

P/17/0094/FP

PORTCHESTER EAST

PORTCHESTER BUSINESS
CENTRE

AGENT: DESIGNANDDRAW

ADDITIONAL STOREY TO 2 WEST STREET AND FORM 3-STOREY LINK BETWEEN 2 WEST STREET AND 1 CASTLE STREET. CHANGE OF USE FROM A2 USE AT GROUND FLOOR TO MIXED USE A1/A3 USE FOR A COFFEE SHOP WITH NEW SHOPFRONT

2 WEST STREET PORTCHESTER FAREHAM PO16 9UZ

Report By

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Site Description

The application site is located within the existing commercial centre of Portchester, known as Portchester District Centre, which lies within the defined urban settlement of Portchester. The property forms the end of a terrace of modern commercial units within the main pedestrianised area of the District Centre. The existing two storey building was formally used as Natwest Bank, which closed over 2 years ago (February 2015). Within this part of the Portchester District Centre, the block currently comprises the following uses: A2 (vacant bank), sui generis (Coral Bookmakers), and then a row of four. A1 Shop uses (Petfayre Pet Supplies, Wink Hairdressing, AG Stapleford Funeral Directors and The Co-operative Supermarket). The only other units in the immediate vicinity are three further units on the east side of Castle Street (opposite the site). These comprise two A1 shop uses (two hairdressers), and an A5 Hot Food Takeaway use.

The property is bounded by Castle Street (to the east), and the main A27 to the north, beyond the pedestrianised area of West Street. The site is within easy walking distance to Portchester Railway Station, and immediately opposite the main bus stops serving the District Centre, providing excellent public transport links to Portsmouth (to the east) and Fareham (to the west). To the south of the site lies the existing modern, three storey office building (Portchester Business Centre). The two buildings are presently separate, with a disabled ramp and access between to the Business Centre located within the gap between the two buildings.

Description of Proposal

This application seeks the construction of an additional one and two storey's onto the existing two storey former bank building, and the construction of a three storey predominantly glazed link between 2 West Street and 1 Castle Street (the Portchester Business Centre). The resultant scheme would see the Portchester Business Centre extend above the first and new second floor above 2 West Street.

The application also seeks the change of use of the vacant A2 bank unit into a mixed A1 (retail), A3 (cafe/restaurant) use at ground floor, together with a new extended shopfront, removing the overhang, and creating a more prominent, and modern shop front.

Policies

The following policies apply to this application:

Approved Fareham Borough Core Strategy

CS3 - Vitality and Viability of Centres

CS6 - The Development Strategy

CS11 - Development in Portchester, Stubbington and Hill Head

CS17 - High Quality Design

Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (Dec 2015)

EXD - Fareham Borough Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document

Development Sites and Policies

DSP1 - Sustainable Development

DSP2 - Environmental Impact

DSP3 - Impact on living conditions

DSP34 - Development in District Centres, Local Centres, and Local Parades

DSP36 - Portchester District Centre

Non-residential Parking Standards (September 2015)

NRPS -

Relevant Planning History

There is no recent relevant planning history.

Representations

Twenty four respondents have commented on the proposed development. All the matters raised relate to the proposed change of use of the ground floor vacant bank into a coffee shop.

Several of the respondents stated a preference for a cafe or a tea room rather than a coffee shop, but the majority of the respondents highlighted that the provision of a new coffee shop would be detrimental to the other existing local coffee shops in the District Centre.

Planning Considerations - Key Issues

The following matters represent the key material planning considerations which would need to be assessed to determine the suitability of the development proposal. The key issues comprise:

- Provision of an additional storey and link;
- Change of use from A2 to A1/A3 mixed use;
- Highway safety and car parking.

Provision of an additional storey and link

The proposal would see the existing flat roofed, three storey Portchester Business Centre building linked and extended above the ground floor element of 2 West Street. The proposal would incorporate a three storey glazed link in the space between the Portchester Business Centre and 2 West Street, with an additional storey added to the main 2 West Street building. The additional storey added to 2 West Street would comprise a mansard style roof, finished in a sheet metal profile roof, with dormer windows, characteristic of other similar three storey structures on West Street.

The glazed link, which is stepped down from the main Castle Street elevation would provide a new main entrance and reception area for the Business Centre. The infilling of this part of the Castle Street elevation would improve on the existing dark, enclosed recess, which presently only contains the access ramp to the Business Centre. The design and appearance of the link has been kept light, with grey aluminium framed windows to create a significant improvement on the entrance point to the Centre and to this part of Castle Street.

The additional storey to 2 West Street has been altered since its original submission, altering the West Street and Castle Street elevations to provide a more recessed, mansard appearance, with the exception of the corner section, to create a more focal point feature at this elevation. The design has been carefully considered to ensure it mirrors other 3-storey buildings on the West Street frontage. The design and appearance of the building would be significantly improved with the provision of the extensions and modernisation of the building.

