

**130 FORE ST, EXETER. EX4 3JQ
DESIGN, ACCESS, PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT**

**PROPOSED VARIATIONS TO EXTANT APPROVAL 12/1426/03 – Condition 2
USE OF 3 BAYS AT LGF AS RETAIL/OFFICE USE, IN LIEU OF 2 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND
REFUSE AREA. RELOCATIO OF REFUSE STORE TO ADJ MAIN ENTREANCE. PROVISION
OF ADDITIOPNAL REFUSE AREA IN UNDER PAVEMENT AREA.
PROVISION OF REPLACEMENT 2 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AT ADDITIONAL SF LEVEL,
MAINTAINING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED 13 FLATS.
MODIFICATION OF TF FLAT DESIGN.**

LOCATION/BUILDINGS/USE

The site is located in Fore St on the western fringe of the main retail area of the city which has in recent years been subject to specific planning policy improvements. The site has an area of 0.03 Ha.

Fore St comprises of principally 3-4 storey traditional buildings with some localised C20th infilling stepping with the sloping topography. Whilst individually unexceptional, they have a collective cohesion. Whilst this description also applies generally to the south side of West St, the north side, in which the application site is located, is of mixed character/quality/scale with an adjacent single storey 1950's industrial building, Victorian 2 storey-dormered domestic buildings, a traditional church and a "relocated" Tudor house.

To the north is located recent 4 storey residential restoration of Fore St building with a 2 storey rear wing, beyond which are generally 2 storey buildings in Stepcote Hill.

Spatially, whilst Fore St is reasonably broad, West St is narrow and tightly grained until it reaches Western Way (the city inner bypass) where containment is lost

The site itself comprises of 2 elements:

A Neo Victorian 4 storey corner building to Fore St with a mansard roof.

A large 2 storey + basement industrial building of flat render with large metal framed windows to West St with a loosely Art Deco block at the eastern end. This building has a large flat roof on 2 levels, is not overly attractive and makes no contribution to the architectural quality of the area.

At the time of the original application, the building was visible over south West St and Western Way buildings from the Exe Bridge Roundabout/lead roads, but is largely lost against a backdrop of higher buildings. Since the redevelopment of the Radmore and Tucker building, views from Western Way-Exe Bridges has been obscured.

The building is believed to have originated as a post office, later becoming a MAFF HQ. More latterly it became a photographic shop, a Foam and Tool shop and currently a fabric shop. The LGF is now a coffee roasting shop and cafe.



View from Fore St/Bartholomew St



View down West St



View up West St



View from West St



View from roof to rear of Fore St premises



View of NW flank from adj premises



View of building abutment with lower West St Prem.

PLANNING HISTORY

Planning approval for redevelopment of the rear premises as 13 flats 12/1426/03. Pre commencement conditions were discharged under 14/1741/32 dated 22.01.15.

This approval was confirmed as commenced and therefore Extant, by the original case officer P Jeffery by email on 18.02.2015. Approval has not been able to be continued until now due to long leases granted on the retail premises.

Pre-application discussions in respect of the current proposal have been undertaken in March 2023 with ECC Office Chris Cummings. ECC supported the proposal.

BRIEF/PROPOSALS

Brief – To retain the LGF in a commercial use, similar to existing (Retail/Office) and provide compensatory residential accommodation at SF level, maintaining the overall residential development at 13 units.

Proposals – The LGF duplex- gallery U2/3 remain as currently approved but in Commercial use.

The previous bin/storage area becomes the 3rd commercial unit C1.

A bin store for commercial units is formed in the void of the under pavement store adjacent C1.

The residential bin store reverts to the originally proposed location adjacent the West St main entrance.

A new floor is inserted at SF level to accommodate 2 1 bed flats relocating those omitted at LGF.

The upper floor flat is moved up 1 storey and has minor modifications in layout, slightly reducing roof garden.

All other aspects of the scheme are maintained as originally approved.

Elevational Treatment

Fore St - The existing neo Victorian elevation will be retained and repaired/redecorated.

West St – The additional floor is included within the same approach/fenestration as the originally approved elevation.

Materials - Generally will be coloured render to match exg. Roof decks will be hard paved/soft landscaped.

New upper roof will be constructed using low pitch standing seam aluminium, all as the original approval.

Amenity/Communal Garden - All units will have access to individual amenity areas as the original approval.

