

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

**CONVERSION OF FIRST FLOOR
INTO 4No. 2 BEDROOM FLATS
12 LONDON ROAD
BOGNOR REGIS
PO21 1PY**

**FOR:
MEDWEST INVESTMENTS LTD**

JUNE 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a full planning application on behalf of Medwest Investments. The application seeks to convert the vacant first floor into 4No. 2 bedroom flats. A pre-application submission was made to the local authority to gauge the local authority's receptiveness to the conversion and the feedback has been incorporated into this application to gauge the local authority's receptiveness to the conversion and to obtain valuable advice that can be incorporated into a future application for full planning approval.

In preparing the scheme an in-depth analysis of the site, its history and its relationship with the surrounding area has been undertaken.

This document should be read in conjunction with the full set of documents and drawings submitted in support of this submission.

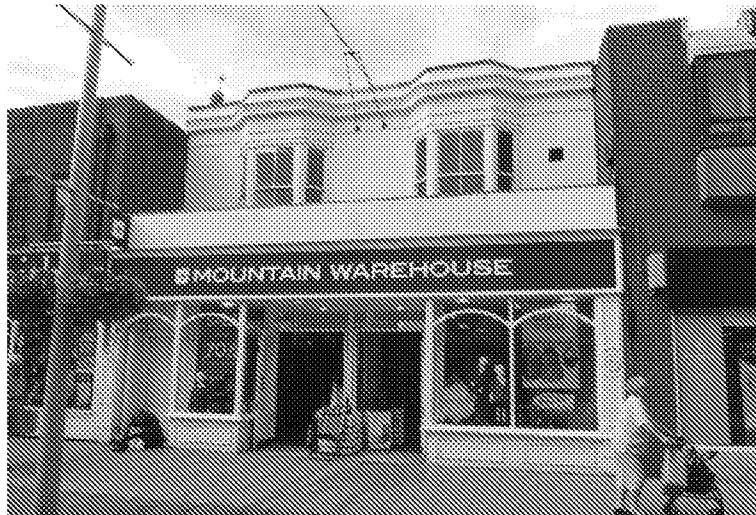


Fig.1 – Application site

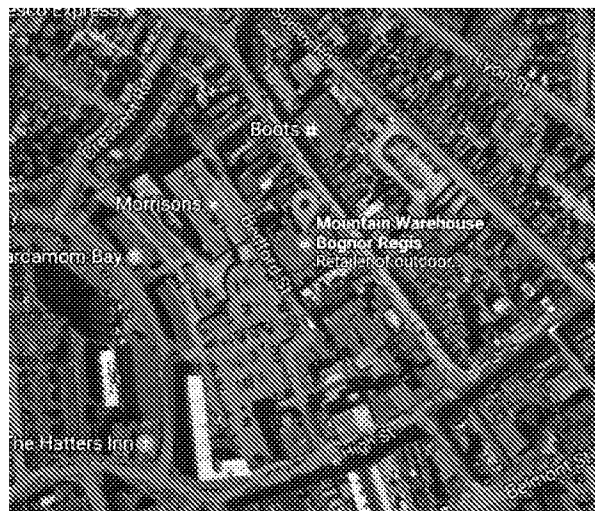


Fig.2 – Aerial View of application site

2. SITE ASSESSMENT AND CONTEXT

As part of the design study, an in depth analysis of the site and its surroundings has been undertaken in order to understand the sites opportunities and constraints. An analysis of the site is detailed below.

LOCATION

The site is situated within the Bognor Regis town centre to the north of The Esplanade and the Bognor Pier leisure centre.

With the application site being in the town centre it benefits from excellent public transport links, with regular buses travelling along the High Street. The railway station and its associated amenities are also a short walk away.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The site fronts directly onto High Street and there is no boundary treatment. The property is a retail unit (Mountain Warehouse) at ground floor level and is located within the primary shopping area with a vacant floorspace above

The property has been characterised as a building of special character. Whilst not a listed building, it is considered to have a degree of architectural and historical merit. The buildings in the immediate surrounding area of London Road have a mix of modern and more traditional character and appearance with many having prominent shopfronts and advertisements.

The existing structure is constructed in brickwork to the rear elevation. The front elevation consists of a full width shop frontage and a pedestrian access door up to the first floor accommodation. The elevation also steps back with an area of flat roof leading up to the prominent bay windows with decorative mouldings between the head of the windows and the top of the parapet.

3. SITE PLANNING HISTORY

Following research of the local authority planning files, there is only one planning application on record. A description of the application is detailed below:

Application REF: BR/2/16/A.

1No. non-illuminated fascia sign and 1No. Internally illuminated projecting sign on the front elevation.

Whilst this does apply to the application site, it only applies to the ground floor retail unit. As a result little can be taken from this when forming the proposals for the new residential units at first floor level.

