



This is The Space
68 Quay Street
Manchester
M3 3EJ
tel: +44 (0)161 5092840
fax: +44 (0)20 3435 4228
email: info@iceniprojects.com
web: www.iceniprojects.com

Planning Department
Wrexham County Borough Council
16 Lord Street
Wrexham
LL11 1LG

15th October 2020

LF – 20/338
BY EMAIL

To whom it may concern,

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION AT THE FORMER NATIONWIDE BANK, 1-2 HIGH STREET, WREXHAM, LL13 8LH

We write on behalf of our client, Courts Developments, to submit an application for full planning permission for the change of use of the upper floors of the former Nationwide Bank at 1-2 High Street, Wrexham to 6 no. flats alongside the refurbishment of the ground floor and associated external works.

We set out below the full description of the proposed works, the site's planning history, planning policy position and the benefits of the proposal, concluding with the reasons why the application should be approved without delay.

The Site

The site is the former Nationwide Bank located on the corner of High Street and Hope Street. It is a modern construction, four storey property arranged as broadly rectangular open space, serviced by a large spiral staircase in the N.E. corner. The ground floor is a bespoke banking hall with private offices. The first, second and third floors have been partitioned to create a variety of private offices, kitchen, meeting and store-rooms with separate male and female WC's on the first floor. We consider the ground floor is therefore an A2 use, with the upper floors described as associated ancillary office space to the main A2 use. The bank closed earlier this year and has since stood vacant on this prominent corner location within Wrexham town centre.

The proposed works

The proposal comprises of the following works:

- Change of use of the upper floors into 6 no. 1 x bed self-contained flats (C3 Use Class);
- Retention and general refurbishment of the A2 use on the ground floor;
- Existing windows to be painted dark grey RAL7012;
- New glazed entrance to south elevation (for access to the apartments);
- New glazed tile finish to ground floor elevation (Grey Caviar); and

- New glazed aluminium entrance door (RAL7012).

Waste & Servicing

The flats will have access to their own dedicated waste storage facilities in the rear service yard.

Access

The site is centrally located within Wrexham Town Centre, a two-minute walk from the nearest bus stop at Brook Street to the south, and a seven-minute walk to Wrexham Central Train Station to the west. The site's accessibility therefore compensates for its lack of dedicated car parking spaces. If residents require visitor car parking, the site is located nearby to St Giles Car Park, Ty Pawb Multi Storey Car Park and St George's Crescent Car Park. Cycle storage will also be provided on site via six cycle stands situated within the secure ground floor entranceway, equating to one per flat.

Planning History

From a search of Wrexham Council's planning history database, there are no previous planning applications associated with the site.

Planning Policy

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan

Wrexham Council adopted the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 - 2011 in 2005 and this remains the current local plan until it is replaced by the emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan. Within the UDP proposals map, the site is not allocated for a particular use but does fall within the Designated Shopping Area (UDP Policies S2 & S3) and Hope Street is a Principal Shopping Street (UDP Policy S1). These policies note-

- **Policy S1:** Non-retail proposals on ground floor frontages in the principal shopping streets of Chester Street (part); Henblas Street; Hope Street; Lord Street (part); Queen Street; Regent Street (part); and Rhosddu Road (part), Wrexham will not be permitted if they have a detrimental effect upon the character, vitality or viability of the area.
- **Policy S2:** Outside the principal shopping streets of Wrexham Town Centre, encouragement will be given to ground floor retailing proposals. Mixed use commercial development will be allowed only if it enhances the vitality and environmental quality of the area.
- **Policy S3:** In order to sustain and enhance its vitality and viability, Wrexham Town Centre will be the preferred location for non-shopping uses, such as offices providing services to the public at large, and for major leisure uses.

Wrexham Town Conservation Area

The site is located within the Wrexham Town Conservation Area however it is not a designated listed building. The Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Assessment & Management Plan notes on page 27-28 that:

The town centre experiences high vacancy and turnover and consistent under-occupation of upper floors. Many upper floors remain vacant resulting in a lack of maintenance and deterioration of the structural fabric, which degrades the overall appearance of the street-scene. The former Burtons at the junction of Hope Street and High Street is particularly detrimental in key views to and from the Church. The current condition with boarded up windows is visually poor and interim measures could be taken to improve this situation (page 27).

The Nationwide site is opposite the site described above, and it is therefore imperative that further town centre sites are not left vacant, allowed to fall into disrepair and detract from the conservation area. This proposal includes sympathetic improvements to the exterior of the ground floor frontage which will be in keeping with the conservation area and generally improve the street scene. The

proposal also ensures that the upper floors are fully occupied and the building is therefore used efficiently.

Benefits of the Proposal

- The proposal will regenerate a vacant site and in doing so, will activate the corner of Hope Street and High Street.
- In accordance with UDP Policy S2, the proposal will create a mixed-use development which will enhance the vitality and environmental quality of the area and provide natural surveillance through the addition of 'eyes on the street'.
- Retention of an A2 ground floor use will ensure the site continues to provide a commercial offer to maintain activity on the high street within the day.
- More residents will be brought into the town centre, creating an uplift in local spending on goods and services within Wrexham.
- The proposal will provide reasonably priced rental accommodation designed to attract young professionals into Wrexham.

Plan package

We have submitted this application with the following plans:

- 20029-S120 (existing elevations)
- 20029-S113 (existing third floor)
- 20029-S112 (existing second floor)
- 20029-S111 (existing first floor)
- 20029-S110 (existing ground floor)
- 20029-P120C (proposed elevations)
- 20029-P113A (proposed third floor)
- 20029-P112A (proposed second floor)
- 20029-P111A (proposed first floor)
- 20029-P110A (proposed ground floor)
- 20029-P100A (red line site plan)

Conclusion

We have sought to provide evidence to demonstrate the acceptability of the proposal for the change of use of the upper floors of a vacant A2 Use Class former bank into 6 no. flats and the refurbishment of the ground floor, together with associated external works. We trust that we have provided sufficient information for you to validate and determine the planning application within the required timescales. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me on 07384 543 690 or cjones@iceniprojects.com.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris Jones', with a stylized, cursive script.

Chris Jones
DIRECTOR