



Design & Access Statement

1) GENERAL

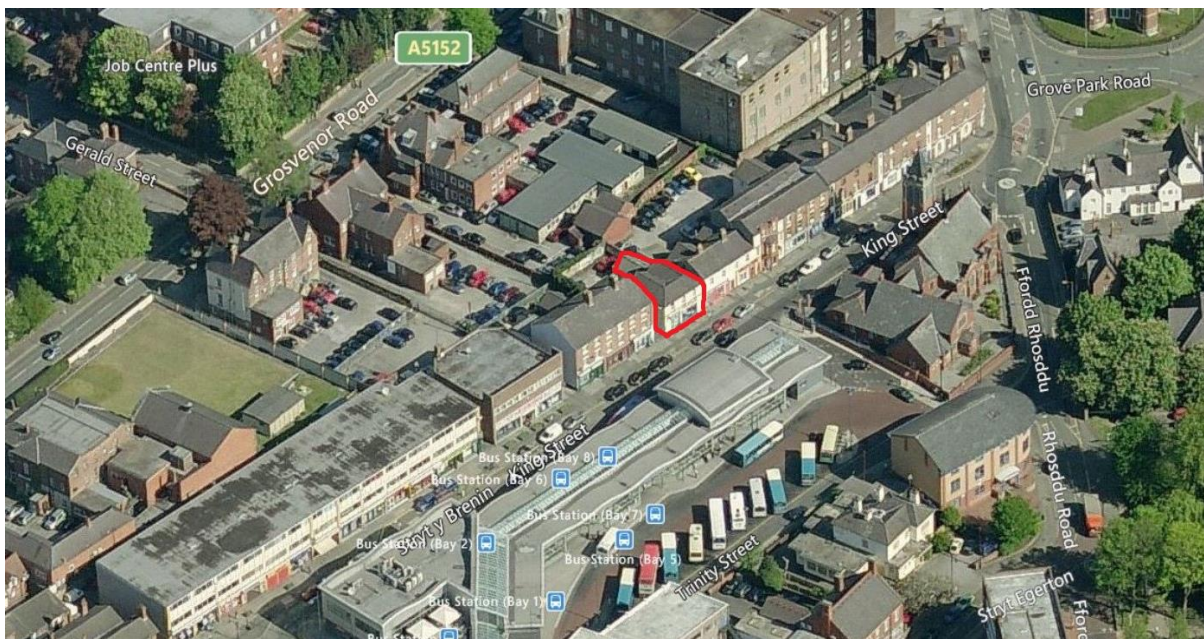
Introduction

This Design and Access Statement should be read in support of a full planning application for the proposed change of use and conversion of existing Office Premises (Class B1a) to 5 no. residential flats (Class C3).

This statement responds to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2009. The statement should be read giving full regard to the application drawings.

Physical Context

The site lies on King Street, within the town centre of Wrexham Town, Wrexham County. The aerial photograph below identifies the application site in red in the context of its surroundings.



Wrexham Town Centre is the central business district of Wrexham, in North Wales and is the area enclosed by the inner ring road of the town. It is the largest shopping area in north and mid Wales, and the administrative centre of Wrexham County Borough. Many of its streets are pedestrianised.

King Street falls within an area covered by the “Grosvenor Road Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan”.

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy



National Policy is set by Planning Policy Wales (PPW – Edition 10, December 2018) which sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government.

It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes and ensures Local councils can keep Wales's commitment to sustainable development through the planning system.

Technical Advice Notes used to aid the proposal submitted are:

- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (2016)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017)

TAN 12 “Design” examines what is meant by Design:

“the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment. To create sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, environmental and economic aspects of the development, including its construction, operation and management, and its relationship to its surroundings.”

Delivering Good Design: Approach

Design is a process of analysis and synthesis: analysing, identifying and diagnosing problems and barriers, then solving them through critique, research, development and testing. Design is a creative means by which to realise innovation and add value.

Design for the built environment plays a key role in economic growth and in raising the quality of the places where we live and work.

