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SHAPING YOUR IDEAS INTO REALITY

PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

SITE | Rotary Printers, Mitton Street, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire, DY13 9AA

APPLICANT | Discovery Veterinary Centre Limited

AGENT | Emily Griffin MSc BA (Hons)

March 2024

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1 Introduction and Planning History

On behalf of the client, this statement is submitted as part of the Full application prepared by Engineering and Building Design Ltd. The purpose of this application is to establish consent for Change of Use to Suis Generis for a Veterinary Practice.

In line with the planning policy enlisted below this statement provides a detailed description of the proposed development and demonstrates the positive impact not only on the application site, but wider surrounding's. This document should be read in conjunction with all documents submitted as part of this application.

Documents enclosed as part of the submission:

- 23-4502-01 Existing GF Plan (a1)
- 23-4502-02 Existing FF Plan (a1)
- 23-4502-03 Existing Elevations (a1)
- 23-4502-04 Proposed GF Plan (a1)
- 23-4302-05 Proposed Elevations (a1)

1.1 Planning History

WF/108875 Dated 24 February 1976.

Extension to print works at Rotary Printers

13/0551/FULL

Alterations and extensions to create new customer reception, additional offices and new loading/delivery bays

2 Site

2.1 Wider Setting

Lying within the boundaries of the Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) the application site is located within the town of Stourport-on-Severn. Rotary Printers, Mitton Street, falls within the designated Conservation Area (Area no.2) and neighbours both residential and commercial property. Mitton Street hosts a variety of use classes, including a Public House, Place of Worship (Mitton Street / Vale Road) and Tesco's superstore (accessed via foot from Mitton Street, with vehicular access from Severn Road). The Gilgal and Mitton Street play a vital part in the highway network though Stourport-on-Severn. The one-way system creates a streamlined approach to both the high street via York Street and Vale Road.



Image – Wyre Forest DC Conservation Area No.2

Stourport-on-Severn Revised January 2015

The building is shown hatched in Blue noted as Other Building or Structure of Interest

2.2 Application Site

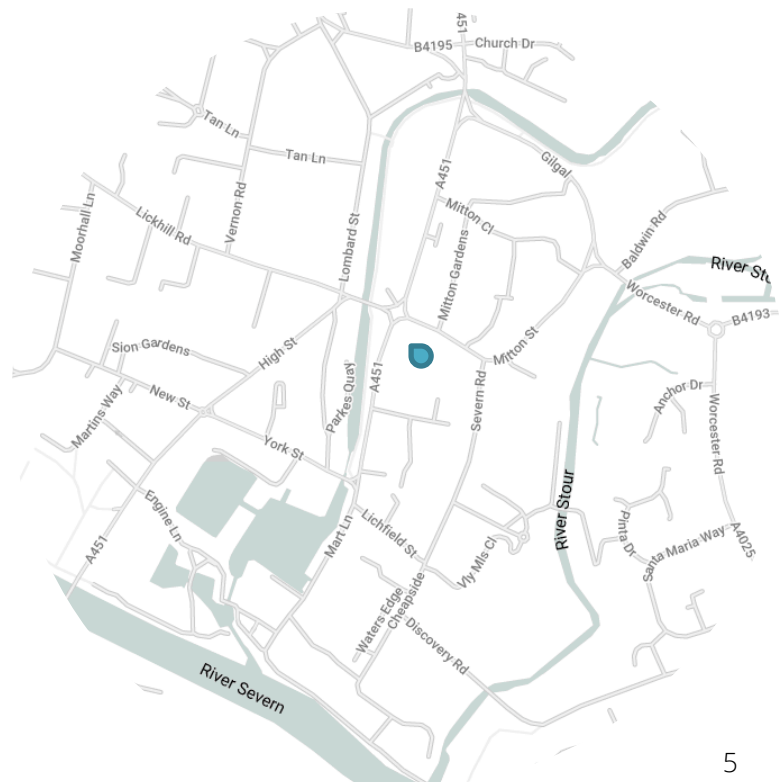
The application site is currently occupied by Rotary Printers, providing printing services and business supplies to both local and national businesses. The large footprint accommodates a spacious reception, offices, storage and printing equipment. There is an existing staff and customer car park to the front of the property with immediate access onto Mitton Street. The car park is bound by an existing red brick wall, with a low level wall with stone capping adjacent to the highway.

