
Planning and Design and Access Statement

THE PLOUGH, 81 CHAPEL STREET, THATCHAM, RG18 4JS
AUGUST 2024

PREPARED FOR SANDSTONE ESTATES LTD

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning and Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Hybrid Planning & Development Limited ('Hybrid') on behalf of Sandstone Estates Ltd. ('the Applicant'), in support of a full planning application and Listed Building Consent submitted to West Berkshire Council ('the Council'), as it relates to the proposed development of 5 residential dwellings at The Plough, 81 Chapel Street, Thatcham, RG18 4JS.

1.2 Specifically, the applicant is seeking permission for:

“The change of use of the existing building (Sui Generis) to provide 3 x residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and the development of 2 x residential flats (Use Class C3) to the rear, with associated parking, cycle parking, waste storage and other ancillary works.”

Submission Documents

1.3 This Planning Statement has been prepared to consider the proposed development against the statutory development plan, and all relevant planning considerations. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents and drawings:

Table 1.1 – Planning Documents

Document	Consultant
Application Form and Certificates	Hybrid Planning & Development
Application Covering Letter	Hybrid Planning & Development
Planning and Design and Access Statement	Hybrid Planning & Development

Table 1.2 – Drawings and Plans

Dwg No.	Title	Scale
JS/SP/1546/1/00	OS Location Map	1:1250 @ A4
JS/SP/1546/1/01A	Block Plan	1:200 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/01B	EXISTING TOPOGRAPHICAL SITE PLAN	1:100 @ A1
JS/SP/1546/1/02	EXISTING & PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLANS	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/03	EXISTING & PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLANS	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/04	EXISTING & PROPOSED ROOF PLANS	1:100 @ A3

Dwg No.	Title	Scale
JS/SP/1546/1/05	EXISTING AND PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATIONS (BLOCK -1)	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/06	EXISTING AND PROPOSED SIDE (EAST) ELEVATIONS (BLOCK -1)	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/07	EXISTING AND PROPOSED REAR (SOUTH) ELEVATIONS (BLOCK -1)	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/08	EXISTING AND PROPOSED SIDE (WEST) ELEVATIONS (BLOCK -1)	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/3/09	PROPOSED SITE PLAN	1:100 @ A1
JS/SP/1546/1/10	EXISTING AND PROPOSED SECTION A-A (BLOCK-1)	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/11	PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS - BLOCK 2	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/12	PROPOSED ROOF PLAN - BLOCK 2	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/13	PROPOSED ELEVATIONS - BLOCK 2	1:100 @ A2
JS/SP/1546/1/14	PROPOSED SECTION B-B	1:50 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/15	TYPICAL DETAIL OF TIMBER FRONT DOOR	1:10 / 1:5 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/16	TYPICAL DETAILS OF TIMBER WINDOW	1:10 / 1:5 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/17	PROPOSED LIGHTING PLAN - GROUND & FIRST FLOOR - BLOCK 1	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/18	PROPOSED LIGHTING PLAN - GROUND & FIRST FLOOR - BLOCK 2	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/19	TYPICAL NEW SOLID FLOOR CONSTRUCTION DETAIL WITH FLOOR FINISHES	1:10 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/20	PROPOSED DRAINAGE PLAN - GROUND & FIRST FLOOR - BLOCK 1	1:100 @ A3
JS/SP/1546/1/21	PROPOSED DRAINAGE PLAN - GROUND & FIRST FLOOR - BLOCK 2	1:100 @ A3

Table 1.3 – Supplementary Statements

Document	Consultant
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Sylva Consultancy
Financial Viability Assessment	S106 Affordable Housing
Flood Risk Assessment	Cole Easdon
Heritage Statement	Palmer Heritage

Noise Impact Assessment	ES Acoustics
Phase I Land Contamination Assessment	Browns Fisher Environmental
Transport Statement	Cole Easdon
Biodiversity Net Gain	To be submitted

- 1.4 This statement provides a description of the application site and surrounding area, and comments on the site's planning history in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides a summary of the development proposals, with Chapter 4 detailing the relevant planning policy. Chapter 5 sets out the planning and design assessment. Chapter 6 draws together the concluding thoughts.
- 1.5 Overall, this proposal is considered to represent a form of development that is sustainable and accords with the relevant planning policy. In light of this, the proposal should be considered favourable by the Council, in accordance with the NPPF.

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site, which is irregular in shape, and extends 995sqm, comprises a detached public house known as The Plough, with a small beer garden to the west and a large, tarmacked carpark to the rear. The existing upper floor of The Plough is a three bedroom apartment, which was used ancillary to the public house.
- 2.2 The surrounding area is mixed in nature, with residential properties, fast food restaurants and a petrol station in the near vicinity. Dunston Green, a large park with children's play area and skate park is located directly to the north.
- 2.3 The site is located approximately 520m west of the centre of Thatcham. There are two bus stops are located approximately 20m and 40m to the north west which offer regular services from Thatcham to Reading Town Centre and Newbury. Thatcham Train Station is located approximately 0.9 miles south (19 minute walk) which has regular direct trains to London Paddington via Reading.
- 2.4 The Plough is Grade II Listed and was first listed on the 10th November 1983 under entry number: 1117258, which gives the following description of its historic importance:

“Public House. C17 and C19. Painted and rendered frame with old tile roof, hipped to left. End stacks to right and left, with stack in front of ridge off-centre to left. 2 framed bays. 2 storeys. 3 C19. first floor casements, 2 C20. casements to right on ground floor and one to left with segmental head. Doorway between first and second windows from left, with architrave and flat hood.”