National Planning Policy

9.3 The Welsh Government sets out in para 6.1.1 of Planning Policy Wales the following objectives for the conservation and improvement of the historic environment:

- preserve and enhance the historic environment, recognising its contribution to economic vitality and culture, civic pride and the quality of life, and its importance as a resource for future generations; and specifically, to:
- protect archaeological remains, which are a finite and non-renewable resource, part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales, and valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and the economy, particularly tourism;
- ensure that the character of historic buildings is safeguarded from alterations, extensions or demolition that would compromise a building's special architectural and historic interest; and to
- ensure that conservation areas are protected and enhanced, while at the same time remaining alive and prosperous, avoiding unnecessarily detailed controls over businesses and householders.
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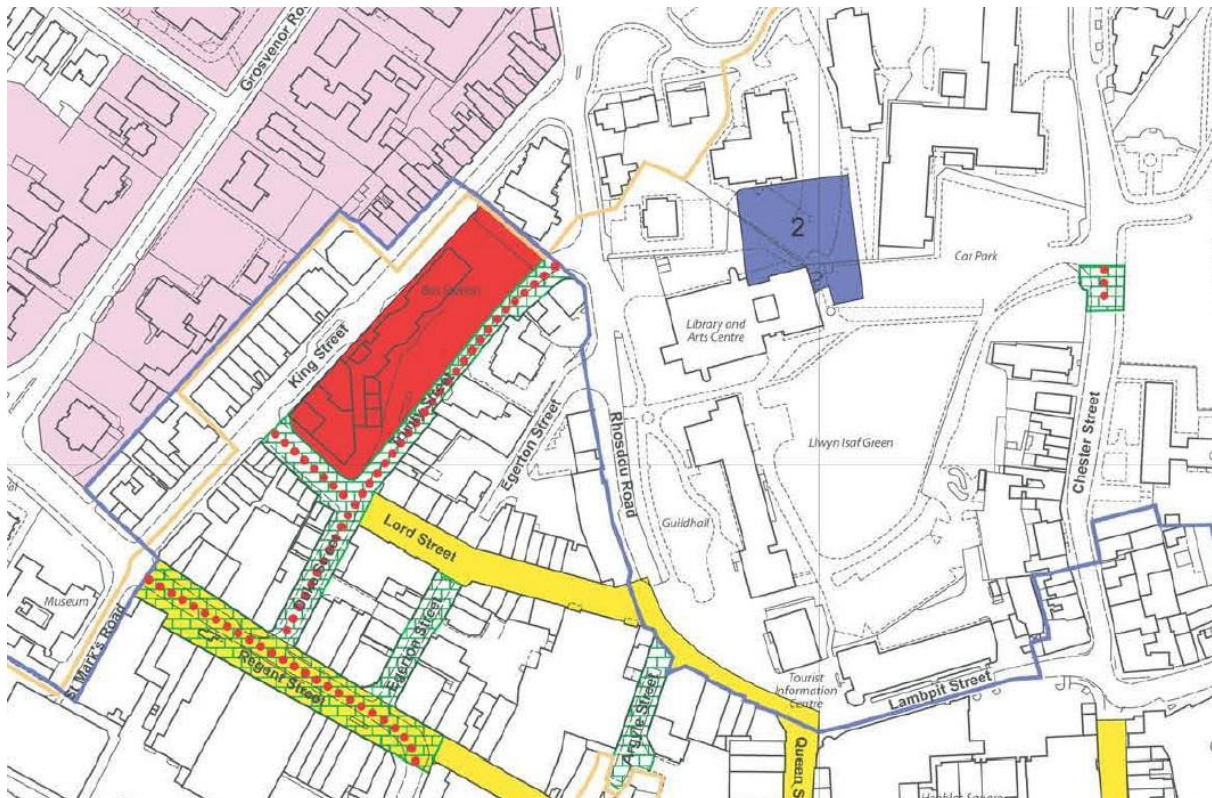


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Local Policy

The development plan consists of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 - 2011 adopted on February 14, 2005.

The plan covers the administrative area of Wrexham County Borough Council. It supersedes previous adopted development plans (the Wrexham Maelor Local Plan: Forward to 2001, the Glyndwr District Local Plan, and the Clwyd Structure Plan: First Alteration).



Inset Plan Notation / Nodiadau Map Mewnsoadiad

	Principal Shopping Street / Prif Stryt Siopa - S1		Housing / Tai - H1
	Shopping Area / Ardal Siopa - S2,S3		Mixed Use and Regeneration Areas / Ardaloedd Defnydd Cymysg ac Adfywio - H13, H14
	District Shopping Centre / Canolfan Siopa Cylch - S5		Bus Station Redevelopment / Ailddatblygiad Gorsaf Bws - T2
	Commercial Offices / Swyddfeydd Masnachol - E7		Road Improvement / Gwellia Ffyrdd - T4
	Conservation Area / Ardal Cadwraeth - EC7, EC8		Traffic Management / Rheoli Traffig - T7
	Environmental Enhancement / Gwelliant Amgylcheddol - EC10		
	Development and Flood Risk / Datblygiad a Perygl Llif - EC12		
	Community and Leisure Facilities / Cyfeusterau Cymunedol ac Adoliant - CLF2		

Extract from the current UDP 'Proposals Map'.



