

24322

Report in support of Change of Use application at

The Shepherd's Boy Public House, Huddersfield Road, Dewsbury



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1_Introduction

JG-D has been requested by Mr A Siddique to make a change of use planning application for the conversion of the Shepherd's Boy at 157 Huddersfield Road, Westtown, Dewsbury into a Dental Clinic.

The former Public House is located approximately 1 mile from Dewsbury Town centre on the A644 Huddersfield Road, adjacent to the junction with Thornhill Road in an area which supports a variety of uses including residential, industrial and educational facilities.

The application site shares the road frontage of a triangular parcel of land with an adjacent open car lot, with grassland and a belt of trees to the South dropping towards the Leeds to Manchester Railway line. The larger site is defined by the main arterial road, Fall Lane which links to Thornhill and the vestige of Fearnley Street.

The host building is identifiable in its current form on the 1890 Ordnance Survey and was originally surrounded by back-to-back terraces. It is first notated as a Public House on the 1956 map and has been tied to a number of breweries, most notably Samuel Webster & Sons Ltd. The building and beer garden were the subject of a major renovation when the previous owners, Ossett Brewery, bought the premises in 2006 but declining trade forced a sale and the Shepherd's Boy permanently closed on 26th August 2024.

The site has limited planning history although the planning portal lists the following applications relating to the larger parcel:

2012/93428_Use of land for Car Sales

2009/90803_Outline permission for Housing

2001/92840_Erection of illuminated Pub Signage

The site is Unallocated on the Kirklees Local Plan Policies Map and falls within Flood Zone 1.



2.0_Planning Context

The submitted development proposals have been formed around the following objectives;

The aspiration to bring a currently empty local landmark back into meaningful use

The need to create an accessible community facility to serve the local population;

And the requirement to provide a high degree of amenity for both professionals and patients

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The case for the change of use of The Shepherd's Boy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) whilst Local Planning policy is provided by the Kirklees Local Plan (adopted in 2019).

At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This is reinforced by Policy LP1 which seeks to *secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.*

Section 8 of the NPPF "Promoting healthy and safe communities" is relevant to the consideration of this application on two levels. The former public house provided a community facility which was lost when it closed in 2024. The previous owner identified an extensive list of renovations necessary to maintain the building's serviceability which simply could not be justified on the revenue return. Changing demographics and drinking culture in the area rendered the Public House use unattractive to the market and forced an open sale. The proposed Dental Practice is also a Community Use however, and by relocating from its current cramped town centre location has the opportunity to increase patient numbers and offer additional services. Policy LP48 states that community facilities in accessible locations will be supported where they meet the needs of all the community.

Section 12 promotes well designed places. *Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.* Policy LP24 encourages proposals to respect the appearance and character of the area. The Shepherd's Boy is a familiar landmark and the proposed change of use will see all its existing



features retained, enhanced by the repairs as necessary, ensuring a positive impact on the visual amenity of an important Dewsbury Gateway.

The proposed dental practice use is not considered to be noise generating and the building has no immediate neighbours. The closest residential properties are 25m away, elevated above Huddersfield Road and any potential car park noise must be judged against the previous Public House use.

The impact on Highway safety is also considered to be comparable to the previous use. The site occupies a sustainable location with a regular bus service on Huddersfield Road. The existing car park provides 13no spaces, one of which will be marked as a dedicated disabled space. EV charging provision will also be made and motorcycle and bicycle parking provided to meet the requirements of LP21 and LP22.

The existing refuse/ recycling arrangement will be retained with storage areas within the car park.

3_Planning Assessment

The considered refurbishment of a prominent local building to create a new community facility in a sustainable location is opined to fully meet the aspirations of both the NPPF and Local Plan.

4_Design

The former Public House consisted of three drinking areas at Ground Floor level arrayed around a central bar with steep staircases linking to lower ground floor cellars and first floor living accommodation. In similarity to the current arrangement the proposed scheme seeks to create three dental surgeries at ground floor with a central reception and waiting area. The original entrance is retained with a fire-rated glass draught lobby leading into an open waiting area with seating extending into the existing bay window. A central spine corridor links to the individual surgeries, a disabled wc and support spaces within the former wc block to the rear. Each space benefits from an original window opening and generous floor to ceiling heights to allow the installation of specialist equipment – subject to design development.

A new ambulant accessible return stair replaces the existing steep flights, leading to first floor treatment rooms where specialist procedures will be undertaken whilst staff facilities are located at lower ground floor level within the former cellar spaces.

New windows will be provided throughout to match existing and the infilled openings at lower ground floor will be re-opened to serve the new staff spaces. The former beer garden is also retained to provide external amenity space for staff members whilst the undercroft space below the former pub wc block will offer a secure plant space – and staff cycle parking.



5_Climate Change Mitigation

The issue of Climate change will be addressed through the refurbishment of the existing building. Local Contractors and materials will be used where possible and materials locally sourced.

The building envelope will meet the current Building Regulations in terms of Part L whilst fixtures and fittings will be energy saving. Lights will be operated by motion sensors and timers whilst water saving devices will be fitted to all sanitaryware.

Recycling provision will also be provided within the defined refuse store within the existing car park area.

6_Access

The proposed change of use retains the existing levels with the existing site entrance retained. New line markings within the car park will guide patients to the existing entrance on Huddersfield Road with a double door and level threshold. Permission will be sought for the erection of a barrier to Huddersfield Road outside the main entrance.

Internally all doors will achieve a minimum clear width of 800mm in the open position.

Any protection and/or fixed objects on circulation routes will not reduce the effective width of the clear space below 750mm. The new stair will have a maximum rise of 170mm, minimum going of 250mm in line with AD_K.

The position of all accessible switches and socket points are to comply with the requirements of Approved Document Part M2, Section 8, diagram 29 - set between the zone of 400mm minimum above finish floor level and a maximum of 1200mm above finish floor level.

7_Security

The Shepherd's Boy is largely enclosed by existing fencing and protected by the topography to the South but is open to Huddersfield Road. The submitted scheme proposes maintain the existing car park arrangement.

The building will benefit from a proposed PTZ Camera system to cover the external areas with both building and pole mounted LED fittings providing on average 24lux to the car parking and access areas.

The building will have a full NSI approved alarm system with contacts to each of the external doors which will be certified to LPS1175 to offer 10 minutes resistance to attempted forced entry. Lower and Ground floor windows will feature toughened laminated glass.



8_Ecology and Environment

The existing building and car park offer limited habitat although there are established trees outwith the site boundary. It is proposed to provide nesting opportunities in the form of Sparrow Terraces at high level on the existing building subject to specialist detail.

9_ Desk Top Study

A walkover inspection of the site has revealed no evidence of subsidence and no intrusive works are proposed.

10_ Drainage Strategy

The EA's web-based flood zone map shows the site is located in Flood Zone 1 with low probability of flooding.

No new impervious area will be formed as part of this application and existing drainage connections will be retained.

Conclusion

The submitted scheme seeks to change the use of the former Shepherd's Boy Public House into a modern Dental Clinic. The use is wholly contained within the existing envelope which will be refurbished as necessary and it is strongly opined that the scheme as proposed complies with planning policy and can be supported.