Basement unit 1 will have access to a sunken mini courtyard. Units 5, 8 & 11 above will have balconettes to this area.

All GF and above units will have balconettes.

Unit 14 will also have a private roof garden.

All units will have access to a communal roof garden at upper FF level with good aspect and sunlight penetration.

Sight Lines - Proposals have been carefully modelled to minimise impact on close and distant sight lines.

From Fore St/West St - new rooftop buildings are recessed from the existing parapet and due to the narrowness of the street, will not be visible from most viewpoints.

From Exe Bridges/Western Way - new buildings are maintained within profiles of existing Fore St building/general backdrop and breaking the skyline will be avoided. Views from Western Way/Exe Bridges will be obscured by the redeveloped Radmore and Tucker building – see overleaf.



The area to the NE of the site (rear of Fore St properties) is principally flat roofed area (see photo above) and have already been determined with the original application to have no amenity value. Therefore the additional proposals will have no adverse impact on the amenity of these properties.

ACCESS

The proposal includes an accessible platform lift from the level West St entrance.

PARKING AND CYCLE STORAGE

The site is located within the city centre core, close to facilities, shops and public transport routes (bus and train). AS with the original approval, in accordance with Local Plan and Central Government sustainability policy, Private car use will be discouraged and no on site parking will be provided.

Cycling will be encouraged and a covered/secure cycle store is provided in the NW corner of the basement as the original approval.

REFUSE STORAGE

A covered/mechanically ventilated recycling refuse storage area is provided adjacent the site entrance as the original approval. An additional store for commercial premises will be located in the under pavement void adjacent C1.

PLANNING POLICY BASIS

The site lies within the established settlement boundaries, a secondary retail area, a conservation area and is not listed/does not immediately abut listed buildings

ECC adopted (21 Feb 2012) it's "Core Strategy". This outlines strategic planning policy. Detailed policy provisions will be contained within the upcoming "Site Allocation and Development Management DPD". This is currently out to consultation and will not be adopted until 2013. On this basis the saved policies of the previous "Exeter Local Plan" apply. The application complies with ELP policy on the basis of:

S1 : RETAIL DEVELOPMENT – The proposal will facilitate the retention and improvement of commercial premises and an active street frontage to West Street.

S3 : RETAIL FRONTAGES - Existing Fore St frontage is maintained and new frontages to West St created.

C5 : ARCHAEOLOGY – ECC's archaeology officers concerns were addressed at original approval discharge of condition stage.

H1: PROPOSALS FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL BE ASSESSED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING SEARCH SEQUENCE:

(i) INFILL WITHIN THE URBAN AREAS;

As the original approval, the revised proposals fall within the most favoured category of site selection.

H2: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO MEETING HOUSING NEEDS ON PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND BY APPLYING THE SEARCH SEQUENCE SET OUT IN POLICY H1 AND BY PERMITTING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE HIGHEST DENSITY THAT CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO LOCAL AMENITY, THE CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE SAFETY OF LOCAL ROADS, WHILST HAVING REGARD TO THE NEED TO PROVIDE A VARIETY OF HOUSING PROVISION WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE TO A RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT, SHOPPING, EDUCATION, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES. THIS WILL SPECIFICALLY INCLUDE: DEVELOPERS SHOULD CONSIDER:

(a) THE PROVISION OF SEMI-DETACHED AND TERRACED HOUSING AND APARTMENTS;

(b) THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFILL AND CORNER SITES;

As with the original approval, the proposals fall within the H2 priority, providing new housing on an infill site at an optimum density. The proposals do not cause detrimental impact on

- Local Amenity - The site is located on a contained site and has been designed to be principally inward aspected to prevent overlooking of any adjacent sensitive uses. The amenity of adjoining properties/the broader locality is not affected.
- The character/quality of the local environment - The proposal utilise land/buildings otherwise unused in an area of mixed architectural quality. The existing street character is maintained and reinforced. The quality of the local environment is enhanced by the proposal.
- Road safety - The proposals will be pedestrian accessed.
- The site is located in an established mixed use area close to employment, shopping, education, health and social care facilities.