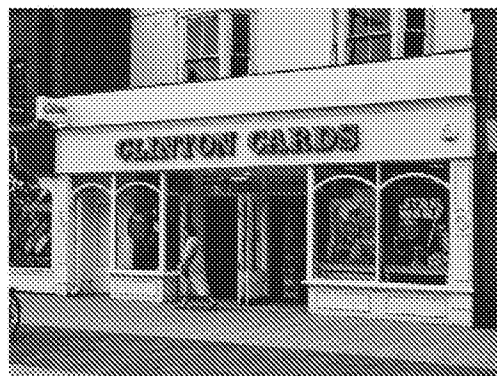
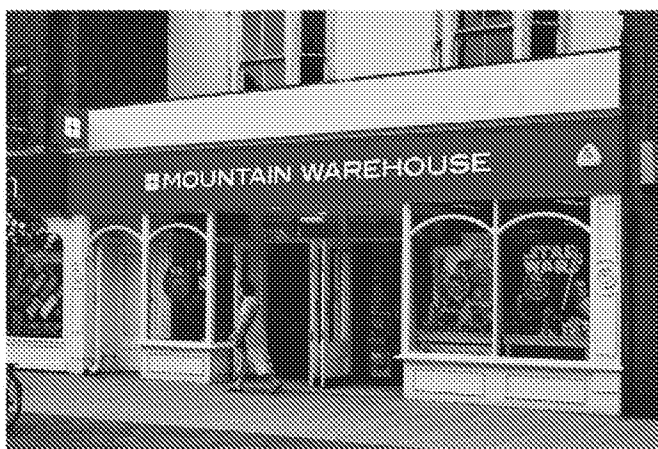


Fig.3 – Proposed Plans submitted BR/2/16/A

4. PLANNING POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

In assessing the appropriateness of the application it is important to consider the proposal in light of both national and local planning policy context. The following policies are considered relevant and have informed the redevelopment of the site.

THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy framework sets out the governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be satisfied.

There are a number of policies included within the document which are of particular relevance to the proposals. A summary is provided below:

- a. Supporting communities by providing housing required to meet the needs of the present and future generation. Creating a high quality built environment with accessible local services. (Paragraph 7).
- b. Decisions need to take local circumstances into account to respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development. (Paragraph 10)
- c. Encourage the effective use of land that has been previously developed. (Paragraph 17)
- d. Actively manage patterns of growth to make fullest use of public transport, walking and cycling. (Paragraph 17).
- e. Allocate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre where suitable town centre sites are not available. (Paragraph 23).
- f. When considering edge of town centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale. (Paragraph 23).
- g. Planning applications for residential development should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. (Paragraph 49).
- h. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. (Paragraph 56).
- i. Development should encourage design that reflects the identity of local surroundings and materials. (Paragraph 58).
- j. Planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and should not stifle innovation.

ARUN LOCAL PLAN

Adopted in 2003, there are a number of policies included within the document which are of particular relevance to the proposals. A summary is provided below:

GEN4- LOCATION AND TRAVEL DEMAND

According to this policy, developments will be granted planning permission if it is located so as to minimise the demand for travel, and appropriate provision is made for safe and convenient access.

Given the central locality of the site it is considered that the location is prime for a residential development as transport links are within walking distance.

GEN5- PROVISION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

The local authority has made a commitment to provide 580 additional homes per year according to the West Sussex Structure Plan.

The proposed development should be looked upon favourably as the proposals offer an opportunity for a large unutilised space to be redeveloped and refurbished into living accommodation made available to local inhabitants.

AREA21- REUSE OF REDUNDANT FLOOR SPACE

Within the Principle Shopping Area, proposals for the reuse of vacant floor space on the upper levels for residential purposes will be permitted if;

The development has no significant adverse effects for the occupiers of neighbouring properties; and

It reflects the need to minimise noise intrusion. Applications must be accompanied by details of noise insulation measures required.

As the application consists of the refurbishment and formation of new residential units above a retail unit it should be considered that this policy is complied with.

The upgrading of the existing windows and building fabric would improve not only the thermal properties but also the acoustic insulation from the surrounding area.

EMERGING LOCAL PLAN POLICY DM2- INTERNAL SPACE STANDARDS

It is considered that the proposal is generally compliant with the council's requirements in this respect.

5. ESTABLISHING THE DESIGN SOLUTION

The building footprint will not be altered by the proposals and will make use of the existing vacant first floor space. This will be providing valuable residential units catering for a need for younger inhabitants of the area and key workers who perhaps, could not afford to rent or purchase other properties.

The redevelopment of the application site provides much needed additional investment in the area and the provision of modern accommodation that will enhance the vitality of the area.

The flats will all benefit from natural light and ventilation via windows and roof lights providing a comfortable environment for the occupiers.

Adequate bin storage has been provided for all flats where possible.

Vehicular and pedestrian access points to the site will remain unaltered. The rear entrance into Flat 4 will be via a secure walkway access off the rear pavement adjacent to the goods in entrance of the ground floor retail unit.

As mentioned previously the site falls within an area of high Accessibility, this will encourage residents to use public transport in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 17.

Pedestrian access will be provided via a pedestrian access door to the front and rear of the site to the west and east elevations.

