

DESIGN AND ACCESS**STATEMENT**

**Proposed Development of Opticians and associated
offices into**

**3 Self Contained Flats at
no.6-8 Lichfield Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1DG**



Client:

Uppal and Singh Properties Ltd.

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History of the Building.

Built Circa 1880 in an Arts and Crafts version of Jacobean Architecture. The purpose of the building was to provide much needed office space during the booming industrial period in Wolverhampton.

Offices at 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors were occupied by Solicitors, Accountants and other services. The ground floors were designed as commercial outlets.

The building has largely remained as original barring a 2 storey extension to the rear which seems to be have much later. This 2 storey building is connected to 6-8 Lichfield Street at ground floor level only and backs onto a private alley.

Nature of the use proposed.

The proposed development involves converting the rear of the ground floor and the whole of the 1st floor into 3 self contained flats. The remaining ground floor will be used as access for the flats and the majority will be retained as an A1 commercial use.

Quantum of development proposed.

The development will take the existing office rooms, male and female toilets and create 3no. 1 bedroom flats.

The area of the total site is 196 sqm. The total gross internal floor area of the building is 241sqm. The ground floor has a gross internal floor area of 157sqm and the 1st floor has a gross internal floor area of 84sqm. 62sqm of the ground floor area will be allocated to the development and the whole of the 1st floor's 84sqm will be converted into residential.

Proposed layout.

The dwellings will be modestly sized having a traditional layout of lounge with kitchenette, bedroom and shower room. As such it is envisaged that the proposed dwellings will afford suitable private and safe accommodation that equals that of the local dwellings in the City Centre. The gross internal floor areas are as follows:

Flat 1. 37sqm.

Flat 2. 35sqm.

Flat 3. 33sqm.

The dwellings will be accessed from Lichfield Street where a new shopfront will provide 2 separate entrances. A new corridor will be formed internally which will provide access to the rear ground floor flat and access to a single staircase leading to the 1st floor where the remaining 2 flats will be situated.

Bin Stores will be situated to the rear of no.14 Lichfield Street in the existing yard, for the use of occupants.

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Scale of the building.

The building envelope will remain as existing.

Width of building from no.6 to 8 Lichfield Street 9.5m

Overall depth of building 23.5m

Height to top of parapet wall is 17m. Height to ridge is 20.5m.

Landscaping.

No landscaping will be required. The Yard to the rear will be tidied up for Paladin Bins to be situated and access for refuse collection.

Appearance.

The building facades will remain largely as existing. The rear elevation (Photos 2 & 3) will see the addition of 4no. ventilation points, covered with era correct cast iron covers. 2 new windows will be introduced at ground floor level, providing natural light into Flat 1.

The existing 1st floor windows, serving the new Flats will be replaced with new double glazed timber framed casement windows.

The front elevation will receive a new hardwood timber framed shopfront, designed in accordance with the local authorities' guidance on shopfronts in a conservation area.

Access.

As the site is situated within the City Centre the development will benefit from excellent public transportation options. The Bus Station is approximately 0.2 miles away and 3 minutes walk. The Train Station is 0.3 miles away from the development and 5 minutes walk.

Consultation.

Consultation has been undertaken with Stephen Alexander, head of city planning at Wolverhampton Council. Overall, the local authority are in support of this application due to the need for more developments of this nature.

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Heritage Statement.

The Building is a Grade II Listed building and therefore will require Listed Building Consent.

The building facade (Photo 1) is without question an attractive and distinctive facade which should be preserved and maintained within reason and therefore the proposals submitted should be looked on favourably as they have very little impact on the appearance of the building.

Internally the building has previously gone through significant alterations and unfortunately lost many original features it may have possessed. Both the ground floor and 1st floor are devoid of any period features. The internal doors, architraves, skirting boards etc are from a more recent period of time, possibly the 1990s as such offer no historic value.

Windows will only be replaced on the 1st floor rear part of the building which is not original to the building fronting Lichfield Street. Its difficult to determine the period this building was built in but non the less alterations will be kept to a minimum to reduce harm to the building fabric.

Conclusion.

The proposal of converting part of this building into 3 dwellings is vital to the preservation of the building. Currently the large commercial unit which spans two floors is vacant with potential tenants being deterred from taking on the lease due to its size. Should the building remain vacant it could lead to a detrimental effect on the fabric of the building and could lead to potential dilapidation.

Creating a better use of the commercial space is imperative to have the building reoccupied again. Reducing the size of the commercial unit will attract a greater number of businesses who want an affordable city centre location to trade from and letting of the flats and would bring back vitality and activity City Centre.

To summarise by developing the existing building into flats improves the likely hood of occupancy of this building, which would satisfy a requirement for much needed housing in the area but also provide an economic benefit by increasing activity within the City Centre. We feel these reasons should encourage Wolverhampton City Council to support this application.

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Appendices:

Photo 1:



Front Elevation – 6-20 Lichfield Street.

Photo 2 & 3:



Rear Elevation – 6-8 Lichfield Street.

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References:

<http://www.historywebsite.co.uk/listed/gresham.htm>

http://blackcountryhistory.org/collections/getrecord/WOHER_MBL800/