DG1: DEVELOPMENT SHOULD:

(a) BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE URBAN STRUCTURE OF THE CITY, CONNECTING EFFECTIVELY WITH EXISTING ROUTES AND SPACES AND PUTTING PEOPLE BEFORE TRAFFIC;

(b) ENSURE THAT THE PATTERN OF STREET BLOCKS, PLOTS AND THEIR BUILDINGS (THE GRAIN OF DEVELOPMENT) PROMOTES THE URBAN CHARACTER OF EXETER;

As the original approval, the Proposals work within the existing block pattern/reinforce the established urban structure/grain of the area.

(c) FULLY INTEGRATE LANDSCAPE DESIGN INTO THE PROPOSAL AND ENSURE THAT SCHEMES ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE OF THE CITY INCLUDING ITS THREE-DIMENSIONAL SHAPE, NATURAL FEATURES AND ECOLOGY;

AS established at the original approval, the existing site has no landscape/ecological significance. A walkover survey has been undertaken and no evidence of bat/bird habitats noted. The proposals continue the general existing form of 3 dimensional design of the existing site. Bird boxes have been incorporated as part of the discharge or original approval conditions.

(d) BE AT A DENSITY WHICH PROMOTES EXETER'S URBAN CHARACTER AND WHICH SUPPORTS URBAN SERVICES;

As the original approval, the site area/density is comparable with similar developments within the surrounding area and other recent city centre schemes.

(e) CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROVISION OF A COMPATIBLE MIX OF USES WHICH WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE VITAL AND VIABLE PLACES;

The revised proposals further augment the existing retail use to provide a mixed use city centre scheme.

(f) BE OF A HEIGHT WHICH IS APPROPRIATE TO THE SURROUNDING TOWNSCAPE AND ENSURE THAT THE HEIGHT OF CONSTITUENT PART OF BUILDINGS RELATE WELL TO ADJOINING BUILDINGS, SPACES AND TO HUMAN SCALE;

Whilst of significant maximum height, the revised proposals will relate well to surrounding in that:

- They are of a similar scale to surrounding buildings.
- They are set back from the West St elevation making them almost invisible from this viewpoint.
- They have an articulated form, which will further break down massing.

(g) ENSURE THAT THE VOLUME AND SHAPE (THE MASSING) OF BUILDINGS RELATES WELL TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE ADJOINING BUILDINGS AND THE SURROUNDING TOWNSCAPE;

The revised proposals follow a similar form/massing to the original approval/existing adjoining buildings.

(h) ENSURE THAT BUILDINGS ARE DESIGNED TO PROMOTE LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS AND TO CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO THE VISUAL RICHNESS OF THE TOWNSCAPE;

The proposals will not adversely affect the Fore/West St Townscape. As previously noted, the character of the West St Townscape (including the existing buildings on the site) are of mixed architectural styles and limited quality. The proposals will improve the architectural quality of the existing building, reinforcing the character and local distinctiveness of the locality.

(i) USE MATERIALS WHICH RELATE WELL TO THE PALETTE OF MATERIALS IN THE LOCALITY AND WHICH REINFORCE LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS.

The revised proposals adopt the materials palette of the existing building and the original approval (as noted under “Proposals”) to visually integrate with the context.

DG4 : RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD:

(a) BE AT THE MAXIMUM FEASIBLE DENSITY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT SITE CONSTRAINTS AND IMPACT ON THE LOCAL AREA;

The revised proposals achieve the optimum use of the site whilst maintaining amenity, aspect, privacy and day-sun light to proposed units and existing buildings.

(b) PROVIDE:

(i) A MINIMUM DISTANCE OF 22 METRES BETWEEN HABITABLE ROOM WINDOWS BACKING ONTO ONE ANOTHER;

As was the case with the original approval, the revised proposal does not create any back to back conflicts

(ii) A MINIMUM REAR GARDEN AREA FOR APARTMENTS AND MAISONNETES..., OF AT LEAST 10 SQUARE METRES UNLESS THIS WOULD CONFLICT WITH THE NEED TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF LAND OR THERE ARE AMENITY AND TOWNSCAPE ADVANTAGES IN PROVIDING LESS;

Revised proposals provide general amenity space via a 44m² communal garden. In addition, the majority of apartments are provided with individual balconettes etc (See appendix A). Provision of inset balconies was possible but was avoided at the request of ECC Planning and Conservation Officers in the original approval to maintain the existing “taut” facade/large pane fenestration as was required as part of the original approval.