- 2.5 A review of West Berkshire's Interactive Policy Map designates the site the following:
- Within the Settlement Boundary of Thatcham (Urban Area – Policy ADPP1);
 - Grade II Listed;
 - Public Right of Way along western boundary (THAT/24/2/ Footpath); and
 - Risk of Surface Water Flooding.

Planning History

- 2.6 From an inspection of the Council's on-line records, we are aware of the following planning history for the site:
- LPA Ref: 97/51903/FUL – Ground floor alterations – construction of a new female toilet – conversion of roof space & general refurbishment works. Approved 12 February 1998.

- LPA Ref: 97/51902/LBC – Ground floor alterations – construction of a new female toilet – conversion roof space & general refurbishment works. Approved 12 February 1998.

2.7 The online planning register does not indicate that the site is subject to any other planning applications.

3.0 THE PROPOED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for:

“The change of use of the existing pub to provide 3 x residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and the development of 2 x residential dwellings (Use Class C3) to the rear.”

3.2 By virtue of the proposed development, the existing first floor three-bedroom flat in the former pub (block 1) will be retained. The ground floor will be reconfigured to provide 1 x 2-bedroom and x 3 bedroom flats. A small block (block 2) of 2 x 2 bedroom flats will be construction to the rear of the site.

3.3 For flats a, b and c, a total of 237.9 of communal amenity space will be provided to the south and west of the site. Whereas private amenity space of 25sqm each is located to the rear of flats d and e.

3.4 In addition, a total of 10 car parking spaces provided, including 8 spaces for the proposed flats and 2 visitor spaces. Two cycle spaces are provided for each dwelling in a secure location and 4 visitor spaces.

3.5 Space has also been allocated for the refuse storage for each property, including 1 x 140l waste bin and 2 no recycling boxes.

3.6 The proposal is shown in detail on the submitted drawings, as outline in table 1.2 above.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states that applications for development should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The Local Development Framework for West Berkshire comprise the following documents:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2023);
- The West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026;
- Housing Site Allocation DPD 2006-2026; and
- West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).

National Planning Policy (NPPF)

4.3 The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was revised on 20 December 2023, sets out the Government's planning policies for sustainable development and positive growth. The Framework prescribes a 'presumption in favour' of sustainable development (Paragraph 11) and supports proposals that are in accordance with the policies of an up-to-date development plan.

4.4 To achieve sustainable development, the following economic, social and environmental objectives need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (Paragraph 8), and should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the Framework; however, they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged (Paragraph 9):

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health social and cultural well-being; and
- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and

pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 4.5 Paragraph 9 of the NPPF continues by stating that planning decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable development solutions, but in so doing, should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 4.6 Paragraph 123 of the NPPF confirms that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.7 The NPPF continues that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, and states at Paragraph 131, that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work, and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 4.8 Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of an area, are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks, and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 4.9 In determining applications (Paragraph 139), great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
- 4.10 Paragraph 200 considers proposals affecting heritage assets and states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Paragraph 203 goes on to state when determining application, local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation;
 - b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 4.11 Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026

Spatial Strategy

- 4.12 **Area Delivery Plan Policy 1** 'Spatial Strategy' requires development in West Berkshire will follow the existing settlement pattern and comply with the spatial strategy set out in the Area Delivery Plan.
- 4.13 **Area Delivery Plan Policy 3** 'Thatcham' states that Thatcham will accommodate approximately 900 homes of the total allocation for the district in line with its role within the District Settlement Hierarchy.

Core Policies

- 4.14 **Policy CS 1** 'Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock' has made provisions for at least 10,500 net additional dwellings and associated infrastructure over the period of 2006 to 2026. New homes will primarily be developed on:
- Suitable previously developed land within settlement boundaries;
 - Other suitable land within settlement boundaries;
 - Strategic sites and broad locations identified within the Core Strategy Diagram; and
 - Land allocated for residential development in subsequent Development Plan Documents
- 4.15 **Policy CS 4** 'Housing Type and Mix' states that residential development will be expected to contribute to the delivery of an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the housing needs of all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements. The mix on an individual site should have regard to:
- The character of the surrounding area;
 - The accessibility of the location and availability of existing and proposal local services, facilities and infrastructure; and
 - The evidence of house need and demand from Housing Market Assessments and other relevant evidence sources

- 4.16 **Policy CS 6** 'Provision of Affordable Housing' requires a proportion of affordable homes to be sought from residential development. As such, the Council's priority and starting

expectation will be that affordable housing is provided on-site in line with government policy. Subject to economic provision, the following levels of affordable housing provision will be sought by negotiation. On development sites of less than 15 dwellings a sliding scale approach will be used to calculate affordable housing provision as follows:

- 30% provision on sites of 10-14 dwellings; and
- 20% provision on sites of 5 – 9 dwellings.