On approach the most prominent feature is the historic gable end with stone lintel detail formally providing access for the fire engines onto the highway. As the users moves into the site the building progresses and unfolds into a number of larger buildings / additions that are apparent via noticeable material change. This statement will include a number of photographs in order to detail and clarify elements of the building which are considered 'modern' or later additions.

The gradient of the site is a moderate incline to the South. As show on the Elevations drawn and submitted as part of this application the ground floor accessed via a number of steps / pedestrian ramp is raised much higher in comparison to the adjacent highway, similarly to the residential properties on the opposite side of the highway. It could be considered that as Mitton Street proceeds it is almost carved into the landscape with the residential units sited more prominently with elevated frontages and gardens sited upon masonry walls.

As reference within the conservation appraisal there is a small collection of established tree's to the West of the application site which provide a prominent backdrop for the building.

Site location shown on map > blue marker.



3 Planning Policy

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. Planning law states that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan (Wyre Forest DC Local Plan 2016-2036 Adopted April 2022) unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Development plans must give regard to the NPPF and the framework should be a key consideration in planning decisions.

Outlined within section 2 of the framework are the principles of achieving sustainable development, the purpose of the planning system. The three overarching and interdependent objectives set out the principles and provide definition for 'sustainable development' – Economic, Social and Environmental.

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Extract from the NPPF Page 5 – Sustainability Objectives

Section 6 of the NPPF outlines policies in relation to 'building a strong, competitive economy' stating that:

'...policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. **Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into accounts both local business needs and wider opportunities for development**' [bold typeface author's emphasis].

In addition to the promotion of economic growth and opportunity for development, the retention of Local Businesses is paramount for the success in achieving the core principles set out within the planning framework.

It would not be unjustified to highlight the decline of economic development within town centres, specifically the use of the high street within Stourport-on-Severn. At present there are a number of vacant buildings, some of which were considered by way of character appraisal for suitability prior to this submission. Section 7 of the NPPF highlights the important role that town centres play and that policies should take a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

As described within the introduction of this statement the application site falls within a designated **Conservation Area**. It is therefore that consideration and weight is given to the policies surrounding the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Furthermore, whilst the building is no protected by way of a National Listing, nor does it feature of WFDC Local List details of its heritage are documented under Worcester City Heritage Environment Record.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Extract from Section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, paragraph 200 of page 58

3.2 Wyre Forest District Council Local Plan 2016-2036 (Adopted April 2022)

This statement aims to address the relevant policies in relation to the development proposal. Through written description alongside the submission of full plans and elevations the application pack evidences the relevance and importance of the development proposal. The principles of the Local Plan are continually discussed throughout the remainder of this statement.

Policy SP.17 A Diverse Local Economy

Policy SP.18 – Town Centre Development

Policy SP.20 – Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness

Policy SP.21 – Historic Environment

Policy SP.27 - Transport and Accessibility in Wyre Forest

Policy SP.35 – Waste

Policy SP.37 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Policy DM.23 – Safeguarding the Historic Environment

Policy DM. 24 – Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness

Policy DM. 27 – Advertisements

3.3 Supplementary Planning Documents / Guidance

WFDC Shop Front Design Guidance within the Historic Environment SPG (2004)

For clarity, the development proposal is not considered a shop frontage; however, there are design principles documented within this publication with regards to signage within the Historic Environment. Whilst some of the documentation is outdated, section 6 'Signage' includes a number of sub-headings 'fascias, lettering, lighting, and hanging signs' of which have some relevance to this application. Further detail on signage can be found within the 'design' aspect of this statement.

4 Historic Environment

The application site falls within the Stourport-on-Severn Conservation Area No.2 designated by Wyre Forest DC. The Wyre Forest Local Plan sets out the value of the Historic Environment under Policy SP. 21;

Development proposals should protect, conserve and enhance all heritage assets and their settings, including assets of potential archaeological interest, subject to the provisions of policy DM.23 (Safeguarding the Historic Environment). Their contribution to the character and landscape or townscape should be safeguarded and protected in order to sustain the historic quality, sense of place, environmental quality and economic vibrancy of Wyre Forest District. In particular this applies to:

Designated heritage assets; i.e. listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and registered battlefields; also non-designated heritage assets (including those identified on the District's Local Heritage List or for which a Historic Environment Records exists), and their setting....