(c) ENSURE THAT THE BOUNDARIES OF PRIVATE REAR GARDENS FACING PUBLIC PLACES ARE DESIGNED TO MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE TOWNSCAPE;

Not relevant to proposals.

(d) WHERE FRONT GARDENS ARE INCLUDED PROVIDE ENCLOSURE TO CREATE DEFENSIBLE SPACE.

Not relevant to proposals.

ECC RESIDENTIAL DESIGN, SPD - The design takes into account the general requirements of the guide where relevant.

As noted under DG4.b.ii balconettes/courtyards are provided to all apartments. A 44m² communal roof garden is provided at upper first floor level with near all day sunlight penetration and spectacular aspect over the river/valley park and the western city.

HERITAGE

C1: DEVELOPMENT WITHIN OR AFFECTING A CONSERVATION AREA (INCLUDING CHANGES OF USE, ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS) MUST PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE DESIRABILITY OF PRESERVING OR ENHANCING THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREAS.

As was accepted at original application stage and noted under “Site” and “Proposals”, the proposals will only be generally visible from the NW and SW sides. The character of the Conservation Area at this point is highly mixed with no strong architectural style/scale.

The revised proposals, as was accepted in respect of the original approval, will unify/improve the site buildings and will dramatically improve the visual character of building/vicinity. They are in scale with surrounding buildings, remove current unattractive roofscapes and create an attractive renovated SW elevation to West St. Additionally, they will provide an enlivened commercial frontage to West St.

As a consequence it is believed that proposals will clearly enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

The original proposal predates ECC's adoption of CIL and therefore establishes the baseline for CIL exempt accommodation. The applicant accepts that any residential floor space above this level will be subject to CIL.

PREVIOUS PLANNING CONDITIONS

Conditions C3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11 issued with approval 12/1426/03 were discharged under DoC application 14/1741/32. It is assumed that any approval arising from this application, will take account of the previous discharge.

CONCLUSION

The proposals, as the original approval:

- Creatively reuse unused city centre space to provide effective housing accommodation grouped around a single stair access.
- Have minimal impact on Fore St.
- Unify the current disparate elements of the application building and therefore enhance West St.
- Provide an improved SW elevation to the existing building
- Are in scale with surrounding buildings and will not present distant skyline views.
- Provide individual and communal amenity space.
- Have no adverse impact on surrounding residential (or any other amenity).

And additionally, provide a new commercial frontage at West St level.

There is no policy or material objection to approval and it is assumed ECC will wish to continue to support this revised variation of Condition application.

APPENDIX A : SCHEDULE OF AREAS

Unit No	Flat Type	Bed Space	Internal Area	ECC/NSS Standard	Amenity Space
Original Approval					
Basement Level					
2	1 Bed Duplex	-2p	51.10m2	50m2	Pavement terrace
3	1 Bed Duplex	-2p	48.30m2	50m2	-
4	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.50m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Lower Basement Level					
5	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.60m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Ground Floor Level					
6	1 Bed Flat	-2p	54.60m2	50m2	2x Balconette
7	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.70m2	50m2	2x Balconette
8	1 Bed Flat	-2p	47.60m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Lower First Floor Level					
9	1 Bed Flat	-2p	54.70m2	50m2	2x Balconette
10	1 Bed Flat	-2p	54.40m2	50m2	2x Balconette
11	1 Bed Flat	-2p	47.40m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Upper First Floor Level					
12	1 Bed Flat	-2p	55.90m2	50m2	2x Balconette
13	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.90m2	50m2	2x Balconette
Communal Roof Garden			44.00m2	-	
Second Floor Level					
14	2 Bed Flat	-3p	61.00m2	61m2	47m2 Private Roof Garden
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL			689.70m2		