4.17 **Policy CS 13** 'Transport' state that developments that generate transport impacts to improve travel choices in favour of more sustainable way of travel (walking, cycling, bus, rail and car sharing).

4.18 **Policy CS 14** 'Design Principles' expects new developments to demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area and make a positive contribution to the quality of life in West Berkshire.

4.19 **Policy CS 16** 'Flooding' states that when development is located within flood risk areas, it should be sage and not increase flood risk elsewhere, reducing the risk where possible and taking into account climate change.

4.20 **Policy CS 17** 'Biodiversity and Geo-diversity' requires biodiversity and geodiversity assets across West Berkshire to be conserved and enhanced.

4.21 **Policy CS 18** 'Green Infrastructure' states that new developments should make provision for high quality and multifunctional open spaces of an appropriate size and will also provide links to existing green infrastructure networks.

4.22 **Policy CS 19** 'Historic Environment and Landscape Character' ensures that the diversity and local distinctiveness of the District is conserved and enhanced, the natural, cultural and functional components of its character will be considered as a whole.

Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026

4.23 **Policy C1** 'Location of New Housing in the Countryside' states there is a presumption in favour of development and development within settlement boundaries. There will be a presumption against new residential development outside the settlement boundaries.

4.24 **Policy P1** 'Residential Parking for New Development' states that the layout and design of the parking spaces should follow the parking design guidance from the Building for Life partnership 2012 and the principles contained in the Manual for Street. The following levels of parking should be provided for residential development:

	Flats (+1 additional space per 5 flats for visitors)			Houses			
	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Zone 1	0.75	1	2	1	1	2	2
Zone 2	1.25	1.5	2	1.25	2	2.5	2.5
Zone 3	1.5	1.75	2	1.5	2	2.5	3
EUA Zone	1.5		2	1	2	2	3

West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007)

- 4.26 **Policy OVS5** 'Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control' seeks to minimise noise pollution and the harm to human health and to the environment from noise, vibration, effluent, fumes and other pollution.
- 4.27 **Policy OVS6** 'Noise Pollution' requires appropriate measures to be taken in the location, design, layout and orientation of development proposals in order to minimise any adverse impact as result of noise generated.
- 4.28 **Policy TRANS1** 'Meeting the Transport Needs of New Development' requires the transport needs of new development to be met through the range of facilities associated with different transport modes including public transport, walking, cycling and parking provision.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.29 The following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are of particular relevance to the proposed development:
- Quality Design SPD;
 - Planning Obligations SPD;
 - Public Houses SPD; and
 - Cycle and Motorcycle Advice and Standards for New Development SPD.
- 4.30 We now turn to assess the proposed development against the relevant planning policies.

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 This section of the report seeks to address the key planning issues arising from the proposal. These issues have been identified through a review of the relevant planning policy for the site.

5.2 In accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2023) and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the Council is required to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

5.3 The proposal represents an entirely deliverable, sustainable, and suitable development that will utilise previously developed land to contribute to the residential accommodation targets of the Council.

Principle of Development

5.4 The site itself is a former public house, which is Grade II listed located on the corner of Chapel Street and Stoney Lane, a large car park is located to the rear, and the former beer garden to the west. At first floor there is residential accommodation. Since becoming vacant in 2017 the building has been a target of criminal damage and drug cultivation, including a cannabis factory being found at the site on 2 separate occasions (Police Incident Number: 43220210336). Since the last incident, the building has been made secure, and cut off from electricity and gas.

5.5 In determining whether the principle of development is acceptable at this location, the most pertinent policies of the local plan are ADPP1, ADPP3, CS1 and CS4 of the Core Strategy, and the Housing Allocations DPD.

5.6 Policy ADPP1 requires most development to be located within or adjacent to settlements included within the settlement hierarchy, and that development will be focussed in urban areas which include Thatcham, and the majority to be located on previously developed land. Furthermore, ADPP3 states that housing in Thatcham should take the opportunity to maintain and enhance the identity of Thatcham.

5.7 As stated above, the site is a former public house with a large area of hard standing to the rear, which is classed as previously developed land, located in the urban area approximately 520m to the west of Thatcham, within a predominately residential area. Furthermore, the proposed development would restore a Grade II listed building, and provide a new building to the south of the site, which has been designed to reflect the materiality of the existing building, whilst being recognisably detached and modern, and have a relationship with the style of surrounding houses.

5.8 Considering paragraph 5.8 above, the principle of the proposed development should be acceptable in terms of Policies ADPP1 and ADDP3.

