

Former Service Area at Five Valleys Shopping Centre, King Street, Stroud.

Design and Access Statement, November 2023



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Introduction

Document Format

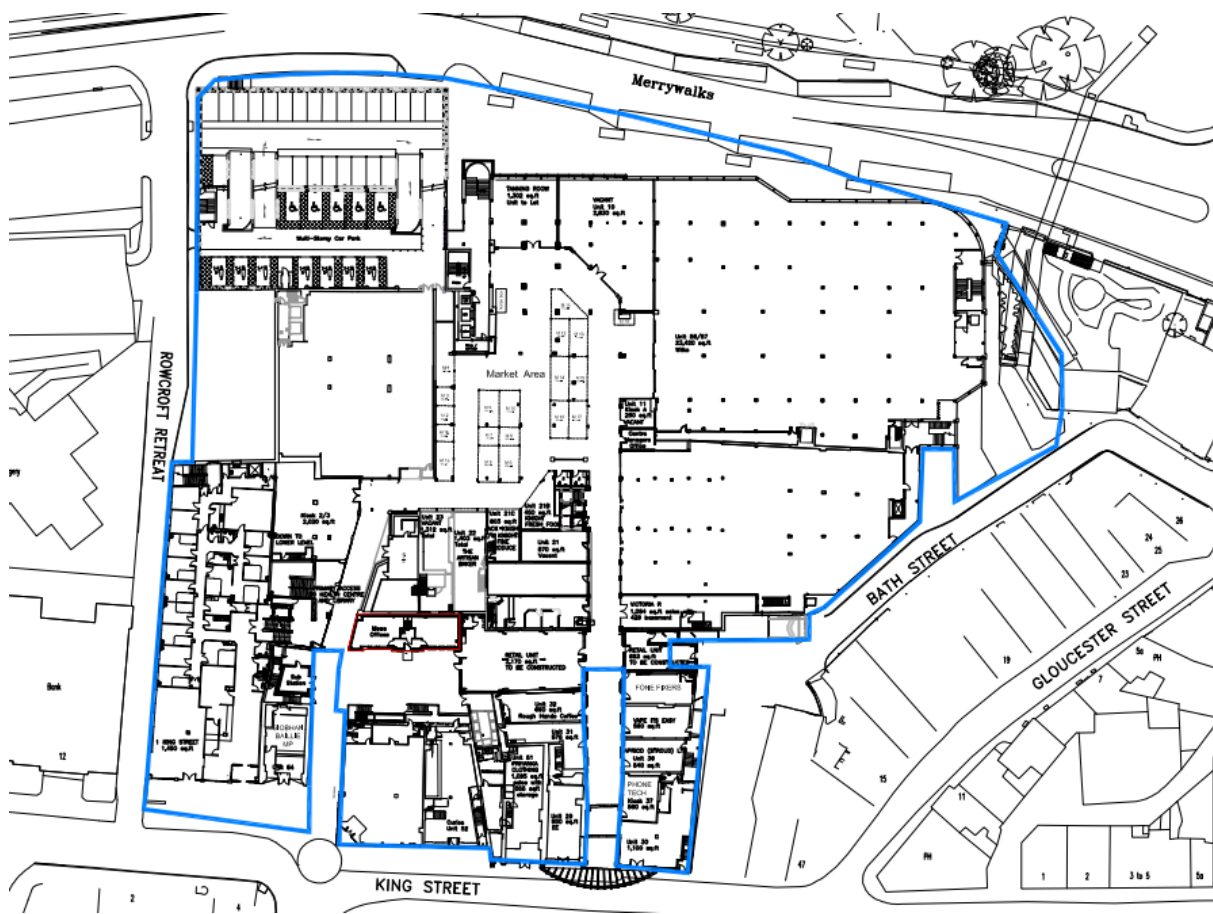
This document provides for a Design and Access Statement in support of a full planning application at the former service yard at Five Valleys Shopping Centre. The Document sets out details of the Site, its context, as well as relevant planning policy, before going on to explain some of the design and access considerations relevant to this full planning application.

The Full Application Proposes:

"Development of an office block (Use Class E(c) / E(g)(i)) and associated works (part retrospective)" Site and

Location Overview

The application site is rectangular shape, and amounts to approximately 99m², as shown within the red line of the location plan. The site is located inside the western edge of Stroud town centre, north of King Street, in Five Valleys Shopping Centre.



Immediate Site Context

The red line boundary of the application site amounts to approximately 99m². It is located inside the western edge of Stroud town centre, north of King Street, in Five Valleys Shopping Centre. The enhancement of the shopping centre has been brought forward by the same applicant through implementation of planning permission S.18/1454/FUL.

The application site is rectangular in shape, set back within the shopping centre, with the multi storey car park towards the north and the health centre and library towards to west. The site sits just outside the Stroud Town Centre Conservation Area.

Within the Conservation Area, outside the red line boundary, to the south of the application site, is King Street. Number 3 King Street Parade is an early 19th Century two storey Grade II Listed Building. Adjacent to this is an entrance way down into the Five Valleys Shopping Centre then, stretching eastwards across 11 – 41 King Street. These two and three storey buildings accommodate a range of retail and service businesses at ground floor. Adjacent to 25 King Street an arcade extends northwards into the Centre. Numbers 23 and 25 King Street are three storey Grade II Listed Buildings with mid-19th Century shop fronts.

The remainder of the Five Valleys Shopping Centre is located immediately to the north of the application site. This part of the Centre, extending back to and fronting Merrywalks, is dominated by a largely blank elevation and the entrance to the Vue Cinema plus, at ground level, units occupied by Domino's Pizza and formerly Halfords (but expected now to be converted for an alternative occupier). The upper levels here include multi-storey car parking. The Centre extends back from Merrywalks with accommodation over a series of levels providing additional retail and car parking space as well as a gym and, on the rooftop, a bowling alley.