The existing ground floor bank facade comprises small windows and a recessed frontage set below the first floor overhang. This overhang, together with the scale of the supporting columns creates an unwelcoming entrance point for the District Centre. The new shop front at ground floor level, which would encompass the existing columns within the shop, and result in a modern, fully glazed frontage on a prominent corner building, which acts as a focal feature to the entrance of the pedestrianised part of the West Street precinct, creates a more active frontage with better engages with the street scene.

It is therefore considered that the proposed extensions and alterations to the building would represent a significant improvement on the existing layout of the gap between the buildings and on the overall poorly maintained and unwelcoming facade to 2 West Street.

Change of use from A2 to A1/A3 mixed use:

The planning application would see an existing vacant A2 (professional and financial services - bank) use be capable of being used as an A1/A3 (shop/cafe/restaurant), although there is presently no user identified for the property. Policy DSP34 requires that changes of use do not result in an unacceptable group of non-retail uses. The current mix of uses in the immediate vicinity of the site (outlined in the site description above), and the proposed mixed A1/A3 use is compatible with this policy and would not therefore be likely to have a detrimental impact on the viability and vitality of the District Centre. The works to the ground floor unit will also result in a significant visual improvement on this prominent focal building at the eastern entrance to the District Centre, and create a more active frontage than the current former bank facade. Appropriate conditions have been suggested to ensure that any future A3 user would not have a significant impact on the amenity of the surrounding area, and a full detailed application would be required before any ventilation and extraction provision could be provided.

It is noted from the many representations received that there is concern that an additional 'coffee shop' in the District Centre would be harmful to the existing coffee shops. At present within the District Centre there is currently two other coffee shops, Darcy's, which is located at the western end of the precinct, on the western side of Jubilee Road, and the other is the Coffee Cup, which is located approximately half way along the precinct, on the northern side of West Street. There is also a further tea room (Deejay's) located further along West Street, opposite the West Street Roundabout. The provision of an additional coffee shop, at the eastern end of the precinct would it is considered, complement the existing facilities,

whilst also making use of a vacant unit in a prominent position on the road frontage. Additionally, the change of use to a mixed A1/A3 use would also allow for the unit to be occupied by a retail unit. The mixed use approach allows for a degree of flexibility for potential future users. Furthermore, commercial competition is not a material planning consideration.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed change of use would not have a significant impact on the viability and vitality of the Centre, accords with the provisions of the development plan, and could allow for the use to encompass A1 (shop) or A3 (cafe/restaurant) uses.

Highway Safety and Car Parking:

The application is likely to increase need for car parking as a result of the additional B1 (office) space being created. The Portchester Business Centre has no private off-street car parking, although the tenants regularly make use of the concrete private parking area to the rear of the site. The users of the Business Centre, and other users of the adjoining retail units have long used this service area for car parking without any objection from the car park owner. In addition, the site lies immediately adjacent to the large surface car park of the District Centre. This includes both short stay and long stay spaces, and is predominantly only fully occupied on market days and Saturdays.

In addition, the site is located in a highly sustainable location, with immediate access to regular buses along the A27 that provide good links to Portsmouth and Fareham and beyond. Further, the Portchester railway station is located only 300m (approx.) to the north of the site, along Station Road.

As such, despite the lack of dedicated off-street car parking to service the application site, the location of the site within the District Centre, which is seeking investment to improve its appearance and level of provision, ensures the office accommodation is within the most sustainable part of the settlement, close to public car parks, and a variety of modes of public transport. Additionally, the serviced natures of the offices proposed, predominantly let on short term leases would imply that the occupancy of the office accommodation would be sporadic, and would be unlikely to be occupied to the same level as a single office user.

The change of use of the former bank into an A1/A3 use would not as such increase potential car parking pressure on the Centre as the unit already exists.

Conclusion:

In summary, it is considered that the proposed extension and alterations to 2 West Street, including the link to 1 Castle Street would represent a significant improvement to the existing somewhat neglected building, which is located in a prominent position on the corner of the main entrance point to Portchester. The change of use, subject to appropriate conditions would not have an impact on the viability and vitality of the District Centre, which retains a strong A1 (shop) use presence. Whilst no end user of the unit has been identified, appropriately worded conditions have been proposed to ensure that should the use as a cafe be taken up, it would not have a significant impact on the locality.

Based on the above it is considered the proposal complies with development plan policies and therefore the application is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

PERMISSION; subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall begin before the expiration of three years following the date of this decision.

REASON: To allow a reasonable time period for work to start, to comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and to enable the Council to review the position if a fresh application is made after that time.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents:

a) Location Plan;

b) Site Plan;

c) Existing Elevations (Drawing: 16-PORCH-EX02);

d) Proposed Elevations (Drawing: 16-PORCH-P03 Rev D);

e) Existing Floor Plans (Drawing: 16-PORCH-EX01);

f) Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans (Drawing: 16-PORCH-P01 Rev C); and,

g) Proposed Second Floor Plan and Roof Plan (Drawing: 16-PORCH-P02 Rev B).