Loss of the Former Public House

5.9 The proposed development offers the opportunity for the full restoration of the listed building, whilst providing 5 high quality residential properties (Class C3). As stated in the Public Houses SPD (2000), public houses serve important social, community and economic functions in maintaining the viability of rural villages and the vitality of larger urban areas.

5.10 The Plough Inn has lay vacant since 2017, with no real opportunities for a viable business as Ei Group (formerly Enterprise Inns) did not consider the Plough to have a long term future. The premises was sold in 2017, back up for sale in 2020 and again in 2022. Evidence provided in Appendix 3 demonstrates the marketing campaign in relation to the premises. This first beginning in 2017, with an open market campaign for the freehold was undertaken by Elliott Network Auctions on 7 September 2017, where the property failed to sell. The property was put back up for Auction on 02 November 2017, where it was subsequently sold.

5.11 The property was left vacant following the sale in 2017, and the premises was back up for auction on 20 February 2020 by Network Auctions. Again, since the sale the premises has lay vacant, apart from the previously mentioned criminal activity within the pub building itself and the rear area of hardstanding.

5.12 It is clear from the above, there is a lack of interest in the site as a public house, going back as far as November 2017. A listing for the premises is still available to view online via Proper Genies (Appendix 3) website. Feedback received from speaking from the previous and current free holders note several issues with the viability of the site as a public house including:

- Fragmented trading areas;
- Small kitchen/prep areas with limited scope to enlarge or enhance;
- Limitations due to the building's Grade II listed status;
- Location outside of the 'centre' of Thatcham;
- Lack of passing footfall; and
- Poor condition due to previous neglect and criminal activity.

5.13 It is important to note that it is not necessary to demonstrate compliance with each of the exceptions set out in the Public Houses SPD (2000) chapter 6 (i-iv), rather each exception stands alone as a potential scenario wherein the loss of a public house may be considered acceptable. In this case, the proposed development site meets all 4 sections of the criteria.

Evidence provided above and in Appendix 3 has demonstrated compliance with exception paragraph 6.1 part iv. The building has not functioned as an active public house since 2017 and there has been no legitimate interest in the purchasing the premises since 2022. The lack of overall interest and the feedback provided by the current owner shows that there is no reasonable potential to be used as a public house. Furthermore, as the pub has not functioned as a community facility since 2017, it is not considered that the loss of the public house would have an adverse effect on the local character and diversity of the area (part i), rather an eye sore due to the boarding of windows and doors and hording around the site.

- 5.14 Notwithstanding, it is also noted that at least 8 public houses located within a c.1000m radius of the site. These are outline in the table below and can be seen in the figure in Appendix 4.

Table 5.1 – Public Houses in Close Proximity to the Site

Public House Name	Address	Distance
The Wheatsheaf	15 Chapel Street, RG18 4JP	475m West
The Kings Head	59 The Broadway, RG19 3HP	555m West
The White Hart	2 High Street, RG19 3JD	625m West
Paggies Bar	15 Kingsland Centre, RG19 3HN	678m West
Cricketts	24 High Street, RG19 3JD	686m West
Old Chequers	36 The Broadway, RG19 3HP	748m South West
The Mill House	Bradley-Moore Square, RG18 4QH	800m North
Swan	Station Road, RG19 4QL	1170m South

- 5.15 All the public houses above offer similar services which The Plough would have previously provided. Therefore, it is considered that there is a more than adequate provision of public houses provided to serve both existing and future residents, and the loss of this public house would not comprise an unacceptable decline in the standard of community facilities in line with paragraph 6 part ii & iii of the Public Houses SPD (2000).
- 5.16 In light of the above, it is considered that the principle of the loss of the public house use is fully compliant with the NPPF (2023) the Local Plan (2022) and Chapter 6 of the Public Houses SPD (2000).

Residential Use

- 5.17 The application site consists of a currently vacant former public house, with ancillary residential accommodation on the first floor, and a large car parking area to the rear. Taken together, the site is a highly underutilised piece of brownfield land located within a residential area of Thatcham. At 995sqm in size, this small sized windfall site which can make an important contribution to meeting West Berkshires objectively need for housing, as set out in policy CS1 which aims to deliver 10,500 net dwellings on suitable previously developed land. The proposals are, therefore, fully supported by Paragraph 70 of the NPPF.
- 5.18 The proposals effectively seek to maximise the development potential of the site through its conversion and residential development, in line with the aims of adopted policy CS1. Being a vacant site, the redevelopment and optimisation of this brownfield site is also supported by ADPP1.
- 5.19 As demonstrated in the accompanying Heritage Statement the area to the south of the existing building once sat a cottage and garden, as such serving as a residential function throughout its history, and the first floor have been used for residential purposes. The proposals will reinstate this historic use for the site, whilst preserving and enhancing the heritage value of this Grade II listed building. Furthermore, as demonstrated below, the redevelopment of the existing car park will bring significant benefits in terms of housing, landscaping and the reinstatement of the Public Right of Way, whilst causing no harm to neighbouring amenity, local environment quality or the local highway network.
- 5.20 As such, the Council should be attributing substantial weight to the value of using this suitable and sustainable brownfield site within West Berkshire for housing, as set out in NPPF Paragraph 123. Furthermore, Paragraphs 126 and 127 of the NPPF require that Councils support applications for alternative uses, especially where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need, such as for housing. Based on the above, the principle of residential redevelopment of the site is considered to be entirely appropriate and consistent with National and Local planning policies.