This change of use application seeks consent for the re-purpose of the existing building with very little modification; the site will continue to offer 'economic vibrancy' for Stourport-on-Severn and the wider District. Development Management Policy no. 23 (Safeguarding the Historic Environment) details the criteria for the success of an application presented to the Local Authority.

1. Proposals likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset (including the contribution made by its setting or any importance vistas or views) should be accompanied by a description of its significance in sufficient detail to allow the potential impacts to be adequately assessed by a qualified and/or experience heritage professional. This will usually be in the form of a Heritage Statement....
5. Repairs, alterations, extensions and conversions of heritage
Assets must be sympathetically designed to respect the significance of the form, character and materials of the original heritage asset and its setting. Fixtures and fittings should be inconspicuously sited and proportioned and be designed sympathetically to reflect to significance of the asset.

4.1 Conservation Area

Wyre Forest District Council

Character Appraisal for Conservation Area No.2

Stourport-on-Severn (Revised January 2015)

The Conservation Area appraisal details the significance of the heritage assets and wider setting. Subdivided into headings the documentation provides a detailed recording of all elements that are considered of importance to the heritage of Stourport-on-Severn. The application site is included within the boundaries defining Area no.2. As detailed in the document ‘...prior to the 1760’s [Lower Mitton] was a small hamlet and the only settlement in the vicinity; being located at the historic crossing point of the River Stour. In the later 1760’s the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal was constructed around the west of the hamlet in order to link the Rivers Trent (far to the north) and the Severn (nearby to the south).’

Further details within the appraisal include notation of the material pallet, predominantly red brick, some areas of cream painted brick / render with brown clay roof tiles or welsh slate. There is also reference made to the trees, as marked on the map below there is a small collection of trees to the North West of the site adjacent to the TA building on the corner of Mitton Street / Lion Hill. These trees are a prominent feature and can be viewed on approaching the application site via Mitton Street, a welcome backdrop to the redbrick building.

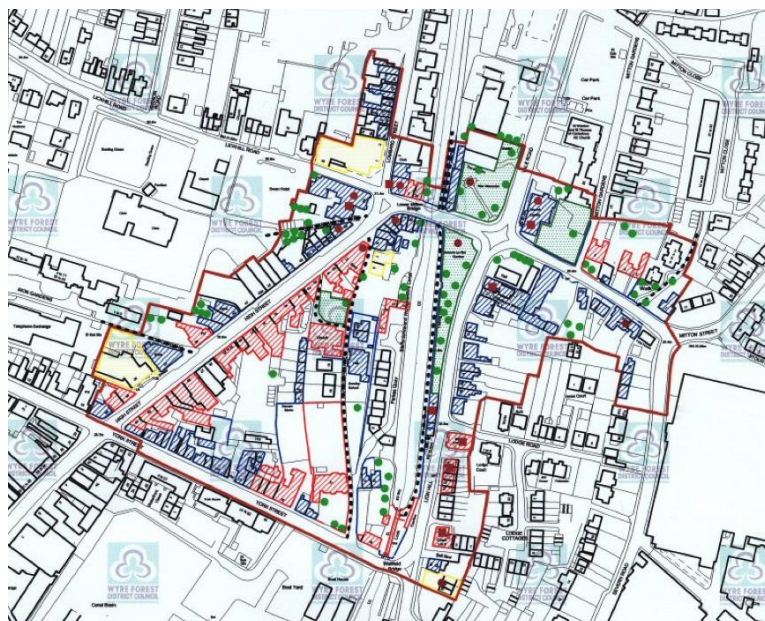


Image – Wyre Forest DC Conservation Area No.2
Stourport-on-Severn Revised January 2015

Page 10 of the document gives regard to the pedestrian movement though out the conservation area. It states *'The east of the Area, including Lion Hill and Mitton Street has, by contrast to the western part, a lower pedestrian flow. In Mitton Street, the relative narrowness of the pavements and the volume of traffic can make this a particularly dangerous place for pedestrians.'*

Specific detail with regard to vehicular and pedestrian movement on and to site is provided within this Statement. However, it should be noted that there has been improvement on this claim by way of pedestrian crossings both on the junction between Mitton Street and Lion Hill and Mitton Street / Severn Road. The Appraisal of 2015 predates the highways improvements. The use of modern street lighting is also noted within Mitton Street and Lion Hill are regular intervals giving an even spread of light.



