



Planning Statement

The aim of this statement is to provide the background information of the development of the former George Hotel, Duke Street.

Central Coop purchased the site in August 2021 with a view to developing the site into a convenience store and supporting units.

Preapplication planning advice was sought with Sefton Council and designs produced to retain and extend the existing original building.

A full planning application was submitted in February 2022.

Approval was granted on the 28th of October, Ref No DC/2022/00415.

Description of Development:

Change of use from vacant public house (Sui Generis) to a retail store at ground floor level (Class E) and four residential units at first floor level (Class C3), with partial demolition of existing building and erection of a single storey extension to the side, infill of existing basement and associated landscaping and access.

Central Co-op undertake a thorough tender process including extensive due diligence, full prequalification review (financial, health & safety, competence, accreditations, experience, and previous work.) This process resulted in the appointment of the building contractor Clement Dickens – a well-established firm of 75 years. Construction commenced November 2022.

Unfortunately, Clement Dickens filed for administration on the 3rd of April 2023 having only completed the site clearance, partial demolition, and partial foundations. The site was then in the control of the administrator and a protracted period followed, regaining possession of the site, resurveying, and retendering to find a replacement contractor.

Specialist temporary works designers were appointed to design a propping solution to support the remaining structure. This was extremely complex due to the deterioration of the building, the required piled foundations and challenging ground conditions. Several options were investigated but it became apparent that the building was no longer safe to continue the conversion works.



A project design team meeting was held (attendees: project manager, structural engineer, contractor, piling contractor, temporary works designer, architect and health and safety consultant) with the outcome being the project could not continue safely.

Due to the unsafe nature of continuing with the current permission, we unfortunately have no alternative but submit a planning application to demolish the existing structure and replace it with a new building.

Our new application retains the existing building footprint, floor areas and boundary treatments and is designed to comply with local plan policy EQ2 "design" by responding positively to the character, local distinctiveness, and form of its surroundings.

To summarise, Central Coop remain committed to the development of the site. The safety of our contractors and long-term future for the site is paramount. Circumstances beyond our control have led to the proposed redesign and this has all come at significant additional cost and loss of time.

Subject to planning approval, works are scheduled to commence in spring 2024 with works scheduled to take 6-7 months to complete.