Following comments from the local authority during the pre-application discussions, where possible windows have been adjusted by lowering the head and cill heights. This will improve the natural light, ventilation and outlook to the flats.

6. PRE-APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND FEEDBACK

Prior to the submission of the current planning application the applicant has engaged in pre-application discussions with the Local Authority. The objective was to ascertain whether the principle of a residential accommodation would be acceptable and to obtain valuable feedback which can be integrated into the designs.

Principle

It was confirmed that the principle of development in this location would be considered acceptable as it lies within an urban town centre area. This is also encouraged by Policy 4 that encourages the re-use

The site lies in an urban, town centre area where the principle of development is considered acceptable. The NPPF further supports effective and efficient use of land for sites such as this but also advises that new housing is well integrated with and complements neighbouring buildings and local area in terms of scale, density, layout and access.

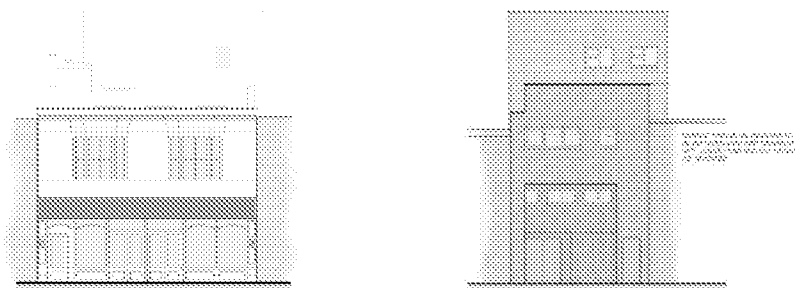
Policy 4 of the Bognor Regis NDP supports applications for the re-use of vacant floors above shops, which this development proposes as long as other policies requirements are met.

Design

In relation to the design itself the council responded by highlighting further policies that would need to be considered when assessing new developments. Generally these policies will support development that efficiently and effectively re-utilises land. Policy Gen 7 requires new developments to respond positively to the identified characteristics of particular sites to create schemes that are in keeping with local characteristics. It goes on to say that overly intensive development may not always be acceptable if it is inappropriate in its context and that new developments should integrate well and compliment the local area.

The council stated the development would be unacceptable in its current form and would result in a poor level of residential living standard due to the lack of daylight and outlook in flats 2-4 despite being in accordance with the local planning guidance living standards.

Fig.4 – Proposed Elevations



Neighbouring amenity

The scheme was considered acceptable given there are a limited number of neighbouring residential properties and it is mainly surrounded by commercial uses. The neighbouring commercial uses are also unlikely to have an effect on the residential units. As the site sits within a town centre it is conceded that a degree of background noise is to be expected and the commercial uses are unlikely to be 24 hour operations.



Fig.5 – Existing high street, looking north towards Application site



Fig.6 – Aerial view indicating camera angle within Fig.5

Amenity Space Provision

As the application site sits within the upper floors of a high street building it is not possible to provide any amenity space at the site itself. With this in mind the council have still confirmed that amenity space would not be an issue due to the close proximity of the site to the beach and local parks.

Sustainability

The development is deemed as sustainable due to the close proximity of local public transport. The proposals also re-use vacant floor space above a retail unit in a central location, something that is encouraged by both local and national planning policies.

Pagham Harbour contributions

As the site is within 5 kilometres of Pagham Harbour contributions of £871 per flat are required.

Bin Storage

Each unit should be provided with the equivalent of 240 litres of residual waste storage/bins.

For flats, the communal/bulk bins can be used on the basis of 240 litres of residual waste storage/bin per flat. Alternatively one 240 litre wheelie bin for each property can be provided. The same amount of storage space/bins for recyclable materials is required to be provided.

Where bin stores are adjacent to an access road serving the development or across a parking area there will need to be a road up to full highway standards. The access of this type provided must be accessible/ passable for collection schedules i.e. no parking or other obstruction.

The maximum pulling distances allowed under Health and Safety legislation are 10 metres 1100 litre bins and 50 meters for 240 litre bins.

It is recommended that if any communal provision is located near or adjacent to the highway, it will be suitably enclosed and landscaped so that the maximum pulling distances and vehicle access requirements are complied with.

7. CONCLUSION

Having gone through the Pre-Application enquiry process a number of amendments have been made to the proposals.

There are a number of large roof lights above flats 2 and 3 which will be retained to provide more natural light into the habitable rooms whilst the windows that are currently at high level will be made larger by lowering the windows. This will provide a better outlook for the occupants together with additional natural light.

The application proposals provide sufficient bin storage to all of the flats. Flat 4 has its own bin storage area accessed via a covered walkway from the road to the rear of the property. As it is intended to utilise 240 litre bins the pulling distance of the bins is in accordance with the requirements of a maximum distance of 50m.

Overall it is felt the proposals respond positively to an opportunity to provide much needed residential accommodation in a prime location with good transport links. Having reviewed the planning policies the proposals would be judged against there is no reason for the application not to be looked upon favourably by the local authority.