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## **PLANNING STATEMENT**

**1 – 5 Central Avenue, Sittingbourne, ME10 4AU**

### **Introduction:**

This statement accompanies a full application for the proposed change of use of the existing first and second floors from office use to residential with construction of an additional floor to the main building and a three storey rear extension to provide self-contained residential flat units.

It has been written to conform with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and is to be read in conjunction with drawing numbers 2666/1, 2, 3, 4, 10A, 11B, 12B, 13B, 14 & 15 prepared by Ken Judge & Associates Ltd.

### **The Site:**

The application site comprises a three storey flat roofed mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century commercial building and is positioned on the corner of High Street and Central Avenue and is in the heart of Sittingbourne town centre.

The existing ground floor and basement are currently occupied by NatWest Bank, first floor offices are part in use by NatWest and part used by other separate companies. The second floor is in office use by a single commercial occupier. 1-5 Central Avenue at ground floor level comprises independent commercial units.

To the rear of the building is a small staff car parking area which is barrier controlled. The existing premises is not listed however is situated within the Sittingbourne Conservation Area. The site is located within the designated town centre of Sittingbourne and is surrounded by a mixture of uses, commercial ground floor uses and residential to upper floors.

The existing building has part stone part facing brickwork external finish at ground floor level with concrete panelled finish at first and second floor levels. The upper levels are accessed by an entrance at ground floor level to the side elevation which has glazed panels to the staircase enclosure at the first and second floor levels.

To the rear of the site is a public car park with 180 car parking spaces with a further 270 spaces adjoining the Forum Centre.

The site is centrally located within the town centre and therefore has excellent public transport (railway and bus links) facilities.

The site is situated within Flood Zone 1 and therefore is at low risk of flooding.

### **Planning History:**

The following historic application have been taken from Swale Borough Council website:

19/505932/FULL – Proposed change of use of the first floor from recruitment agency (Class A2) to training unit (Class D1) – approved March 2020.

There have been no relevant planning applications which have been determined in respect of the redevelopment of the site.

A pre-application advise request was submitted (ref: 23/502228/PAMEET) for the proposed change of use of the existing second floor from office use (Class E) to residential use (Class C) including the construction of an additional third floor to create self-contained residential flat units. Proposed three storey rear extension to create self-contained residential units to the first and second floors with separate ground floor entrance, with a written response received 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

This application proposal has been prepared to include points raised within the Pre-application written response/advise.

### **Planning Policy:**

Relevant Local Planning Policies have been considered in addition to the National Planning Policy Framework during the design process.

The application site lies within the built up area boundary and forms part of the primary shopping area of Sittingbourne High Street as identified under policy DM2.

The site is located within the Sittingbourne High Street conservation area. Policies DM14 and DM33 of the Local Plan 2031 supports development where the proposal would conserve and enhance the natural and/or built environment taking into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.

### **Description of Proposal:**

The proposal is for the following:

Proposed change of use of the existing first and second floor from office use (Class E) to residential (use class C3) including the construction of an additional (third) floor with a three storey rear extension to create a total of 22 self-contained residential flat units.

### **Design:**

The proposed self-contained residential flat units are detailed on drawing nos. 2666/10A, 11B, 12B & 13B showing the proposed change of use of the existing first and second floors with the construction of an additional third floor with a three storey rear extension.

The proposed site plan drawing no. 2666/10A further shows the location of refuse/recycling area and rear car parking area accessed from the existing vehicular entrance from Central Avenue.

The proposed rear three storey extension has been designed to match the style of the existing premises with external cladding panels and window configurations to the upper floors with facing brickwork at ground floor level.

The proposed third floor would be set in from all existing perimeter parapet flat roof walls and have a contrasting external appearance with a flat roof over. The position of the proposed third floor has a further set back away from the High Street. The proposed third floor would have a light appearance with external cladding.

The proposal comprises of:

First floor: 1no. 1 bed 2 person, 6no. 2 bed 3 person, 1no. 3 bed 5 person.

Second floor: 1no. 1 bed 2 person, 5no. 2 bed 3 person, 2no. 3 bed 5 person.

Third floor: 2no. 1 bed 2 person, 2no. 2 bed 3 person, 1no. 3 bed 4 person, 1no. 3 bed 5 person.

Proposed first floor flat units nos. 3 and 5 have been designed for use by disabled persons and are accessible and wheelchair compliant flat units. The existing first floor is accessed by an existing lift positioned within the main staircase area.

All proposed flat units comply with the National Space Standards for new dwellings.

The new third floor would be accessed by a new staircase from the existing staircase enclosure below to lower floor levels with the extension of the existing lift from the second floor.

Part of the existing car parking area would remain and would include a position of cycle storage and an independent entrance with staircase to the new upper floors.

This application proposal has been prepared to include points raised within the Pre-application written response/advise dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

**Car Parking:**

Part of the existing carparking area would remain providing 7no. parking spaces. 3 parking spaces are for the use of the existing ground floor use (Natwest Bank) and the remaining 4 would be the use of the residential use to the upper floors.

Cycle parking will be provided via secure enclosure within the carparking area.

**Refuse and Recycling:**

Refuse and recycling facilities will be provided which is shown on drawing no. 2666/10A.

**Assessments & Reports submitted with the planning application:**

Noise Survey – prepared by DAA Group

Heritage Statement/Impact Assessment – prepared by Barry Hillman-Crouch

Transport Assessment and Travel Plan – prepared by GTA Civils & Transport

Draft Construction Management Plan – prepared by NRG Consulting

Air Quality Assessment – prepared by NRG Consulting

Sustainability/Energy Assessment – prepared by NRG Consulting

**Conclusion:**

It has been demonstrated that this proposal would respect the character of the local area and would not appear out of character with the surrounding area. The proposal would not result in any unacceptable harm to the existing adjacent premises and would also provide a good quality of accommodation to the future occupiers of this development. The proposed scheme is considered to be in accordance with the aims, objectives and requirements of the national and local policies.

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023