



PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO GROUND FLOOR AND CONVERSION OF UPPER FLOOR ACCOMMODATION AT 14-15 HIGH STREET, BANBURY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This Design and Heritage Statement has been prepared by Walker Graham Architects on behalf of the applicant. It accompanies a detailed planning application and listed building application for works associated with 14-15 High Street, Banbury.
- 1.2** This application follows a positive pre-application with Cherwell DC in December 2021 (ref: 21/03408/PREAPP).
- 1.3** The applicant has appointed Walker Graham Architects to develop feasibility proposals to alter the ground floor retail accommodation and convert the top floors of the existing buildings (nos. 14-15 High Street). Originally a pair of dwellings, both buildings are predominantly three storeys in height, with modern single and 2 storey extensions to the rear.
- 1.4** The site sits on the High Street with varied uses within the vicinity. To the rear of the site is an area of private car parking not directly associated with the site.

The site



Fig 1. The site

- 1.5** The property is a Grade II Listed building and is within the Banbury Conservation Area.

- 1.6** The application proposals consist of converting the upper floors of the building into 3 apartments. The ground floor would remain in retail use but a new entrance door to serve the first-floor residential apartments would be provided in the shop frontage.

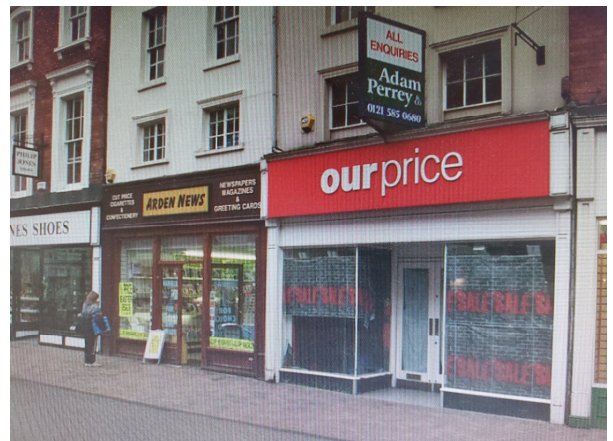


Fig 2. Photo of front elevation – 2004

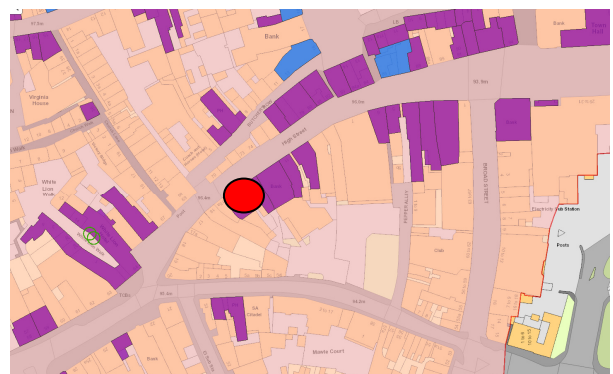


Fig 3. Site Location within context of other listed buildings



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2.0 HERITAGE

2.1 The property listing is as follows:

- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1046940
- Date first listed: 08-Jul-1975
- Date of most recent amendment: 14-Feb-1986
- Statutory Address: DEWHURST, 14, HIGH STREET
- Statutory Address: RECORDS AND TAPES, 15, HIGH STREET

BANBURY HIGH STREET SP4540NE (South side)
7/66 No. 14 (Dewhurst) and No.15 08/07/75
(Records and Tapes) (Formerly listed as Nos.13, 14
and 15) GV II

Two houses, now 2 shops. Late C18/early C19. Stucco; Welsh slate roof, brick ridge stack. 3 storeys; 4-window range altogether. Two C20 shop fronts. 4 shortened sashes to first floor have moulded stone surrounds and glazing bars (3-pane width). 4 sashes to second floor have stone sills and glazing bars (3-pane width). Moulded stone eaves cornice below parapet. Interiors said to have been remodelled C20.



Fig 4. High Street c.1955 – building on right hand side

2.2 The subject buildings were originally townhouses converted into shops. The listing description indicates that the interior is likely to have been

remodelled in the 20th century. Internally there are some remaining areas of historic fabric which contribute to the significance of the buildings. This includes historic staircases and floorboards, skirting boards and some historic windows and doors.