REASON: To avoid any doubt over what has been permitted.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed using external materials to match those on the existing building in colour, form, texture and composition, unless as otherwise specified on the planning application form.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity.

4. The link and first and second floor accommodation at 2 West Street shall be limited to use as B1(a) Offices, and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class B1 of the schedule of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any other statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order.

REASON: To ensure the use of the building does not have a harmful environmental effect in the interests of amenity.

5. The ground floor retail unit at 2 West Street shall be used as a shop (A1 use) or cafe (A3 use) only, and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class A3 of the schedule of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any other statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order.

REASON: To ensure the use of the building does not have a harmful environmental effect in the interests of amenity.

INFORMATIVES

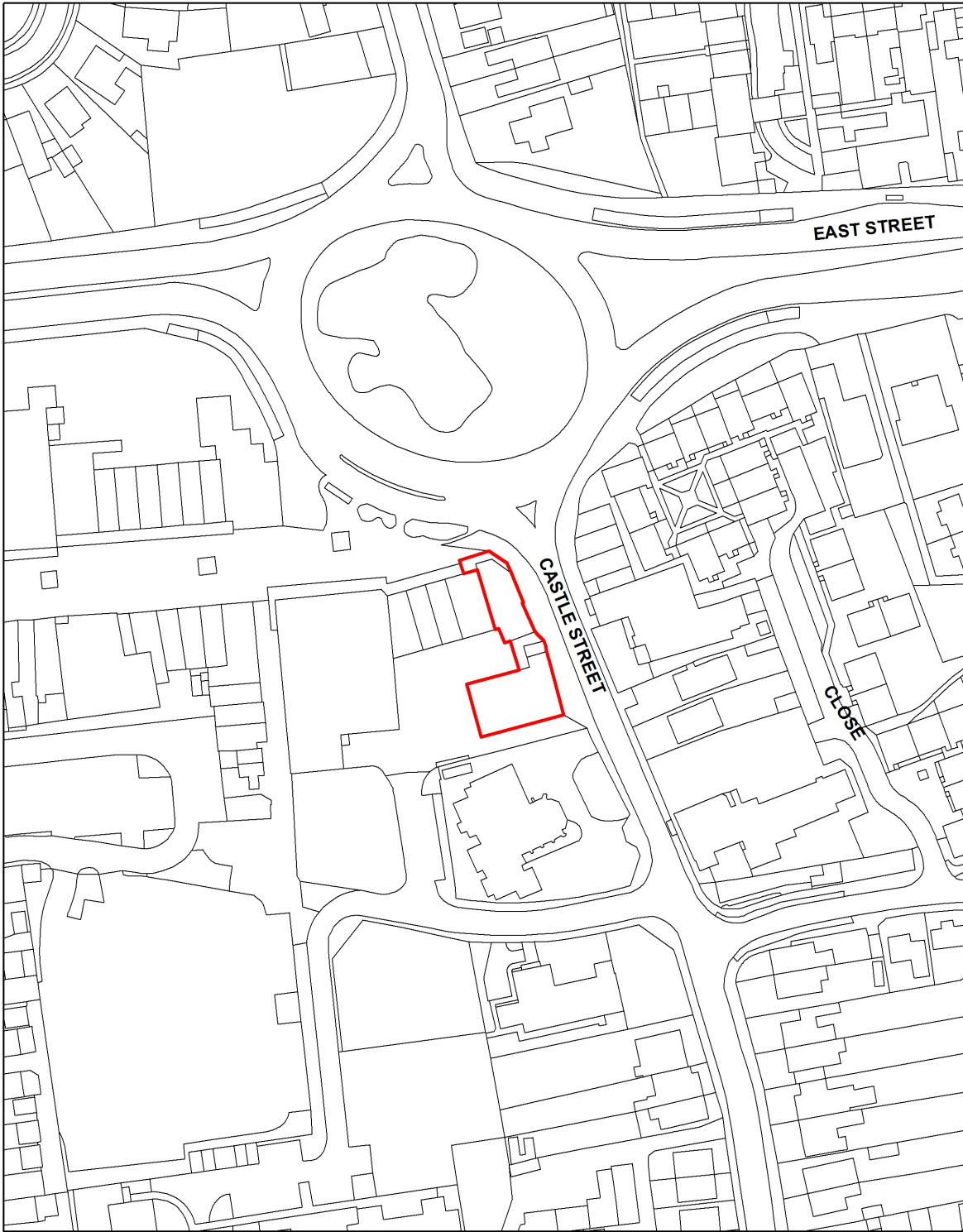
a) The change of use of the ground floor unit does not allow for the installation of commercial ventilation or extraction equipment. The applicant is reminded that a separate application for planning permission is required for such works.

b) The change of use hereby permitted does not allow for the provision of tables and chairs to be placed outside of the building on the West Street frontage. The application is reminded that the provision of tables and chairs placed outside of the building on West Street will also require the provision of a separate application for planning permission. The applicant may also need to apply for a licence to do so from Hampshire County Council as

the Highway Authority.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL



2 West Street, Portchester
Scale 1:1250



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