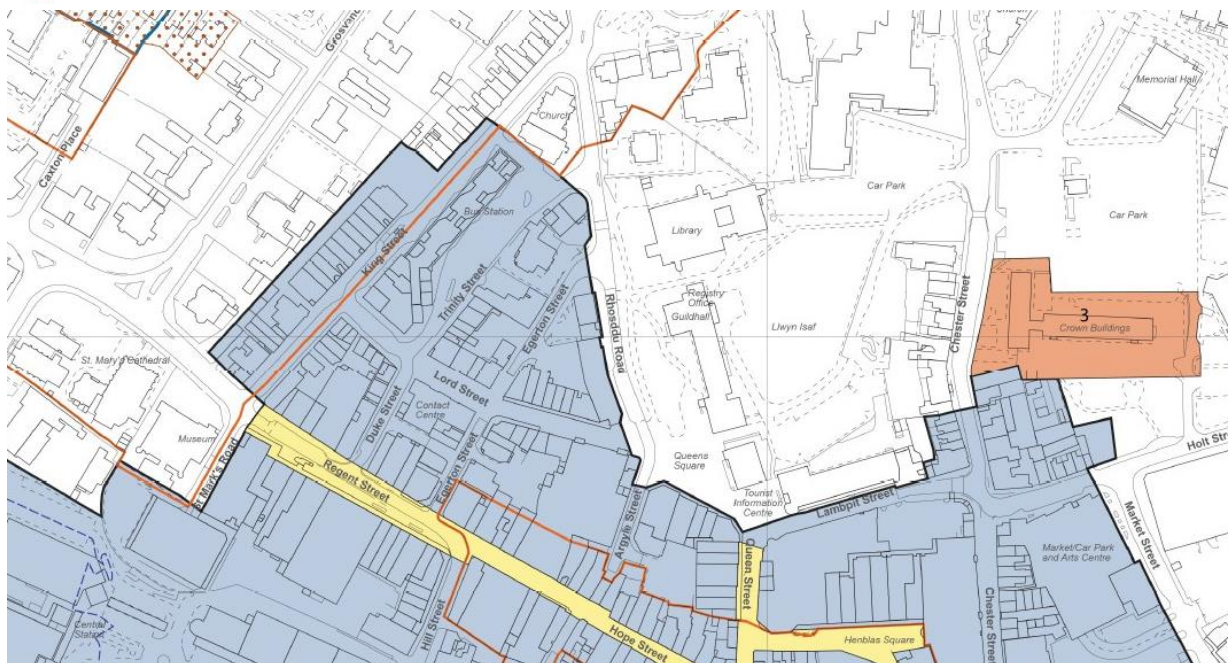
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The proposal site is shown in the area designated for Commercial Offices in the current UDP. It is however no longer included in the area designated 'Town Centre' in the latest deposited Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) (2013 - 2028).

Although it is not yet adopted, it shows that the site is no longer considered part of the Commercial Offices/ Town Centre area by Wrexham County Council.

Inset Plan Notation / Nodiadau Map Mewnrosodiad

- | | |
|--|--|
| Housing - SP1, H1 | District, Local, Village or Neighbourhood Centre - R1, R5 |
| Primary Shopping Street - R3 | Conservation Area - SP16 |
| Wrexham Town Centre - R1 | Article 4(2) Direction - SP16 |
| Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan Area - R2 | Whole Inset is covered by the Energy Mineral Extraction Exclusion Area - SP17, MW3 |
| Wrexham General Transport Hub - T4 | Whole Inset is covered by the Non-Energy Mineral Extraction Exclusion Area - SP17, MW3 |
| TAN 15 Flood Zone (C2) - SP19, DM1 | |
| Mineral Railhead Safeguard - SP17, MW1 | |
- Scale / Graddfa 1:2500



Extract of the Proposed Wrexham Local Development Plan (unadopted)

The Following Are The Specific Local Policies That Apply To The Application Site.

Policy PS1 New development for housing, employment, and community services will be directed to within defined settlement limits/employment areas.

Policy PS2 Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.

Policy GDP1 All new development should:-



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- a. Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.
- b. Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces.
- c. Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.
- d. Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.
- e. Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.
- f. Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.
- g. Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.
- h. Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.
- i. Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.
- j. Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.
- k. Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

Policy EC7 Within, and in close proximity to, conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and/ or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.

Policy T8 Development granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby, in accordance with the Council's current parking standards. Special regard will be paid to the following factors, as appropriate:

- the availability of public transport nearby,
- proximity to public car parking,
- proximity to local services and facilities,
- road safety hazards and amenity considerations arising from on-street parking in the vicinity of the site.