Heritage and Design

- 5.21 The accompanying Heritage Statement prepared by Palmer Heritage, lays out in greater detail the historic development of this Grade II listed building, from its first documentation in 1785, and the building being shown on the Tithe Map of 1841, as a single block jutting forward onto Chapel Street.
- 5.22 The Ordnance Survey mapping of 1877 (shown in Appendix 1, Map 1 of the Heritage Statement) shows much of the same situation, but there were changes which include

extensions to the rear of the inn. The wider area had developed somewhat along the ribbon, including Stoney Lane; to the west another inn and a smithy. Since then, the listed building and surrounding buildings have undergone substantial change over time, with demolition of buildings to the side and rear. As a result of this, the significance of the heritage building has been significantly eroded through a series of piecemeal changes.

- 5.23 Today, the Plough Inn consists of a wide elevation to Chapel Street, with a short historic return to Stoney Lane, and a mass of rear extension of part single, part two storey form. The building has been vacant since 2017 having fallen out of use as a public house, and recently became subject to use as a marijuana farm which has caused some limited internal change.
- 5.24 In terms of the original sections of the listed building, the proposals comprise of internal and external changes that have been designed to meet the client's brief for a small development of much needed housing. The principle external changes relate to the upgrading of windows and doors in all parts of the listed building, which will serve to replace the mix of timber and UPVX casements and modern doors which are currently in evidence on the elevation. The replacement windows will be of a design to match the existing style of timber windows within the building, whilst providing a greater level of comfort through their increased energy efficiency. These windows will replace windows of limited or no historic interest, it is considered that this is a sympathetic style and date of this part of the building.
- 5.25 It is proposed that the 'Plough Inn' signage is retained. Whilst the public house will be no longer in use it is considered that the retention of signage will allow this former use to be legible and prevent the anonymisation of the listed building which is currently prominent on its corner site. This will be a heritage benefit and help to retain part of the historic interest of the listed building. Alongside this, the repair and renovation of the external elevations of the building will emphasise its prominence and enhance its historic appearance.
- 5.26 Internal changes are proposed which involve the strip out of modern public house fixtures, modern finishes, and the renovation of the internal spaces which are currently in poor condition which is detrimental to the heritage value of the building. The insertion of limited partition walls, kept to a minimum, will allow effective use of the rooms throughout the building in line with their new use and to suit modern living standards. Of particular benefit is the retention of internal architectural features such as fireplaces, beams and uprights, and the use of the existing plan form to the first floor. The roof structure of the listed building will not be changed. As such, the historic plan form and architectural interest will be retained and legible following the works, which will allow the proposed change of use to take place without harm to the heritage value of the building.
- 5.27 In some areas, it is intended to lower floors or raise ceilings by a small amount to allow a greater level of comfort for the users of the proposed flats. This will be achieved with minimal

removal of historic fabric and is necessary to allow the new use of the listed building. The appearance of the building will not perceptibly change as a result of these interventions, but the experience of its users will be greatly enhanced.

- 5.28 The insertion of new finishes, alongside new kitchens and bathrooms will allow the proposed new use of the building; as noted, the building has been vacant for a number of years, and this lack of occupation has resulting in the deterioration in its condition and damage from unauthorised use. It is therefore considered that though these fittings will change the character of the ground floor areas of the building, this change is mitigated by the positive and full future use of the listed building, and its renovation and repair.
- 5.29 It is intended to provide utilities and lighting in a manner which minimises the need for additional runs and cuts through historic fabric, though it is recognised that there will be some disruption to historic fabric, and this constitutes a minimal harm to the heritage value of the building.
- 5.30 In terms of finishes, it is proposed to incorporate simple modern finishes which are appropriate to the style of the building where the existing finishes are incapable of repair. This will cause no harm to the heritage value of the building as it is intended that no historic fabric will be disrupted, and traditional styles will be used which enhance the appearance of the former public house.
- 5.31 The new building to the southern part of the site has been designed to reflect the materiality of the existing building, whilst being recognisably detached and modern, and having some relationship to the style of the surrounding housing. Its form and scale will not dominate the listed building, and though it will be within its setting, it will not remove any feature of this setting which contributes in a meaningful way to the historic interest of the public house. The small and appropriate development in this area will further allow the renovation and new use of the former public house, benefiting the listed building whilst not presenting a detrimental change to its setting.
- 5.32 The landscaping and infrastructure around the development has been carefully considered and ensures that there is open space to all aspects of the listed building allowing it to be fully visible and legible in its position on the corner of Chapel Street and Stoney Lane for each direction along the roads. The parking is proposed in the area of the current parking, and otherwise small enclosures for cycle parking and bin storage will not be disruptive within the open spaces and will serve to provide functionality to the new residential uses. It is considered that these elements are appropriate to the scale of development and to the surroundings; the retention of green spaces and openness will ensure the retention and enhancement of the listed building through minimal and reasonable change to its setting, and the heritage value of the listed building will not be harmed.