Images taken from Conservation Appraisal. Top of Mitton Street / Vale Road and Severn Road
Prior to the installation of pedestrian crossings.

Architectural features of interest have been included in the appraisal, including the Sandstone walls in Mitton Street. This can be seen opposite the entrance for the application site.

Whilst Mitton / Mitton Street have been discussed throughout the document there is little reference to the application site and no mention of the former use and/or remaining architectural features.

The remainder of this statement will seek to provide a written description and where possible photographic evidence of the building in which change of use is sought.

4.2 Historic England

The application site is not listed by Historic England. However, given its location within the Conservation Area a search has been carried out on the Historic England website in order to highlight nationally listed assets within the immediate vicinity. To illustrate such assets an image taken from the website is included below. Listings are denoted by way of a blue marker and the site is highlighted by an orange star.



4.3 Worcestershire and Worcester City HER

Worcestershire and Worcester City HER

If you have any queries regarding this record please contact us at HERRecord@Worcestershire.gov.uk for County records (WSM) and archaeology@worcester.gov.uk for City records (WCM)

Name: Old Fire Station Building, Mitton Street, Stourport
HER Reference: WSM27503
Type of record: Building
Grid Reference: SO 812 713
Map Sheet: SO87SW
Parish: Stourport-on-Severn, Wyre Forest, Worcestershire

Monument Types
FIRE STATION (20TH CENTURY AD - 1930 AD to 1950 AD)

Full description
Old Fire Station. Used during WW2 by both the Auxilliary Fire Service and the National Fire Service. New Fire Station built post-war. East elevation now has modern façade.[1]
Dates are conjectural.[2]

Building recorded as part of the 20th century building project NHPP7644. There may have been an earlier building on the same site. The photograph gives no hint of a connection with a fire station but it clearly had a filled in entrance.[1][3]

Sources and further reading
<1*> Record card: Wilks, M. 1998. Defence of Britain: Stourport Fire Station. Defence of Worcestershire Project.
<2*> Personal Comment: Taylor Neville. 2005. Comments on Setting Up or Updating Record in HER. Historic Environment and Archaeology Service.
<3*> Guide: Hathaway, E and J, Lake. 2020. NHPP7644 Adding a New Layer: Guide to 20th-century Non-Domestic Buildings and Public Places in Worcestershire. Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service.

Search results generated by the HBSMR Gateway from [exeGesIS SDM Ltd.](#)

The entry above within the Heritage Gateway includes the details of the former use and a brief summary of the later additions to the building. Some of the above detail can be evidenced through photographs.

5 Character Appraisal

The building is predominantly constructed of red brick with a pitched tiled roof; as shown on the photographs, some of the building includes off-white rendered panels and timber infill panels to the front of the building. There are also a number of different brick types visible externally which help to age and identify the evolution of the site. On approach via Mitten Street (east to west) the gable end is a prominent feature adjacent to the highway. There are two PVC casement windows within the gable with a stone header detail and brick corbelling at the eaves and within the apex following the roof line. Signage can be seen within the windows and below located within the rendered cream rendered panel.



The façade adjacent to the highway can be seen on the above image taken from Google. The details include brick corbel at eaves level, a brick chimney, two small windows with brick arch over and a brick infill panel and with stone lintel above. The images below illustrate the former use and entrance for the Fire Engine Station, the date of the photograph's are unknown.



The photograph above illustrates the part glazed timber doors with signage above. Whilst the lettering no longer remains on the façade the stone lintel remains in situ. The image illustrates the

original sash windows with mid bars and brick cill. The cobbled pavement no longer remains, as referenced in the Conservation Appraisal the streets / highways have been replaced with Tarmac.

The current entrance is a later addition to the building, and includes two UPVC top hung casement windows serving the spacious reception area and a glazed pedestrian door with side lights. The reception is raised from the external ground level and can be accessed via a number of steps or a ramp as shown in the photographs below. There are small panels of cream render on the building and a red brick has been used to create columns in-between the window frames. Unfortunately there is little cohesion between the brickwork on the building. As seen in the photograph below the modifications and later additions to the building have softened the architectural merit and historic value. Feature panels have been installed to the front of the building as shown painted blue. The first floor section above has been rendered cream and has two very small casement windows.





