Client:	Mr K Price	Date:	10/05/2023
Job:	Proposed Redevelopment of Town café, 33 Alder Street, Huddersfield HD1 6LD	Job No:	1772

Planning Statement – Sequential Assessment

Ref: 2023/91071

Introduction

Wake Morley Architects Ltd have prepared this sequential assessment on behalf of Mr Kevin Price. It is submitted in support of a Full Plans planning application for the demolition of existing Café and new build Café with Office at first floor off Alder Street, Huddersfield HD1 6LD.

The existing café is modest and has been established for 30 years. It services the needs of local industry in the area and the majority of it's customers walk to use it for breakfast, sandwiches and lunches. It is currently closed as the building is in poor condition and requires refurbishment. However our client feels that the costs associated with these works would be better spent on a new building and would like to use the opportunity to add a first floor office. The proposed café will be the same size as the existing café.

Proposed Development

The description of development is as follows:

'Redevelopment of Café into two storey building with Café at ground floor and offices at first floor'

The site's primary use will remain as the current established use ie a small café, with a small first floor office above. The proposed building will be set back from the roadside to afford disabled access from the existing pavement.

Sequential Test

Background

Paragraph 87 of the NPPF states:

"*Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.*"

NPPF paragraph 88 notes that applicants and local planning authorities should be flexible when considering sequential matters.

Policy LP13 of the Kirklees Local Plan (2019) explains that the scope and content of any Sequential Test shall be agreed upon with the Council and reflect the proposal's scale, role and function. The Council did not provide a scope when they requested one be provided.

Policy LP13 expresses the Council's policy on town centre uses. Policy LP13 explains that:

" *Proposals which come forward for main town centre uses, which are located outside of the defined centre boundaries, will require the submission of a Sequential Test. For retail proposals the boundary shall form the Primary Shopping Area; for all other main town centre uses this shall be the extent of the centre boundary. Main town centre uses shall be first located in the defined centres, then edge of centre locations, and only if there are no suitable sites shall out of centre locations be considered. For offices and small scale proposals in non urban areas*, the sequential approach will not be required for proposals of 150 square metres and under.*"

*non urban areas are defined as being within the Green Belt therefore the exemption does not apply in this instance.

Where an application is seeking to pursue a specified form of development, on this occasion, a replacement café with offices at first floor, then the sites to be sequentially assessed should be reviewed in relation to the characteristics and requirements of the use that is being sought.

The total proposed floor area is 70 sq.m (35 sq.m café + 35 sq.m offices) and is therefore below the threshold where an additional impact test is required.

Methodology

The approach to selecting available, suitable, and viable sites requires considering the operational and market requirements of our client.

The requirements that will determine whether a site is suitable and viable for the operations of the proposal are as follows:

- A site with a relatively flat topography.
- A site with good visibility.
- Potential for offices essential

To be flexible specific site sizes are not specified.

Assessment Areas

The nearest designated centres are the Local Centres of Fartown and Moorhouse, followed by Birkby and the main town centre (defined on the policies map).

A review of various lettings agents' websites identified the following available commercial properties. They did not satisfy the applicants' criteria as expressed below, falling short on all requirements of the applicant, even accounting for flexibility in the operation.

Fartown Local Centre

Location: Hot food takeaway off A641 Bradford Road

Tenure: Leasehold

Commentary: Lacks potential for office element.

Moorhouse Local Centre

None available

Town Centre

Location: King Street Restaurant

Tenure: Leasehold

Commentary: Lacks potential for office element and circa 1.5km from the proposed location.

Location: Ramsden Street Commercial property

Tenure: Leasehold (Skipton Building Society

Commentary: Significantly larger than required and circa 1.5km from the proposed location.

Location: New Street Huddersfield Mixed Use

Tenure: Freehold

Commentary: Significantly larger than required and economically unobtainable and circa 1.5km form the proposed location.

Conclusion

The application site is a unique prospect because it is in the applicant's ownership and is currently operating as a café servicing the needs of local workers. It has been operating for 30 years , thus, it is providing a sustainable service without compromising the designated District Centres of Fartown and Moorhouse or Town Centre services. We expect that the Council accepts that this redevelopment including the proposed first floor offices does not conflict with the established employment uses in the area.

We have searched for sequentially preferable sites across an area within a reasonable time and distance of the proposed site. Our sequential search and assessment methodology is proportionate and sensible, noting relevant policy guidance.

We found no sites within or on the edge of the established retail centres that are suitable, available, and viable for the application scheme. Therefore, the application is considered to have passed the sequential test outlined in paragraph 86 of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy LP13.