- 5.33 Considering the above, and the full assessment in the supporting Heritage Statement, that there will be less than substantial harm, which is minor in nature, due to the special architectural and historic interest of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF, due to the removal of historic construction material. However, this change will not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the listed building. In addition, several improvements will also be made and the overall enhancement of the listed building provides a benefit through its increased functionality and user comfort, as well as potential for continued enjoyment and use by future generations. Listed buildings which have no use tend to suffer from deterioration in their condition, as well as being at threat of damage or loss; this scheme will secure the appropriate and sensitive use of the building which is a heritage benefit.
- 5.34 In line with the NPPF These proposals are of public benefit due to their retention of the majority of the historic form of the listed building, whilst allowing the present community to meet its needs, which include good quality housing In addition, the history and development of the Plough Inn will continue to be legible and the appearance and condition of the building will be improved. The less than substantial harm to the historic building, which is minor and does not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the building does not 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh this public benefit.
- 5.35 The design adheres to the West Berkshire Core Strategy in that development will respect the historic environment of Thatcham. The development has considered local distinctiveness and taken into account the sensitivity to change of the listed building and its surroundings, adhering to policy CS19 of the Core Strategy. The proposals are appropriate in their location, scale, design and context, and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, also as per the Core Strategy.
- 5.36 As such, the proposed works will allow for the future sustainable use of the listed building and will secure the safe use and maintenance for the foreseeable future, compliant with the aspirations of the NPPF and Policy CS19 of the Local Plan.

Quality of Accommodation

- 5.37 All new dwellings have been designed to provide high quality, spacious and liveable residential accommodation for future residents. Each unit fully accords with the Nationally Described Space Standards. Additionally, all units will be at least dual aspect, whilst opportunities have been taken to maximise the internal natural light of the flats. As a result, the proposals will provide adequate access to daylight and sunlight for residents and sufficient natural ventilation throughout. High quality fixtures and fittings shall be used in both elements of the scheme, respecting the Grade II listed building and ensuring adaptable and pleasant living areas for occupants.

- 5.38 In line with Policy CS14 of the Local Plan, the proposed development has been designed to avoid any loss of privacy, whilst remaining good levels of outlook and to conserve the character of the building and surrounding area. It is considered that the proposed development will not be visually intrusive or have any detrimental impacts to neighbouring properties in terms of noise, outlook to neighbouring properties or daylight and sunlight.

- 5.39 The Quality Design SPD recognises the need for outdoor amenity space, which is provided on site. However, due to the constrained nature of the site and the need for carparking, and the desire to optimise the development potential of the site it is considered that the proposal complies with these standards. In addition, the site is located within immediate proximity of Dunston Green, a large park with children’s play area and skate park, which would add further amenity to future residents.

- 5.40 Furthermore, Noise Impact Assessment prepared by ES Acoustics concludes that the significant adverse effects are unlikely to occur at the proposed residential development if the appropriate mitigation measures are implemented, which are detailed in the report submitted to support this application.

- 5.41 Overall, the proposal will create 5no. high quality residential dwellings, which would contribute to the housing targets of West Berkshire. The proposals would not result in loss of neighbouring amenity for neighbouring or future occupiers and is therefore considered to be wholly in accordance with the NPPG, Policy CS14 of the Local Plan and the Quality Design SPD.

Residential Mix and Affordable Housing

- 5.42 The proposals comprise of two distinct elements – the conversion of the existing pub to provide 3no. residential flats, and the construction of a two flats in the rear carpark, which has been reduced by one unit/block following pre-application advice. The proposed mix of the new units are as follows:

	Pub Conversion	New Build
2 Bed 3 Person	0	1
2 Bed 4 Person	1	1
3 Bed 4 Person	2	0

- 5.43 Consistent with Policy CS4, it is demonstrated above that the proposed development will provide a mix of housing, including family sized housing to meet the housing needs of the community.

- 5.44 In terms of density, the proposals would provide approximately 49 dwellings per hectare (DPH). As mentioned above, the density has been reduced since initial pre-application discussions with the Council. The proposed density is considered to be entirely appropriate for this location, next to Thatcham Town Centre, where densities for new developments outside town centres are expected to be in the region of 50 DPH, in accordance with Policy CS4.
- 5.45 The proposals seek to provide all dwellings as private market housing. The Council's expectations for providing affordable housing is set at 20% of all units on sites between 5-9, as set out in Policy CS 6. As discussed, the quantum of units have been reduced since pre-application discussions, and the cost to restore the listed building would render the scheme unviable. This has been confirmed by the Financial Viability Report (FVA) prepared by S106 Affordable Housing and submitted in support of this application, which confirms in lieu of providing affordable housing, a policy complaint contribution towards affordable housing would be offered.
- 5.46 Considering above, the proposed mix and affordable housing offer is compliant with Policies CS4 and CS6 of the Local Plan.