The original façade included a cat-slide roof and large openings with part-glazed doors. This roof has since been removed and replaced with the mono-pitch roof over the entrance and panelled doors / window arrangement.

When approaching the building via the entrance drive to the south of the site is the storage area accessed via two roller shutter doors. A later addition, the building has been constructed in block work and painted cream to match the existing render. There is a parapet detail and flat roof which intersects the traditional pitched tiled roof beyond as shown on the photograph. There is also a self-contained unit to the left (as show on the image) of the building with white UPVC doors and windows.





To the rear of the property the original brick arch detailing can be seen intersected by a modern link building. The gable end also includes the brick corbel detailing as seen at the front of the building. The link building is formed from brown UPVC frame and cladding with a central door and side lights.



The above image illustrates the modern addition to the rear that is not highlighted as notable interest within the conservation appraisal. The building is brick built with a shallow pitched roof over and brown UPVC casement windows.

6 Design & Access

6.1 Introduction

As stated within policy SP.17 'small-scale businesses... will be encouraged in suitable locations', the development proposal seeks consent for the relocation of an existing business within Stourport-on-Severn. Bay Tree Veterinary Centre is a well-established independent veterinary practice, opened around 25 years ago. The aim of the business is to provide excellent value and a personal service to the local community. Over the last 4 years, Bay Tree Vets has grown in popularity. This is due to appreciation of our service, an increase in pet ownership, and also because clients want to bring their pets to a locally-owned business. The re-location to the proposal site allows for the business to increase in capacity whilst maintain a town centre location within walking distance of the current premises. The business currently resides at Mitton Garden, Stourport-on-Severn.

A statement from the business owners is as follows;

The aim of moving the business to a larger site is to increase capacity and clinical facilities. With many local housing developments in the area, there will be a subsequent increase in pets requiring veterinary care. The improved facilities will allow for more advanced medical and surgical procedures to be carried out, which will avoid referral to out-of-town hospitals, and will reduce the cost of veterinary care for our clients. The increase in capacity will also lead to more employment opportunities.

6.2 Design & Appearance

The proposed development seeks consent for the Change of Use to a Veterinary Practice. As shown on the proposed floor plans internal alterations will be made in order to accommodate the requirements of the practice. The insertion of stud walls will sub-divide existing open plan offices / storage spaces and create defined uses within the flow and processes required. The conceptual design process has relied upon collaboration with the client / applicant in order to fully establish and understand functionality and practicality with regards to the profession. Through several site meetings, discussions and review of the current facilities plans have been developed to create synergy both with the existing building, wider setting and use.

With regard to policy SP.20 and DM 24 the development proposal includes minor external works to enhance the existing building. Following a character appraisal, desk top and field study it is proposed that the existing windows to the side and front of the building are replaced with a dark (black / grey) UPVC frame. At present there are a number of different window sizes / styles and a mix of poorly repaired timber windows and white UPVC. As part of the enhancements it is proposed that the timber sash windows (in bad repair) adjacent to the highway are replaced with a PVC sash window with grain in a black or dark grey. This will not only enhance the colours within the brick work but preserve the appearance given the locality. For continuity, the mixed colours of plastics on the building will be replaced with black PVC; this includes rainwater goods and fascias.

As described in this statement the building features a number of different brick styles in varying shades of colour and size. In addition, small areas of render (assumed repair works) have been added to the frontage and are seen painted in an off-white cream (with yellow undertones). Given the shade of which the render has been painted it is considered a prominent feature on the building, drawing ones eye away from other architectural elements of the building. In addition, the proximity to the highway produces noticeable pollution by way of dust etc. which is highly visible on the light shade of paintwork. In order to improve the overall appearance of the building it is proposed that the elements of render are painted in more muted tones. As shown on the Proposed Elevations, a muddy green has been selected for the lower part of the building. Is it considered that the muddy earthy colour will help restore the colour in the original brickwork, drawing the eye to the historic elements of the building, creating harmony and synergy between the original fabric and modern materials. In order to create uniformity upon the frontage, additional rendered panels are proposed, omitting some of the orange brickwork and square white upvc windows with blue timber infill panels below. The additional render to the frontage seeks to tie the building together and create a cohesive approach to the building. The omission of the double doors adjacent to the existing entrance doors will create a platform for signage.