Fig 5. Comparative image 2022

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING CRITERIA

3.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 - Part 1 was formally adopted by Cherwell District Council on 20th July 2015 and provides the strategic planning policy framework for the District to 2031. The Local Plan 2011-2031 – Part 1 replaced a number of the 'saved' policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 though many of its policies are retained and remain part of the development plan.

3.3 The relevant planning policies of Cherwell District's statutory Development Plan are set out below:

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2031 PART 1 (CLP 2031)



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- ESD15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment
- SLE2 – Securing Dynamic Town Centres
- Banbury 7 – Strengthening Banbury Town Centre
- PSD1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996 SAVED POLICIES (CLP 1996)

- C18: Development proposals affecting a listed building
- C21: Proposals for re-use of a listed building

Other Material Planning Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Historic England Good Practice (2015)
- The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic England Good Practice (2015)
- Banbury Conservation Area Appraisal 2018
- Cherwell Residential Design Guide (2018)

3.4 Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Part 1 states that new development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high-quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards and should respect the historic environment including Conservation Areas and listed buildings.

3.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also of particular relevance to this proposal.

3.6 Paragraph 6 of the NPPF states that: “The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”.

Paragraphs 18 to 219, taken as a whole, constitute the Government’s view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. The NPPF goes on to say that, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

3.7 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that a presumption of sustainable development should be seen as a golden thread running through decision taking, which means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. The NPPF goes on to say that, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

3.8 The impact on the designated heritage assets should be minimal and not harm their special interest. In the case of impact that is ‘less than substantial’, NPPF 134 directs that this is weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Those benefits include enhancing the use and viability of the heritage asset.

3.9 As a result, the proposal in principle complies with Local and National policies relating to Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area; and the statutory duty to preserve the special interest of the Heritage Assets will be fulfilled.

3.10 Having regard to the above-mentioned policies, the principle of a mixed (retail and residential) use should be considered to be acceptable in general sustainability terms and would support the aims of creating ‘vibrant town centres’ – in accordance with Policies PSD1, SLE2 and Banbury 7 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Part 1.



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4.0 PRE-APPLICATION

4.1 This planning application follows a pre-application for a similar scheme in December 2021 (ref: 21/03408/PREAPP).

4.2 The case officer for the pre-application stated; *‘The use of the upper floors for residential in the town centre is considered acceptable and has been permitted at numerous other sites in the town centre. The upper floors of the building are currently vacant and therefore the reuse of them is welcomed and would contribute to the vitality of the town centre and provide a long-term use for the upper floors of the building. I therefore consider that the change of use of the upper floors of the building to residential would comply with Policies SLE2 and Banbury 7 of the CLP 2015 and Government guidance contained within the NPPF and could be supported.’*

4.3 The case officer also confirmed that *‘Whilst the loss of part of the frontage of the shop to create a new access is unfortunate there appears to be little alternative as rear access to the site does not appear to be available. In my view the retained ground floor unit would remain of a sufficient size to remain attractive to future occupants.’*

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 The application seeks approval for converting the upper floors of the building into 3 apartments. The ground floor would remain in retail use but a new entrance door to serve the first-floor residential apartments would be provided in the shop frontage.

5.2 The proposals consist of the following and as denoted on the drawing proposals;

- Replace 2 no. windows on front elevation with slimlite double glazed timber windows– to match style of no. 14 High Street
- Replace 3 no. windows on Northwest elevation, with slimlite double glazed timber casement and sash windows.
- 3 new slimlite double glazed timber sash window to Northeast elevation.
- 1 new double glazed timber casement window to Northwest elevation – to replace existing window and door.
- Secondary glazing to all remaining windows
- New entrance door in front façade
- New staircase from ground to first floor
- New internal partitions to form apartments
- Boxing in existing staircases

5.3 The applicant intends to make minor changes to the interior of the property to improve and re-use the existing spaces, thus preserving and enhancing the appearance and use of the listed building group and this part of the Conservation Area.