Highways Impact

- 5.47 This application is supported by a Transport Note prepared by Cole Easdon, which provides greater detail as how the proposals have been designed to ensure limited transport impacts to the surrounding area in terms of transport and parking.
- 5.48 In summary, the site is located in good proximity to sustainable modes of transport, which include; good footway provision and safe crossing points along Chapel Street; both on and off carriageway signed cycle ways; 50m to the nearest bus stop, benefitting from sheltered seating, which offers 2 hourly services between Newbury and Reading; and Thatcham railway station 1.3km walking distance.
- 5.49 A total of 10 parking spaces are provided over two parking areas, these areas will be formed of Grasscrete. The level of parking proposed is in accordance with Policy P1 of the Local Plan. As requested at pre-application stage, a swept path analysis has been provided for both parking area (CE Plan 9773-203 [*Swept Path Analysis – Car Park A*] and CE Plan 9773-203 [*Swept Path Analysis – Car Park B*]), which demonstrates that all proposed parking spaces are accessible.
- 5.50 With regard to cycle parking, 2no. cycle parking spaces are proposed in a secure area for each residential unit, located within the front/side gardens for flats A, B and C, and the rear gardens for flats D and E. A further 4 spaces are provided for visitors. As such, the proposed

level of cycle parking is considered to be in accordance with Table 2 – Parking Standards for West Berkshire SPD.

- 5.51 Table 5.5 of the Transport Statement indicates that the proposed development would facilitate a reduction in vehicle trips when compared to the former public house. Accordingly, the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and the residual cumulative impact on the road network.
- 5.52 As such, the proposed development is in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the NPPF, Policy P1 of the Local Plan and the Parking Standards SPD.

Landscaping, Trees and Biodiversity

- 5.53 As requested at pre-application stage, the application is supported by a Tree Survey prepared by Sylva Trees. The aim of the report is to undertake a survey of the existing and nearby trees to the site and carry out an arboricultural impact assessment (AIA)
- 5.54 By way of the proposed development, one category 'C' tree (T3) and two category 'C' groups (G1 & G2) will be removed to implement the scheme. The British Standard 5837:2012 documents that category 'C' trees as being either low quality, limited merit, low landscape benefits, no material cultural or conservation value, or only limited short term potential; or young trees with a trunk diameter of 150mm; or a combination of these. As such, these trees should not be considered a constraint to the development.
- 5.55 To mitigate for the tree loss, the applicant is committed to provide an enhance environment which compliments the development of the site.
- 5.56 Furthermore, the proposal seeks to remove a large area of hardstanding and the addition of grassed areas, planting and the addition of high quality trees. The Public Right of Way which runs along the west of the site would be reinstated and enhanced.
- 5.57 Initial discussions with the ecologist confirms that the site would reach the target 10% biodiversity net gain. Due to time constraints with the ecology consultant, the BNG report will be issued to support this application post submission.

Contamination

- 5.58 A Phase 1 Land Contamination Desk Based Assessment was undertaken to confirm the extent, scale and nature of any contamination that may be present at the site, in connection with its proposed residential redevelopment.
- 5.59 The report states that there was no obvious evidence of previous contaminative activity or other geo-environmental concerns associated with the former hospitality use of the site were

noted. The site is set within predominantly residential surrounds, with no significant current issues highlighted.

- 5.60 However, the conceptual model of the site demonstrates some plausible pollutant linkages exist due to the sites previous use and location. The report concludes with recommendations to ensure that site workers, future site users and the natural environment are not subject to any risk from any potential contamination.

Sustainable Drainage

- 5.61 A *Flood Risk Assessment* has been undertaken for the development proposals by Cole Easdon, in accordance with NPPF requirements. Flood risk from all sources is considered to be low. A surface water drainage strategy has been prepared for the development proposals which utilises attenuation SuDS, discharging to existing public surface water sewer, to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere as a result of the proposed development.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The application seeks to maximise the development potential of this small brownfield site by restoring and sensitively enhancing this vacant Grade II listed building as part of its conversion to residential use and enabling the redevelopment of the existing rear car park for 5 new dwellings, along with associated private amenity spaces, hard and soft landscaping, parking and waste storage.

6.2 The proposals accord with the relevant national and local policy guidance and will:

- Utilise a previously developed 'small site' to further contribute to West Berkshire's identified housing needs;
- Provide a mix of residential accommodation in a sustainable location;
- Contribute to the restoration and ongoing preservation of this important Grade II listed building.
- Improve the appearance and significance of The Plough Inn through the removal of unsympathetic modern additions;
- Enhance the character and appearance of the area through the creation of high quality flats;
- Optimise the potential of the site without detrimentally impacting the surrounding heritage assets, residential amenity or local environment quality;
- Restore the PRow which runs along the western edge of the site; and
- Provide 10% onsite Biodiversity Net Gain.