At the first floor level on the front elevation the original brickwork has been rendered. As per the lower level this has been painted off-white to match. The bright colour draws your eye to this banding of render detracting from the original tones of the red brickwork and clay plain roof tiles. It is therefore proposed that this section will be painted in a deep rich grey / brown, the depth of the shade shown on the drawing draws out the brown hues of the traditional clay roof. It is considered that the paint has a synergy with the original materials and creates a foreground and background

within the built form. To compliment this colour pallet the remaining render on the modern extension should be painted in a stone.

6.3 Signage

The existing signage can be seen on the frontage at low level, a large white sign with 'BSG' the company initials providing identity to the building. There is also additional signage and advertisements within the window's as per the images attached to this statement. The signage proposed will be located within a similar location to the existing 'BSG' sign, as per the proposed elevations submitted as part of this application. The dark green logo will be sited upon the 'muddy green' paintwork. In accordance with policy DM.27 the imagery will be proportionate and scaled appropriately for the location. Additional signage will be located upon the building by way of letter hanging to identify the threshold and point of access for the user. The letter hanging will be simple but effective by design and will be illuminated during the winter months by way of down lighters within the fascia board. The lighting will only be in use during practice open hours. No additional signage will feature upon the building unless prior consent is sought from the Local Authority.

6.4 Access

It is considered that the application site falls within the parameters of Stourport-on-Severn town centre. The central location will benefit from the existing highway network, pavements, towpaths alongside the canal linking the core of the town to wider communities and public car parks.

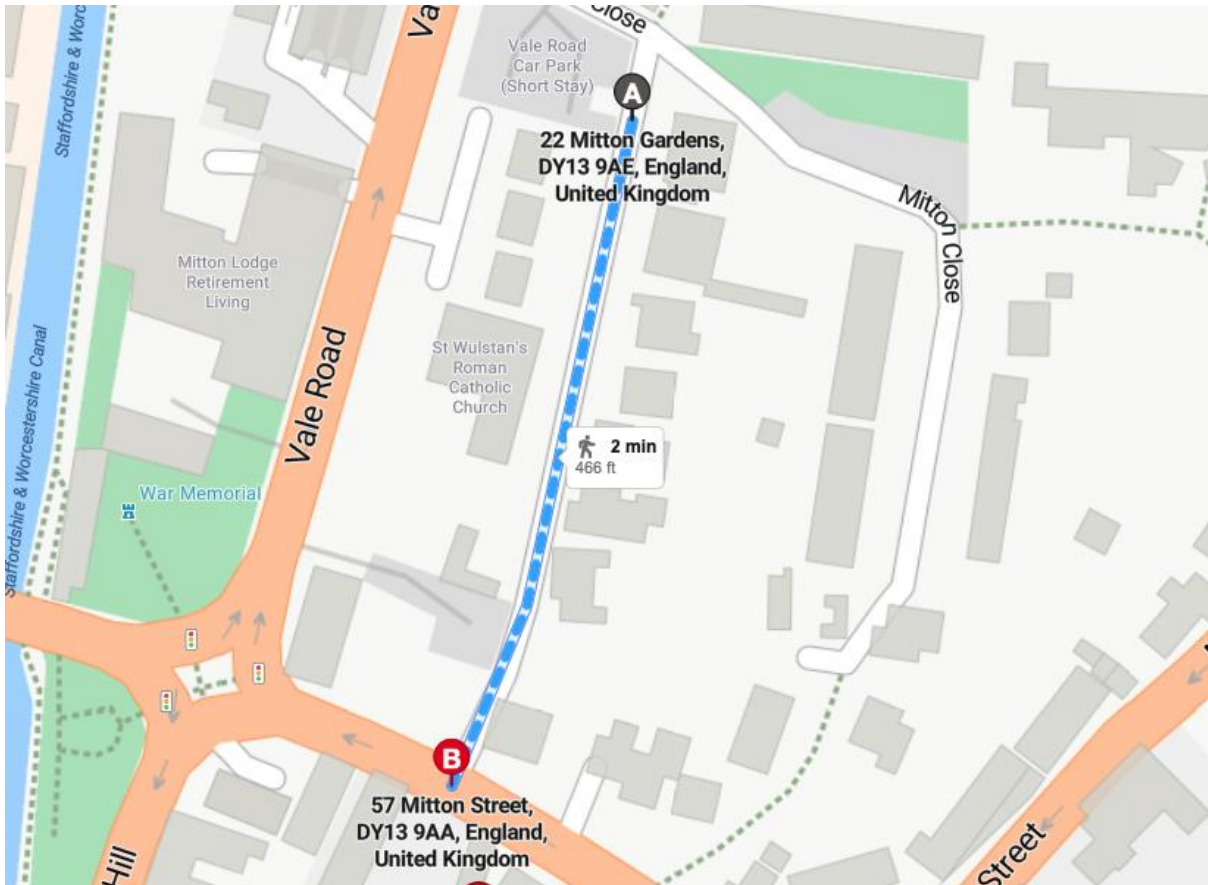
There will be no modifications to the access into the building. As shown on plan, there is an existing ramp and steps up into the main point of access to reception. There will be no modification to the pedestrian route; however the handrail will be modified. There are several points of access into the building, to the rear there is access via three pedestrian doors, these will remain in situ for staff use only. Additional points off access include two roller shutter doors, a pedestrian door into the storage area and a door into the self-contained office. The only new entry / access point will be inserted to the front of the building adjacent to the roller shutter doors for infrequent / private use as and when required.

