

59, Regent Street
Wrexham,
LL11 1PF

November 25th, 2017

The Planning Inspectorate,
Crown Buildings,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

***Re: Appeal reference: APP/H6955/A/17/3188092 - 61, Regent Street,
Wrexham, LL11 1PF***

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am the owner of a business situated immediately next door to the above property. My Dental Practice is at 59, Regent Street, Wrexham LL11 1PF.

I should like to make further comments to support an objection to this planning appeal in addition to those already submitted by myself previously to Wrexham Council Planning Department.

My first two comments relate to inaccurate information submitted in relation to the proposal to convert the commercial premises to residential.

1. In the Design and Access Statement, the building is described as having been "vacant for 3 years". I would like to correct this and confirm that the office is used regularly by the present owner and is still in use up to the date of this letter.
2. With reference to a letter written by the applicant, Mr Mark Wilkins, and addressed to Wrexham Planning Department, dated 3/10/2017 (Document Number: 3646708, attached, and available on Wrexham Council Planning website), I would like to draw attention to a comment made regarding deliveries to our businesses. The applicant states that: "regular deliveries to the properties as suggested by Joanne Kinch is a complete fallacy". I was shocked by this statement and would like to emphasise that there are 5 active businesses operating along the terrace as well as a busy lager club adjacent which all receive and require regular deliveries via Union Road in order to manage their businesses. My business is a public service, and, by the nature of our work, we have regular deliveries and collections of laboratory work, products and supplies for dentistry as well as clinical waste collections. In addition to this, our patients attend and leave the premises at regular intervals of approximately 10 minutes throughout the day, some evenings and occasional Saturdays as well as for emergency out of hours care.

I feel that it is extremely important to correct the comment made by the applicant as our concern would be the safety of residents living within a

confined commercial environment as well as the inconvenience and noise disturbance from regular commercial vehicles delivering and collecting in the rear parking area (see attached photographs). I would, therefore, be grateful if the concerns of safety and disturbance to potential residents are examined. The planning system must ensure that potential residents are not being offered substandard and inappropriate accommodation when there are many empty residential properties in the Wrexham area requiring renovation and situated in more resident friendly environments.

Whilst I value any improvements to the exterior of the property, I feel that a residential dwelling set in the middle of a row of dense commercial properties does alter the character of a prominent entry road into Wrexham, is not compatible with existing uses and is not appropriate or able to provide suitable living conditions for residents for the reasons set out below:

1. The outside space to the rear of the property is substandard, leaving no recreational space for the residents and insufficient space for bin storage and drying areas, therefore contrary to Policy GDP1 of the adopted Wrexham Unitary Development Plan. As the property backs directly on to the car park used by the businesses there is no safe recreational area to the rear nor is there a recreational area at the front of the property due to restrictions placed on the frontage of all the properties as part of the Grosvenor Road Conservation area.
2. Patients visiting the Dental Practice will pass/cross one of the front bedrooms at ground level at intervals of approximately 10 minutes throughout the day, certain evenings and Saturday mornings. The bay window to this bedroom is directly next to the dental practice front entrance door. This will have a detrimental effect on the privacy of the resident occupying this room in particular as well as general noise disturbance.
3. The current rear detached car park belonging to the property cannot accommodate 4 vehicles unless 2 are blocked in. In full use, this may cause problems for the residents who may wish to leave and enter at different times of the day.
4. As well as being inconvenienced by business traffic during the day, the Lager club on Union Road is open late in the evening so residents will have little peace and quiet at night due to noise and disturbance from customers at the club, drinking or smoking outside.
5. All of the businesses along the terrace have metal bars to protect the buildings from theft (see attached photo). This is a necessity in the area. I noted that the applicant felt that if 61, Regent Street was occupied at night this may deter unwelcome characters. I feel that it is very unfair to expect residents to "police" an area of offices and businesses and it is highly likely that the owners would find it necessary to install similar deterrents to our own in the future. It seems totally unacceptable to expect residents to live in this way, behind barred windows.
6. As regards safety, the car park to the rear of the property is not suitable for residents entering and exiting the property at night. It is a dangerous

location after dark due to the open access and dark recessed areas where people can hide or engage in anti-social behaviour. We have had fire damage to the bin storage at the back of our business (see photograph attached) and live gas piping cut and removed causing gas to enter the building.