The rest of Stroud town centre extends south and eastwards away from the application site beyond King Street. Further retail and service units are located along Gloucester Street to the east, whilst to the west is a medical centre and a drive through restaurant. Schools, parkland, and residential areas are located to the north on the opposite side of Merrywalks, beyond which is the urban edge of Stroud, and then open countryside.

Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

At the national level, the NPPF includes the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This lies at the heart of the NPPF and for decision making this means (paragraph 11), "...approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay." The presumption in favour of sustainable development for decision taking applies to the current proposals in circumstances where they are in accordance with the development plan; they should be approved without delay.

The NPPF is framed throughout as a positive and enabling document, seeking to facilitate sustainable development and growth wherever possible. There is a clear commitment to supporting and securing sustainable economic growth, thereby creating jobs and prosperity; significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.

Carrying forward themes evident over an extended period from previous expressions of national policy there remains an emphasis in the NPPF on positive planning for the promotion of competitive, expanding, healthy town centres at the heart of communities, encouraging choice and diversity. The Five Valleys Shopping Centre occupies a "town centre" location. It is a preferred location for uses including offices.

Stroud Local Plan (2015) and Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan (2016)

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal responds directly to and is in accordance with the Development Plan. It should be determined, positively, accordingly.

The relevant parts of the Development Plan for Stroud comprise the Local Plan (adopted November 2015) and the Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan (2016). The relevant policies from the Development Plan, and other policy documents issued by the Council, are summarised in the schedule appended to the covering letter supporting the application. The schedule also comments on how the proposals accord with these policies. The schedule at appendix 1 to the covering letter identifies the policies relevant to the current proposal, in relation to; the Local Plan; Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan; and Supplementary Planning Documents.

Design and Access

Proposed Development

The design concept behind the scheme is to reflect the character and appearance of Stroud Town Centre.

The development is described as:

"Development of an office block (Use Class E(c) / E(g)(i)) and associated works (part retrospective)"

The planning application is submitted in full, and is part retrospective, proposing an office block to replace the provision of three mews houses which were allowed as part of the previous permission here (S.18/1454/FUL).

The proposed development is shown on the following application plans:

- DPL-STR-C00 Location Plan
- DPL-STR-C01A Courtyard GF Office
- DPL-STR-C02A FF Office and Roof Plan
- DPL-STR-C03A Courtyard Office Elevations
- DPL-STR-C04B Courtyard Office Sections
- DPL-STR-C07 Proposed Block Plan
- DPL-STR-C10 Existing Block Plan

The above plans appropriately define the extent of the application site and the proposed development area for the purposes of a full application submission to establish the detail of the proposed office block on the site.

Use and Amount

The proposed office block will allow activities under Use Classes E(c) and E(g)(i), providing accommodation for working professionals. It makes efficient use of the site, creating a safe, secure, and attractive environment without being overdeveloped or out of context for this location. A total of 146 sq m GIA of space is proposed.

Scale and Massing

Careful consideration during the detailed design process will ensure that the proposal relates well to its surroundings.

The proposal is two storeys, fitting in scale with the car park to the rear, whereby the height of the car park parapet wall is 4125mm, above courtyard level, and the proposed offices will be 7875mm above courtyard level (3750mm higher), and the same height as the entrance feature.

Appearance

Walls and Windows

The walls will be a mixture of rendered panels and a yellow London stock brick (final colours to be agreed) to provide an element of extra quality to the scheme.

A new balustrade to the elevation will be implemented to match the car park elevation.

The windows will be a mixture of opaque, colour black to match doctors building surgery and grey and white painted hardwood.

The ground floor main door is to be grey painted hardwood timber unit.

Roof

The existing balustrading to roof edge is to be retained. New balustrading is provided to the front of the existing roof to match existing balustrading to car park elevation of existing office.

Overall, the appearance of the development would enhance the visual perspective of the site and its relationship with the wider town centre. The proposed design is traditional, consistent with occupier requirements and positively addresses the wider urban design issues arising by providing an appealing feature set back from King Street. The proposed materials are entirely appropriate for this site.

Access

The access to the scheme will be consistent with that previously approved in the permitted scheme here (S.18/1454/FUL).

The designated pedestrian entrance points are from both Five Valleys Shopping Centre, King Street and the adjacent car park in order to maximise the linkages with the existing developments around the site.

The site is near the existing town centre and associated car parks, public transport, and taxi ranks.

Sustainability in Construction

Waste and Use of Recycled Material in Construction

Materials used in construction of the development include brick, timber, and concrete foundations; all these materials are suitable for recycling. Furthermore, concrete used for the foundations could be formed from recycled aggregates.

Materials for the building are selected to provide the required aesthetics combined with maximum durability and robustness. The requirements for replacement, maintenance and repair will be minimal during the building lifecycle, thus providing a good low level of energy input over the whole lifecycle.

Green Charter

The applicants have drawn up a green charter and are asking clients, contractors, and suppliers to sign up to this charter.

In day-to-day operations they are continually working to;

- Reduce energy use.
- Reduce transport.
- Reduce waste and recycle.

On development projects (where feasible) they look to:

- Install renewable energy sources, such as photovoltaic, CHP's and ground / air source heat pumps.
- Implement a site waste management plan so to reduce transfer to landfill.
- Employ local contractors to reduce car journeys.
- Reward tenants who undertake a proactive approach to environmental sustainability.