6.5 Highways

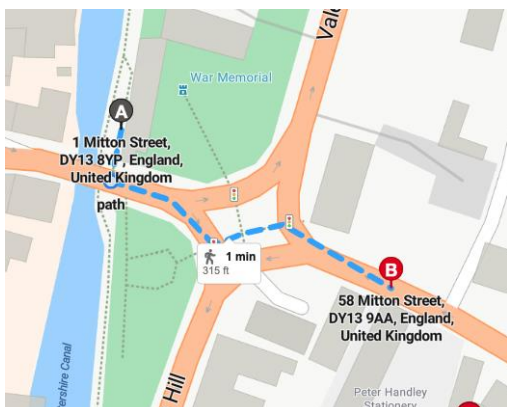
The proposal site / location successfully demonstrates the requirements set out within 'Managing Travel Demand' of Policy SP.27. As described, the town centre location and distance from the existing premises in which the business has been in long-term operation will minimise the demand for travel, providing essential services for pet-owners in Stourport-on-Severn. The site is located upon the walking and cycling networks and is within close proximity to the canal towpaths. Referenced within the conservation section of this statement, the introduction of pedestrian crossing has significantly enhanced the safety and experience for the pedestrian. Please see below an image highlighting the traffic light installation to both junction to the east and west of the application site.



The proposed site is a short walk from that of the existing premises. Whilst providing off-street parking for their customers the existing premises also benefits from the public pay and display car park (Vale Road). At present, to ensure customer parking is available, permits are provided for a number of staff for the use of Vale Road Car Part. It is understood that the permits will be continued for staff parking as part of the relocation. In order to evidence the viability of this proposal below is a map of the existing site / Vale Road Car Park in relation to the application site. The mapping software suggests a distance of 466ft.