Where implementation difficulties arise in making parking provision on-site or nearby, the Council will require a developer to make financial contributions for measures to assist public transport, or walking and cycling as appropriate.



We believe that the application as presented, and with this accompanying Design & Access statement, will set out how the general principles of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan and its associated policies above have been met.

ECONOMIC & SOCIAL CONTEXT

Being a residential development, the factors to consider in the appraisal of social and economic profile relate more to:

- how the proposed development can contribute locally;
- issues related to crime and disorder;
- market demands and deficiencies;

The existing building currently has a B1a class use of a commercial Office. It has however been empty for some time with no interest when advertised for rent.

It is proposed that the building be converted into 5 flats, which are likely to be used to house those who work within the town centre.

The actual conversion itself will be likely to be constructed using local labour and skilled trade construction workers. This will ensure there is a direct contribution to the local economy. Additional contributions will be made by purchasing materials locally.

The owner of the property is local to the area, therefore all financial aspects of the conversion and future proposed use would boost the local economy directly. By bringing an empty building back into use, there is a positive impact to the social context of the area.

2) ACCESSIBILITY

National Planning Approach

CABE defines Inclusive Design as an effort that *'aims to remove the barriers that create undue effort and separation. It enables everyone to participate equally, confidently and independently in everyday activities'*.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is the principal planning document of the Welsh Assembly Government, which sets out the context for the consideration and evaluation of all types of development. The main thrust of PPW is to promote sustainable development by ensuring that the planning system provides for an adequate and continuous supply of land, available and suitable for development to meet society's needs in a way that is consistent with overall sustainability principles.

PPW acknowledges Good design is inclusive design. Development proposals should place people at the heart of the design process, acknowledge diversity and difference, offer choice where a single design solution cannot accommodate all users, provide for flexibility in use

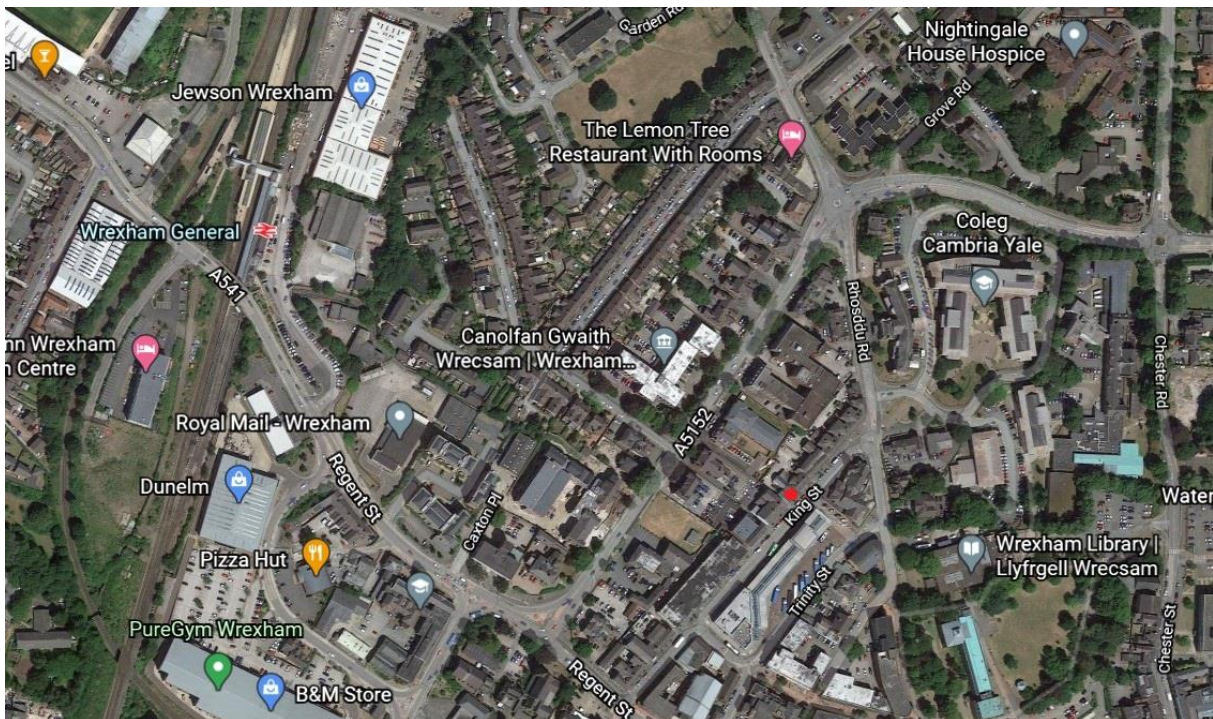


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and provide buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.

