

In response to your email we write to clarify the position with regards to this property as discussed and explained to your team leader Neil Bearcroft. We were asked to confirm the reasons as to why a sequential test wouldn't be required or appropriate in this instance. We outline these below:

Firstly and most importantly the building is a Grade 2 listed building in a worsening state of repair, the roof has severely leaked and the ceilings internally have been severely damaged and in some cases collapsed. Immediate works are required to the roof to ensure no further structural damage is encountered. As you can imagine the cost of repairs are significant. Currently 3 of the flats do not have tenants in place, meaning a half of the income is lost, the flats have been re-advertised but there has been no rental interest.

The building has previously had a commercial use and therefore there is precedence for the use as proposed. Several of the surrounding properties have a commercial use also.

Much of the building fabric requires some form of repair and upgrade and the current dwindling rental income will not cover this cost moving forward. Without the commercial use it is feared the property will fall into further disrepair and it is seen that the suggested use will help to boost the income for the repairs to allow maintenance and upkeep of the heritage asset moving forward.

Whilst speaking with Neil Bearcroft he explained that the property was 550metres from the nearest area boundary which is indeed very close so only just out of a designated centre. It is true that the property has very good accessibility for Cyclists and people walking from town, walking from the train station for example would be within 10 mins meaning for the proposed use this is a sustainable location.

The proposed alteration of the existing building will also mean that the large incongruous extension to the rear would be removed and many of the buildings heritage features to this elevation repaired and reused within the proposals. This programme of repair would not happen should we not gain planning permission.

We believe the above justification supports the proposals and hope that you can support the application with a recommendation for approval.

Please let me know if you have any concerns prior to determination to allow us to address any issues promptly.