7. I also have concerns regarding the layout of the premises. The common room can only be accessed via the kitchen. If a fire starts in the kitchen, there would appear to be no other means of escape for residents in the common room.

Finally, this terrace of properties offers an ideal location for small businesses to operate within a prominent area of the approach into Wrexham city centre. The reduction of such available space for affordable offices could result in permanent loss of employment land in Wrexham city centre. There is, therefore, a strong economic reason why the conversion of this property to residential would be inappropriate and could result in an adverse economic impact for Wrexham.

I would be grateful if a copy of the appeal decision letter could be sent to me.

Kind regards,

Christopher R Andrade

Enc:

1. Copy of letter written by the applicant to Wrexham Planning Department and available on the Wrexham Council Website (Document Number: 3646708)

2 Photographic evidence of a) lorry deliveries, b) car parking at the rear of the property, c) security bars on the office windows due to anti-social behaviour in the past d) arson damage at the back of 59, Regent Street and 57, Regent Street.

3rd October 2017

Wrexham Planning Department
(Or To Whomever it may concern)
The Guildhall
Wrexham
LL11 1AY

BluSky Developments Ltd
4 Willow Court
Acrefair
Wrexham
LL14 3UJ

Dear Sir/Madam

Ref: 61 Regent Street, Wrexham

I am writing to advise of our disappointment at some of the planning committee's behaviour and attitude during the meeting of 2nd October, as well as that of the local councillor who opposed the planning application of 61 Regent Street.

Regrettably, I was not able to attend and my colleague who was going to speak on our behalf was held up elsewhere, so please accept our apologies for not being present. I did however, manage to watch proceedings via the Wrexham Council weblink.

I would like to temper my words by saying that we fully respect the outcome of the planning committee and ultimately, we are not questioning in the integrity of the vote in any way shape or form. However, I feel it necessary to raise the following;

Local councillor Phil Wynn brought up a number of points that were completely irrelevant, mainly regarding conversation which were correctly dismissed by the planning officer. He also brought up the issue of anti-social behaviour associated with tenants that reside in HMO accommodation, suggesting they would "have barbeques in the street" and "set-up deck chairs" on a main arterial route in to town. (Apologies if I have paraphrased there). We feel that these comments are completely out of context and are a slight on those people unable to afford other accommodation. When the planning officer again pointed out that planning conditions would prevent the front of house being used for recreational purposes, we had assumed that these fears had been alleviated.

However Phil Wynn was afforded a second opportunity to speak, against the policies of the planning meeting. We were of the understanding you had one opportunity to speak but he was granted two? Irrespective of the ethics of being allowed to speak twice, his second concern related to the lack of amenity space for the people living at 61 Regent Street. He suggested that people living at the property needed ample external space and that people living in a HMO

shouldn't be treated like second class citizens – the same "type" of person that was 5 minutes earlier having a barbeque in the street and causing anti-social behaviour. I find it somewhat bizarre that in the two visits to the stand, Mr Wynn could both defend the rights of HMO tenants as well as accuse them of causing anti-social behaviour? We feel the second visit to the stand probably swayed the opinion of the committee in to believing that HMO tenants are disruptive, anti-social nuisances that should be kept away from mainstream society.

On the topic of external amenity space for HMO properties, we feel that a precedent has been set on other properties in the town, which makes it unfair to levy that excuse against our proposal. If inadequate parking and/or external seating space is an issue for 61 Regent Street, a number of HMO's across the county must be failing to comply with standards?

We had fully complied with the requests of the planning department and were looking forward to working with the local stakeholders to enhance the external appearance of Regent Street as well as making use of a derelict building (*we noted the comments suggesting our Design and Access statement was incorrect by saying the building was derelict. It is in occupation to a minimal extent, with 1 man occasionally working out of the office as he is approaching retirement. Regular deliveries to the properties as suggested by Joanne Kinch is a complete fallacy.) We had assumed that any anti-social behaviour linked to our proposal would be dealt with by revoking our license or dealing with the local community police and PCSO's, not by refusal of a planning application.

As mentioned at the start of my letter, I would like to reiterate our position that we fully respect the vote but will consider our options to appeal as the result clearly has an undertone of prejudice and personal opinion. It is a shame that personal opinion has obscured fact in this case, but we hope to work together with the authority in the not too distant future.

Yours faithfully

Mark Wilkins
BluSky Developments Ltd







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