Revised Proposal

Basement Level					
C1	Retail/Office	-	60.20m2	-	N/a
C2	Retail/Office	-	51.10m2	-	N/a
C3	Retail/Office	-	48.30m2	-	N/a
4	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.50m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Lower Basement Level					
5	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.60m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Ground Floor Level					
6	1 Bed Flat	-2p	54.60m2	50m2	2x Balconette
7	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.70m2	50m2	2x Balconette
8	1 Bed Flat	-2p	47.60m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Lower First Floor Level					
9	1 Bed Flat	-2p	54.70m2	50m2	2x Balconette
10	1 Bed Flat	-2p	54.40m2	50m2	2x Balconette
11	1 Bed Flat	-2p	47.40m2	50m2	Lightwell balconette
Upper First Floor Level					
12	1 Bed Flat	-2p	55.90m2	50m2	2x Balconette
13	1 Bed Flat	-2p	53.90m2	50m2	2x Balconette
Communal Roof Garden			44.00m2	-	
Second Floor Level					
U2R	1 Bed Flat	-2p	48.90m2	50m2	2x Balconette
U3R	1 Bed Flat	-2p	60.95m2	50m2	2x Balconette
Third Floor Level					
14	2 Bed Flat	-3p	89.20m2	61m2	22.5m2 Private Roof Garden
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL			728.55m2		
TOTAL COMMERCIAL			159.60m2		

APPENDIX B : ADDITIONAL PLANNING VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

- Affordable Housing Statement - The approved proposal provided 13 new additional units, below the 15 unit threshold of the amended ECC Affordable Housing SPD - version 7, which existed at the time of the original approval. Whilst since that date a national threshold of 10 units has been introduced, given the original scheme is extant and that only 13 units are still being provided, ECC have accepted that no Affordable Housing requirement is generated.
- Air Quality Statement - N/A : The site is remote/elevated from a source of high levels of pollution (Western Way)
- Bio-Diversity Statement - As noted in DG1.c, N/A. Bird/bat boxes have been provided as part of the original approval discharge of condition.
- Flood Risk Assessment - N/A : The site is not located in a flood risk zone.
- Heritage Statement - The site is not listed, but is within a conservation area. See main statement above.
- Lighting Assessment - N/A : The site is located in a city centre location. No additional lighting impact will be created.
- Planning Obligations - N/A : No obligations are anticipated.
- Planning Statement - See main statement above.
- Site Waste Management Statement - See main statement above. New refuse storage is provided at GF level as indicated on the proposal drawings.
- Statement of Community Involvement - None
- Transport Assessment - See main statement above. The proposal creates city centre small residential uses with no car/service transport requirement (other than refuse disposal) in addition to existing use.
- Tree/Arbouricultural Assessment - N/A : The site has no exg arboricultural content/value.
- Vent/Extraction Statement - N/A : Proposals involve domestic ventilation only.
- Daylight Study – N/A – adj area in shadow cast is only flat roofed not garden.
- Habitat Mitigation Contribution – A Unilateral Undertaking was entered into at the time of the previous approval submission and will apply unchanged to the revised proposals.

APPENDIX C

LANGHAMS, 130 FORE ST, EXETER

GREEN TRAVEL STATEMENT

The site is has a central position within Exeter commercial centre, approx 200m south west of Exeter High St, placing it within easy walking distance of all main services. The site has a frontage to both Fore St and West St. These feed to the city's main shopping area to the north east, the River Exe valley to the south. The city's main inner by pass, Western Way is approx 50m east of the site. Principle bus routes run along Western Way and Fore St, and these along with train stations at Exeter Central (500m north) and Exeter St Thomas (200m south west) provide good public transport infrastructure. The site is located within an area served by a network of dedicated cycleways and the site is located 150m south west from the arterial Exe Valley cycle path. The Exeter Car Club - Co Cars currently has pick up points within 400 m of the site.

Exeter City Council Local Plan policy requires all practical measures to be taken to ensure car use generally, and in particular that in city centre locations, is minimised. The applicant considers the site to be ideally located to provide a no-car development.

To achieve these objectives the following measures will be adopted:

- 1 No on site parking is provided.
- 2 Existing on street parking and the nearby Smythen St Car Park is in short supply and is time controlled, discouraging general use. This is suitable principally for occasional use/visitors.
- 3 Secure, covered on-site cycling parking spaces is provided.
- 4 Information will be provided to all occupants setting out:
 - The objectives of green travel.
 - Location of adjacent public transport points and timetables for served networks/contact information for service providers.
 - Access to/use of the on site cycle parking facilities
 - Location of city cycle routes and cycle hire centres.
 - Contact details and location of local car club pick up points.
 - New residents will be made aware that new/additional permits for residents on-street parking in the vicinity of the site will not be available.

- 5 Access information will be made available to visitors via a web site to enable/encourage visitors to access the site without need of car use.
- 6 A person will be appointed by the landlord or management company to ensure the Travel Plan is updated at regular intervals.