One of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) main objectives is to extend choice in transport and secure accessibility in a way which supports sustainable development and helps to tackle the causes of climate change by encouraging a more effective and efficient transport system, with greater use of the more sustainable and healthy forms of travel, and minimizing the need to travel.

For example, ensuring that development is accessible by means other than the private car will help to meet the Welsh Government's objectives for social inclusion. Encouraging cycling and walking will contribute to the aim of improving the levels of health in Wales.



The above aerial photo shows the application site dotted red and nearby public travel provision.

The Existing Transport Network

Being a Town Centre location, there is plenty of access to the local Public Transport Network. The main Bus Station for Wrexham is also located directly across the road on King Street, and this affords access from Wrexham to all Major towns and Cities near to Wrexham.

King Street is a short walk from Wrexham General Train Station which gives access to the rest of the country via the rail network.



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There is existing parking to the rear of the property with 2 parking spaces available. There is also limited parking spaces available on King Street, and pay and display car parks situated locally.

The existing building for the proposed flats is ideally positioned for those who either do not use a car or are a 1 car household.

In terms of inclusive access, each of the proposed ground floor apartments have a WC & Shower room.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable Materials

Locally sourced sustainable materials with a low environmental impact are to be used for the development. Any timber used will be sourced from sustainable managed forests and certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

Biodiversity and Local Environment

No works are proposed to any of the existing landscaping and Biodiversity in the locality of the site.

Water

The Tan 15 Development and Flood Risk Map show that the site is situated in Zone A – “considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial or coastal/ tidal flooding”.



Application site shown centrally and dotted red

Zone A is described as being ‘considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial or coastal/ tidal flooding’. The development will not be a risk of flooding, nor will the proposals increase the risk elsewhere.



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Energy Efficiency/ Carbon Reduction

The existing walls will be upgraded where necessary to include internal insulation. The air tightness of the property will be increased during the conversion works. Secondary glazing will be installed to the existing sash windows to aid in increasing the air tightness.

New boiler and space and water heating systems to the new flats will be using modern technology with more efficient results than the current installed system.

Waste Management:

The proposed development will change from the previous commercial office waste to residential waste which will be sorted for recycling post collection.

4) CHARACTER AND SCALE

Layout

The existing building comprises of two floors of Class B1a commercial office space. On the ground floor are 4 offices with staff and visitors WC, and a small kitchen. There are 6 further offices and a small kitchen situated on the first floor.

Access into the building is by both front and rear access doors.

It is proposed to reconfigure the ground floor to provide 3 single bed, self-contained flats. All accessed externally by the rear entrance lobby. The existing communal stairs will continue upstairs to the proposed 2 additional self-contained flats.

Each flat is provided with a shower room and WC, small Kitchen, suitably sized lounge area and bedroom.

The original ground floor front entrance doors will be replaced with fixed pane glazing.

Appearance & Scale

The existing building was originally a dwelling and is of traditional build and two storey in height. During the lifetime of the building, a two storey extension has been added to the rear although the exact date of this is unknown.

The external vernacular of the original building is Georgian in style, with sash windows, low hipped roof, painted brickwork, and painted stone cills.

The latter addition rear extension is painted render with low pitched, slate finish roof and UPVC sash looking windows. A traditional painted timber shop front has been added to the front of the building, and replaces the original Front door and ground floor windows.

It is intended to retain all the original windows, secondary glazing will be added internally to make the building more thermally efficient. Two additional windows are proposed to provide light and ventilation to ground floor bedroom and first floor lounge area, to the side elevation. There are already windows to this elevation so it is in keeping with the original building.



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



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5) COMMUNITY SAFETY

During the design progress design measures have been carefully assessed to help to prevent crime. It is not considered that the proposed development will increase opportunity for crime or reduce the existing Community Safety. Existing ground floor windows are fixed with external bars to stop break ins. Access doors will have suitable lock fastenings to ensure safety for the residents.

An additional safety aspect to be considered for the proposal however is the increased chance of injury during the building works and the possibility of increased accessible areas to the building site for break-ins. It is suggested that the building works should be carried out by qualified contractors who follow health and safety guidelines with regard to the local community, local residents and all contractors.

6) MOVEMENT TO, FROM AND WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT

Matters relating to accessing the proposed development have been dealt with in detail in section 2 of this statement. No amendments are proposed in terms of movement to or from the dwelling.

7) CONCLUSION

This statement has identified that all Design and Access matters have been fully considered at the design stage and that the scheme presented offers a development that complies with National and Local planning policies.