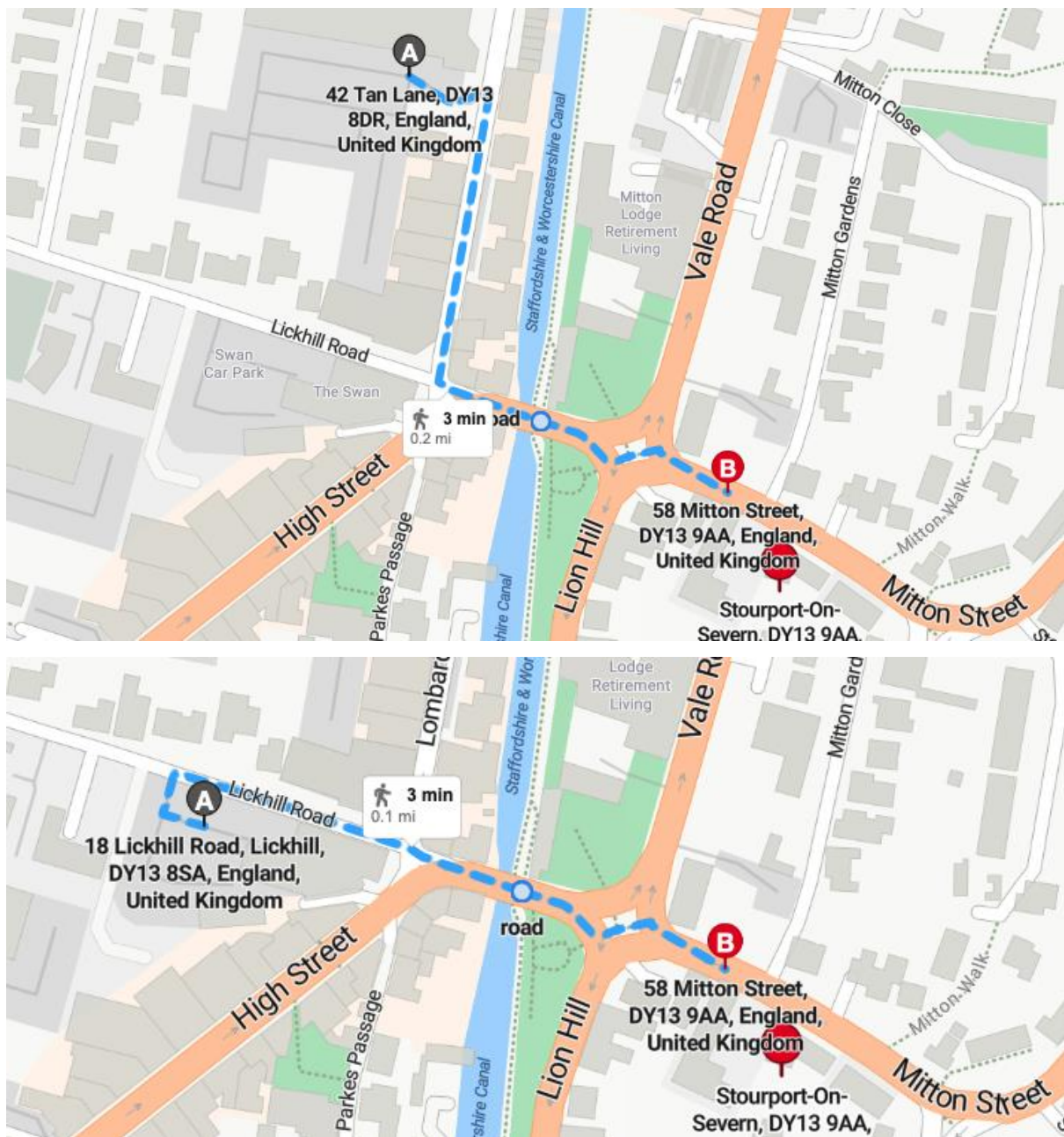


The application site is 315ft from the Canal Towpath, which boasts wonderful scenery and has direction connection to towpaths alongside the River Severn and access to the North of the town.



Map to illustrate access to the Towpath.

Whilst walking is promoted, it's not always viable for a number of reasons, including the age and health of the animal visiting the practice. As shown on plan, there are a number of car parking spaces available on site. There will be no modifications to the existing parking arrangements that are currently in use by the employees and customers of Rotary Printers. It is not considered that the car park will be at full capacity at any one time. However, due to the central location there are a number of further Pay and Display car parks in addition to the Vale Road Short Stay which provide ample parking for businesses within the Town Centre. Please see mapping below.



6.6 Waste

Aligned with policy SP.35 the waste disposal will be stored within the existing site parameters on the car park, please refer to the floor plan to see the designation. General waste and recycling will be collected weekly contracted to Wyre Forest DC. Clinical waste will be collected weekly by Greener Option.

6.7 Sustainability

The application site hosts an EV charging point; this will be retained and maintained. At present there are not further provisions for sustainable energy.

6.8 Other Considerations

Opening Hours

Mon-Friday 8.00- 19.00

Saturday 8.30-12.30

Current number of staff

Full time: 5

Part time: 10

Total: 15

Proposed number of staff as part of relocation / expansion

Full time: 7

Part time: 11

Total: 18

7 Conclusion

Evidenced through existing and proposed plans and aligned with the NPPF and the Local Plan it is sought that the proposed development is with justification sufficient to support the success of this application.