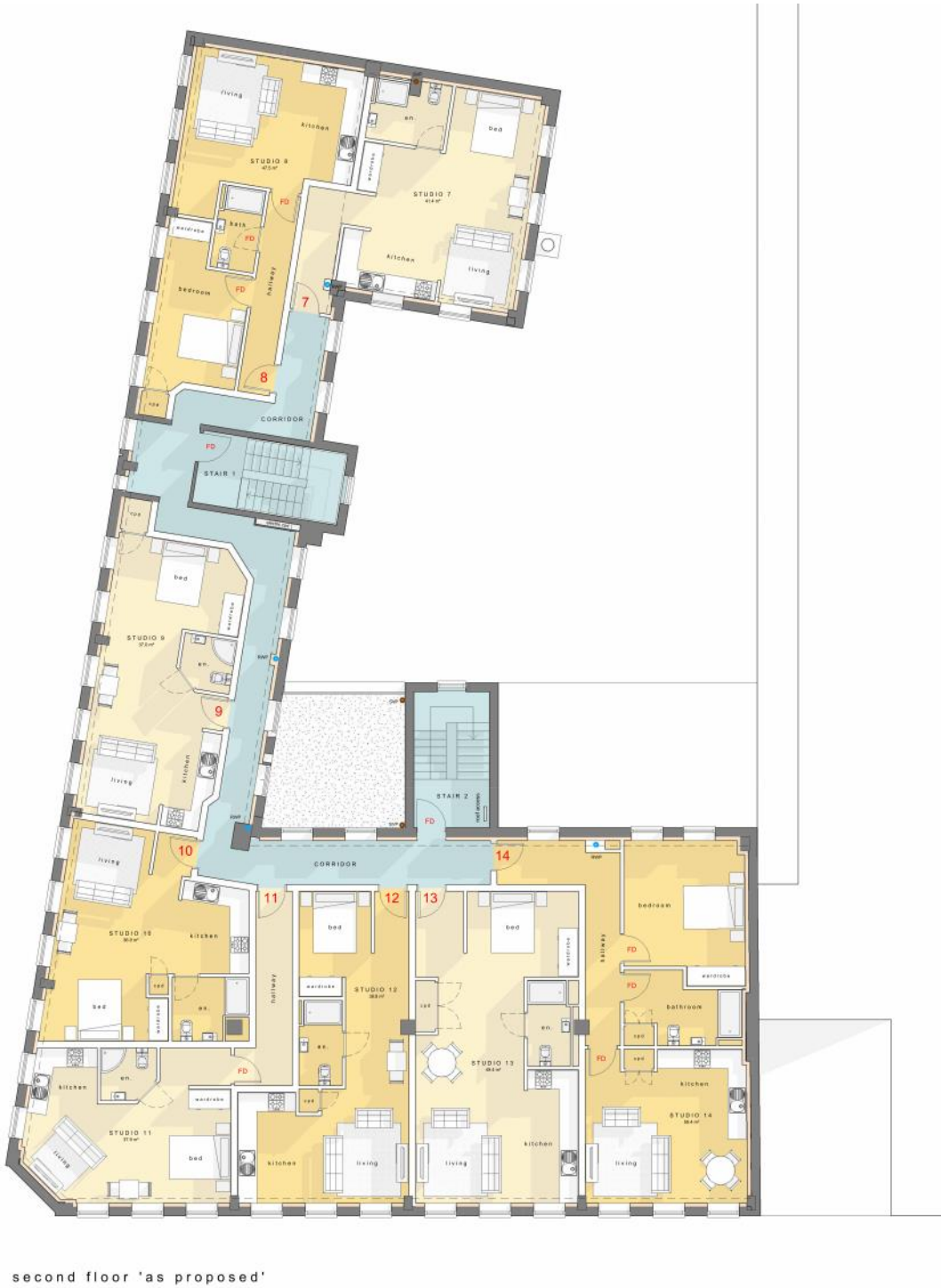
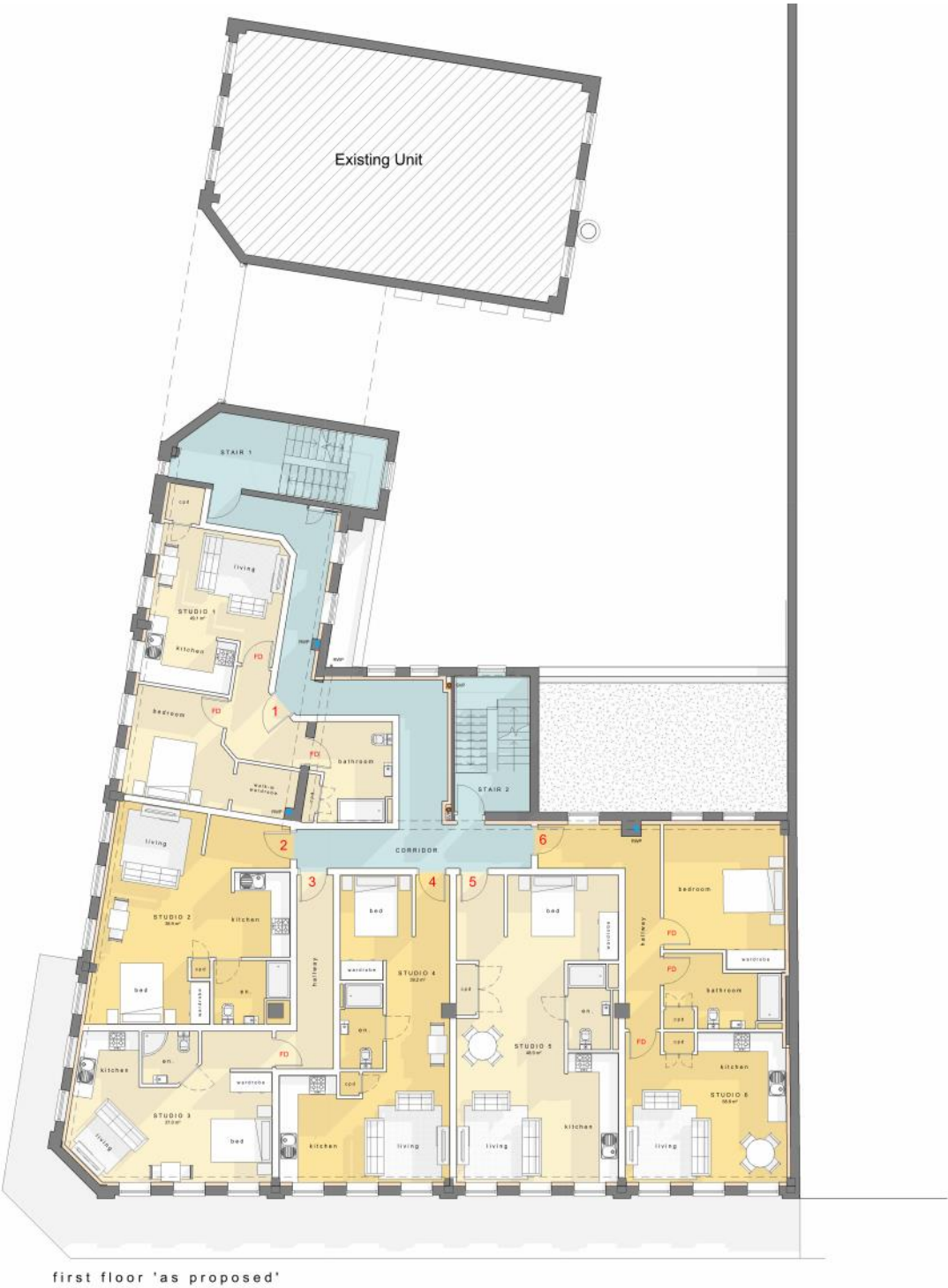
The development proposal would see a “change of use of the first and second floor to 14 apartments including new windows.”