6.3 The proposal therefore represents an entirely deliverable, sustainable and suitable development that will contribute to West Berkshire's housing targets, whilst having no detrimental impact on surrounding heritage assets, residential amenity, local environmental quality or the local highways network.

6.4 Accordingly, we look forward to receiving your confirmation that the application has been registered and, subsequently, approved.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 2



Tasking Team

Newbury Police Station.
Mill Lane
RG14 5QU

P2173 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Switch Board Number: 101.

Date: 28/03/2023

For the attention of: [REDACTED]

A cannabis factory was found the property, The Plough Inn, 81 Chapel Street, RG18 4JS, on the 15th MAY 2022.

On the 15th MAY 2022, you made Thames Valley Police aware of a cannabis factory at the location. It was searched by officers and a large cannabis factory was located, with electronic equipment and plants found. No persons were found within the property, or since been arrested.

The building was secured by police, after the address was examined and the cannabis was removed from the property.

The crime report for the incident was 43220210336. The incident was filed due to lack of evidence and no suspects identified.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

P2173

APPENDIX 3

Thatcham pub sells at auction

By Newbury Reporter - newsdesk@newburynews.co.uk

Published: 00:00, 09 November 2017



Listen to this article



Building sells at second attempt



The Plough in Thatcham has been sold at auction.

The Grade II-listed building in Chapel Street sold for £345,000 when it went under the hammer in London last Thursday.

The pub previously failed to sell at auction in September, when it was advertised with a guide price of between £370,000 to £380,000.

Last week's auction saw the guide price drop to between £350,000 and £360,000.

Elliott Network Auctions said that it could not reveal the pub's new owner because of data protection rules.

Evidence of Auction in Aug 2020

Newbury Weekly News

The Plough back up for sale at £450,000

Grade II-listed A4 pub needs revamp after being vacant for years

Enterprise Inns · Thatcham · Nick Young
13 Aug 2020

A FORMER Thatcham pub is back on the market.

The Plough was last auctioned in February with a guide price of £410,000 but the building failed to sell.

The freehold for the pub, on the A4 Chapel Street junction with Stoney Lane, is up for sale again, this time with a price of £450,000.

Agent CSJ Property says The Plough

would suit a variety of uses, including redevelopment, subject to the relevant consents.

Marketing information says the building is an attractive Grade II-listed public house situated in a prominent position.

It has reasonable-sized trading areas with a first-floor three-bedroom flat, garden and car park providing approximately 13 parking spaces.

It adds that the property has been vacant for a number of years and would require refurbishment before being occupied.

The 17th-century pub, with 19th-century additions, was closed in

2017 by Ei Group, formally Enterprise Inns, which said that The Plough did not have a long-term future within its business.

It sold at auction for £345,000 in November 2017, but the building has remained empty and no plans were submitted for it.

The pub freehold and its 0.25 acres is up for sale.

The ground floor comprises two defined trading areas with central servery, customer toilets, kitchen and cellar.

The first floor includes a living room, three bedrooms and bathroom.

A trade garden with space for 30 covers and a car park is also included.

Research conducted by Thatcham historian Dr Nick Young places the earliest confirmed record for pub use back to Edward Farrow in 1795.

It stayed with the Farrow family un-

til c1860.

In November 1888 the body of an infant was discovered in the roof.

In 1894, Thatcham Football Club played its first recorded match, using the nearby Plough Inn as its base.

Write a comment...

Listen Page View Share Save More



Email from Agent on Current Marketing Sept 2022 – Aug 2024

To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Marketing of The Plough 81 Chapel Street Thatcham RG18 4JS

Dear [REDACTED]

I hope you are well.

We started marketing your property on 12/09/2022 and it is still on the market for sale. We had some interest but no successful offer yet.

Please let me know if you want to make any changes.

Regards,



Find our properties on: OnTheMarket Zoopla PrimeLocation.com



MANAGING DIRECTOR

mobile: [REDACTED]
office: 0207 9711481
email: [REDACTED]
website: www.propergenies.co.uk

[REDACTED] (BBA-Hons, Finance) (CeMAP) (MARLA)

The Plough Inn, Chapel Street, Thatcham, Reading, RG18

£550,000



Full Description

Proper Genies is pleased to offer this Attractive Grade 2 Listed Public House. It Has Reasonable sized trading areas with first floor 3 bedroom flat, garden and car park providing approximately 13 spaces. A good sized site with potential for alternative uses and possible re development

Features

- Potential For Development (Subject to Planning)
- Good Location
- Requires Refurbishment

(subject to planning) **TERMS** We are instructed to seek offers for the Freehold interest with vacant possession

Contact Us

Proper Genies

Space House Business Centre,
Suite 13, Abbey Road

London

United Kingdom

NW10 7SU

T: 0207 9711 481

E: info@propergenies.co.uk





APPENDIX 4