5.4 It is considered that a mixed-use scheme to accommodate upper floor residential accommodation, and separate retail spaces on the ground floor which is in use as a ‘Main Town Centre Use’, should be supported, subject to details.



Fig 6. Recent façade changes at 13 High Street



**PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO
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- 5.5** At ground floor, it is proposed to alter the existing façade to include a new entrance door to access a new staircase leading to the upper floors. This proposal has similarities to the recent changes at 13 High Street, where a new entrance door has been installed into the front façade – see fig. 6.
- 5.6** An acceptable internal living environment is provided for the future occupants of the apartments. Given the constrained nature of the building within its plot, the applicant is not able to provide any significant level of outside amenity space for future occupiers. However, the proximity of the site in relation to town centre amenities should be taken into consideration. On balance, in the context of the development and the location of the site, it should be considered to have an acceptable level of amenity space provided.
- 5.7** Internal bin stores are proposed within each new apartment. The bin stores are ventilated to the external walls – as denoted on the proposed elevations.
- 5.8** Furthermore, it is considered that the principle of first, second and third floor residential development at this site could also be supported if the changes do not cause significant or demonstrable harm to the visual amenities of the locality, residential amenities, highway safety or ecology.
- 5.9** The proposal for reuse would preserve and enhance the appearance and use of the listed building. It will provide improved access to use and maintain the building and reinstate residential use to the upper floors, which is the optimum heritage use.
- 5.10** The proposals are designed to accord with the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031. The proposals would make an efficient use of an existing urban site. The new uses would relate to the original building visually and would not affect the conditions of neighbouring properties.
- 5.11** The proposed alterations would not result in a loss of privacy or cause overlooking of any neighbouring residential units. In addition, given the sites town centres location, it is not uncommon to find this close relationship between opposite properties.
- 5.12** The internal alterations comprise mainly of the insertion of stud partition walls to divide the existing spaces (making sure room proportions are kept intact). The works do include some removal of internal walls and a rationalisation of the staircases to provide a better connection from top to bottom.
- 5.13** The proposal seeks to retain and repair original fabric, however there will be some elements of the work that relate to Building Regulations and safe fire related egress from the building, such-as, installation of a suitable fire alarms, fire rating between floor/walls, up-grading to fire doors and sound insulation where possible.
- 5.14** It would be expected the new shop frontage details will need to be conditioned so that the new tenant will then discharge the planning/listed building conditions – once they have secured the legal tenancy and produced their detailed designs/layouts. Care will need to be taken here with any new shop front to ensure the existing character of the front elevation is maintained.
- 6.0 NOISE / SOUND**
- 6.1** The site is located within a mixed-use area which includes a range of residential and commercial uses. The proposed use is therefore considered unlikely to be adversely affected by noise, and



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likewise is unlikely to cause disturbance to neighbouring properties by virtue of the proposed use.

- 6.2** Where existing windows are retained, secondary glazing will be installed to prevent external noise entering the new dwellings. Where new windows are to be installed, slimline double glazing will be used.
- 6.3** Acoustic trickle vents will be included within the existing and proposed windows.
- 6.4** Existing floorboards will be carefully lifted (and retained) for intermediate acoustic and thermal insulation to be added between existing floor joists. Once the existing floorboards are fixed back into place, HUSHPANEL 32 is added. This panel comprises 22mm High Density moisture resistant chipboard bonded to a 10mm acoustic layer – which assists in sound reduction between apartments.
- 6.5** Some exterior walls or ‘party walls’ will be upgraded with a separate timber stud wall – for sound separation and thermal upgrading. 50mm CLS timber studwork will be built 10mm off said wall, with 1 layer of 15mm Gyproc Soundbloc plasterboard + skim coat finish. 50mm (min) Isover APR 1200 mineral wool quilt will be added between the studwork.
- 6.6** Existing ceilings and coving details will be retained (and repaired where necessary) for simple decoration. Breathable paint will be used on any period lath and plaster.

7.0 ACCESS

- 7.1** Due to the sustainable location of this site, no car parking is allocated to the residential properties.

- 7.2** It is considered that there would not be any highway safety concerns, particularly given the sites location within the town centre where there is easy access to its services including national bus and rail transport links.