This application totals 14No. C3 residential studio apartments. The first floor above 3 King street is not part of the proposals and is not accessible from the main first floor area.

7.0 Layout

The layout has been developed around the constraints and opportunities of the existing building. This primarily relates to the position of the existing staircases and parameters of the concrete frame. A corridor to the rear of the flats has been incorporated around the staircases whilst allowing each dwelling to have access to appropriate levels of natural light mostly from the front elevation, to provide appropriate means of escape and natural surveillance to King Street & Regents Street.

The apartments are split between 4no. 1 bedroom apartments (47-59m²) and 10no. Bedsit apartments. (37-49m²). As part of the design process Wrexham Council was asked about the minimum sizes of apartments. It was confirmed that there is no space recommendations for private apartments and they would support an application with bedsit units of these sizes.



8.0 Scale

The form and height of the building is not affected by this proposal.

9.0 Access

Access to the upper floors will be from King Street via the dedicated entrance door and existing stair-case There is also an additional existing fire escape located to the rear that leads into the service yard.

The site is located within Wrexham Town Centre which is well served by public transport links and benefits from a bus station directly along King Street.

The rear of the building is secured with a fob operated roller shutter which is shared with the retail units. This will provide access to the secure cycle store and residential bin storage.

The location allows good access to nearby services and amenities and can therefore be deemed a sustainable location that would not require dedicated parking spaces for each unit.

10.0 Materials

The windows will be replaced to match existing with new fenestration to be compliant with building regulations , however, all window openings will be retained and no other external materials changed.

11.0 Landscape

The proposal does not accommodate areas of landscaping within the scheme due to the physical limits of the site and its context (within the centre of Wrexham).

Within close proximity there are a number of high quality open and green spaces, namely St Giles Churchyard and the larger Bellevue Park

Further afield, the site is within a walkable distance is Acton Park in the north.



Local open space | NTS

12.0 Summary and Conclusion

The proposal presents a good opportunity for the re-use of an existing building in a sustainable location that is close to existing amenities, services and transport links.

The proposed residential units will make a small but meaningful contribution to much needed housing within Wrexham. The size of units also contributes to the mix in developments in close proximity to the site and the wider area.

The change of use will see a long term vacant building come back into meaningful use whilst maintaining existing ground floor uses. Rationalising the use class of accommodation above ground floor to C3 will allow the building to be managed appropriately.

All 14 apartment units will be for rent/open market.

We see no planning reason why the application should not be approved.

13.0 Bibliography

Planning Documents

gov.wales (2021) Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

Wrexham County Borough Council (2005) Wrexham Unitary Development Plan

Wrexham County Borough Council (2011) Wrexham Unitary Development Plan

Wrexham County Borough Council (2016) Wrexham Town Centre Master Plan

Wrexham County Borough Council (2011) Planning Policy Guidance Notes

Articles

<https://www.wrexham-history.com/imperial-hotel-regent-street/>

<https://maps.nls.uk/towns/>