

Subject: FW: Planning Application P/2018/0915

From: Alun Jenkins [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 November 2018 11:49
To: David Williams (Planning Manager) [REDACTED]
Cc: Matthew Phillips (Planning) [REDACTED]
Subject: Planning Application P/2018/0915

Residential Development comprising conversion of first and second floors of Central Buildings to provide 10 apartments with related alterations to ground floor level, and erection of 28 apartments on adjacent land with associated parking]

Central Buildings (Brook Street) and adjoining land (Bridge Street) Wrexham

It is good to see that there are proposals to bring the upper floors of Central Buildings back on Brook Street into use, and to develop the derelict site of the former Wayne Saunders shop on Bridge Street, and that the site has been tidied up prior to redevelopment.

However, I cannot support the current proposals, for the reasons I explain below:

- 1 It is quite disappointing that the proposals for the ground floor of the new building are for apartments rather than for commercial or business use as had been previously envisaged to complement the eventual redevelopment of the larger site on the opposite side of Bridge Street and alongside the St Giles Way link road beneath the Parish Church.
- 2 The use of the combined site is over-intensive, with 10 flats on the two upper floors of Central Buildings and 28 flats in a new build on the adjoining empty plot - far more than can be safely and sustainably provided on this limited site..
- 3 The proposed parking provision is far from adequate, proposing only 19 spaces for the total of 38 apartments. Planning Guidance Note 16 on Parking Standards specifies a maximum standard of 1.5 spaces for each bedroom space, giving a maximum requirement of 57 parking places for this total development of 38 flats. Planning Approvals for nearby developments have been for one parking space per bedroom space, plus additional space for visitors. This would give a requirement for at least 38 spaces.
- 4 In addition, the parking space sizes illustrated are smaller than specified in PGN 16, which would make the spaces difficult to use. If provided to the specified sizes, then it is unlikely that more than 13/14 spaces could be safely provided on the remaining space behind the new buildings, whilst still providing adequate space for delivery or refuse collection vehicles to turn within the site.
- 5 The proposed entrance to the car park area from Bridge Street adjacent to the Grade 2 listed Burton Building is too close to the signal controlled junction with Brook Street for the amount of traffic that would be generated by the development, and is located at the point where Bridge Street divides into two separate lanes - into Brook Street and into St Giles Way. This is one of the busiest entrances into Wrexham Town Centre. Further, any vehicles driving from Brook Street and wishing to turn into the site could find their route blocked by vehicles driving down the hill towards the town centre, so the street could become gridlocked.
- 6 Facilities for Waste and Recycling collection for the 28 flats is shown at the rear of the property, accessed from the car park area. Whilst the refuse vehicle would enter the car park to empty the containers off-street, turn within the site and return in a forward direction back onto Bridge Street, it is not clear from the submitted plans whether such movements would be possible without affecting the free flow of traffic in both directions on Bridge Street. The arrangements for the 10 flats in Central Buildings are not acceptable. Their refuse and recycling bins would be stored in the alleyway leading to Voodoo Moon, and this would require refuse vehicles to park on Bridge Street, immediately before the traffic lights, blocking the turn into Brook Street.

Application P/2010/1052 for the conversion of Central Buildings into student accommodation was refused by the Planning Committee in June 2011 - "The development would create additional parking problems to the detriment of highway safety" - and the Appeal by the applicants was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate in October 2011.

The document submitted by the applicant is misleading, in that it refers to the 10 flats in Central Buildings, with 19 car spaces behind, then elsewhere in the document refers to the 28 flats in the new building - with 19 car spaces behind. These are the same 19 spaces - serving the total of 38 apartments. There is no doubt that this severe shortfall would create additional problems for residents in the nearby residential areas. Experience from other developments in and around the town centre where there has been inadequate car parking provision shows that those residents leave their vehicles in these residential areas, where there is already insufficient car parking space for all the residents that live in those localities.

Many of these points have been raised in the Highways response. In the absence of any of the revised information requested by Highways, I believe that this application has to be refused for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed development is grossly over-intensive. The site cannot support 28 new units in addition to the 10 proposed in Central Buildings.
- 2 There is insufficient car parking. There has to be a minimum one car parking spaces per bed space. Given that there is not space for 38 properly specified parking spaces, the total number of units has to be limited to the number of safe spaces that can be provided within the site.
- 3 Unacceptable impact on Highway safety at a busy junction on one of the busiest entrance routes into the Town Centre.
- 4 Inadequate arrangements for collecting waste/recyclables, especially for the Central Buildings apartments.
- 5 Lack of privacy for those ground floor tenants facing Bridge Street, whose only windows would face directly onto the busy street.

Many thanks,

Alun

R. Alun Jenkins,
Councillor Offa Ward