

Design and Access Statement

**Proposed New Convenience Store,
High Street, Rocester,
Uttoxeter, St14 5JU**

For

SEP Properties Limited

DOCUMENT REFERENCE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Gould Singleton Architects have been appointed by SEP Properties Limited to consider a potential new Village Convenience retail development at land off High Street, Rocester.

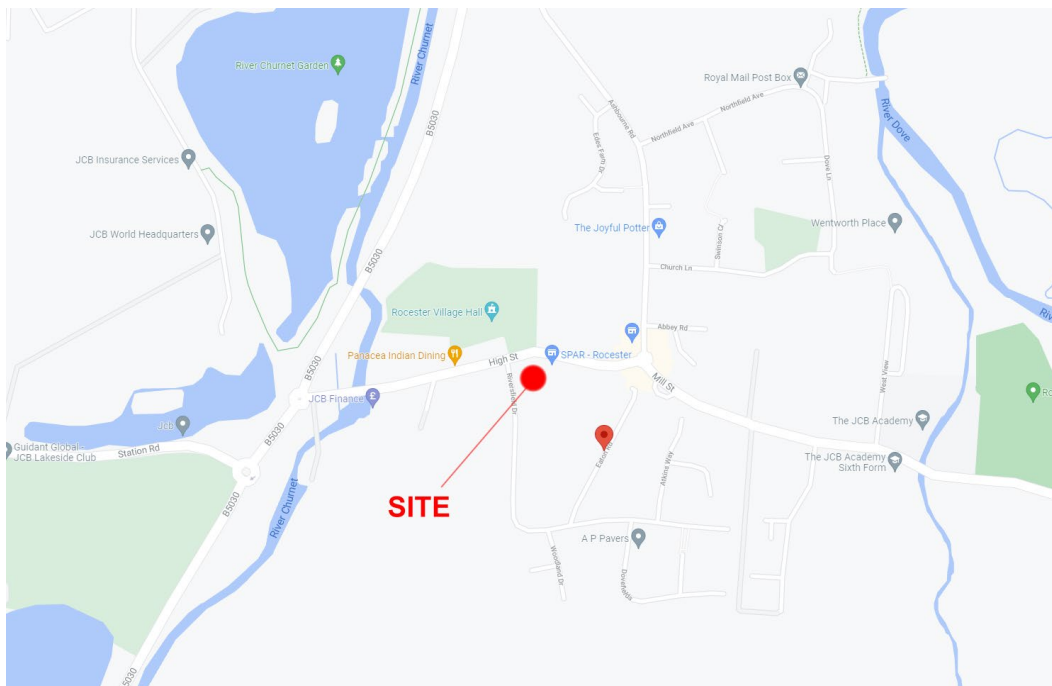
The developer has secured an option on the land subject to formal Planning Consent and this document is to be used to give guidance on how Gould Singleton Architects have approached the scheme, taking the scheme through pre-application Submission to full submission with the Planning Authority.

This document is to be read in conjunction with reports produced by third party consultants which are as follows:-

- Planning Statement
- Transportation Statement
- Arboricultural Impact Statement
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Ecology Assessment

2.0 THE SITE

The development site lies in the High Street of Rocester, which is approximately 250 metres from the junction with the B5030 running alongside JCB HQ which sits to the west. To the east of the development site is the centre of Rocester which is approximately 120 metres further up the High Street.



The area of the site is approximately 0.258 acres with all boundaries being defined. The area of land for development is the frontage area of Riversfield House positioned south of the development land.



Aerial View of Development Site

The site has a frontage of approximately 36 metres and is approximately 28 metres deep, north to south, the site is generally flat and level with the public highway path along High Street on the north side of the site.

Running down the western side of the site is Riversfield Drive which falls away when heading from north to south and at the point where the southern boundary is located, Riversfield Drive is approximately 600mm lower than the site levels at the Southern Boundary line of the development site.

The site is enclosed on the western boundary and front northern boundary with an existing brick wall of varying height, with intermediate brick piers. Originally the site was accessed from High Street and dropped kerbs are still present in the public highway, which are proposed to be reinstated to serve the new development.



Picture from High Street to Northern Boundary of Site, showing old access point

Approximately ten years ago the landowner segregated the front portion of land by planting a Laurel hedge, photographs of which are shown below, which has matured and is currently overgrown and is planned to be trimmed and managed in the future as part of this development.



View of Site 2009



View 2011 with New Laurel Hedge dividing off front part of site

Along the eastern boundary is a selection of Laurel hedgerows and trees and the site is unsecured along this eastern boundary; however, it is proposed to position the new development along the eastern boundary to form a defensible line which will also preserve privacy to the private access drive that serves a number of residential developments and commercial facilities to the south.



View of Eastern Boundary and ex. Private access drive



Commercial Premises to rear of site off Private access drive

3.0 PRE APPLICATION PROCESS

Gould Singleton Architects assisted in a detailed Pre application submission to ESBC in mid September 2021. The submission was supported with Transport, Heritage and Planning statements together with a Tree report

A comprehensive response to the submission was received in mid December from the area planning officer Lisa Bird, ref: QU\2021\ENQ\0394

The key considerations with the scheme identified as :

- Principle of Development
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Impact on the residential amenity
- Highway Matters
- Impact on ecology
- Impact on Heritage assets and Archaeology
- Flooding and drainage
- Impact on Trees

Many of the above were addressed in our formal pre-application submission. It was noted that a further Pre-application submission was needed to be made direct to

Staffordshire County Highways in respect of highways matters, a formal response to our application was received in January 2022.

The overall conclusion to the submitted scheme by the Planning officers at ESBC was one of support with a requirement for further material to be submitted to support a formal full application.

In respect of the Highways pre-app, objections have been raised to our proposals from the Highway officer which have led to changes to access and servicing of the proposed new unit with access now being taken from Riversfield Drive on the Western Boundary.

4.0 DESIGN EVOLUTION

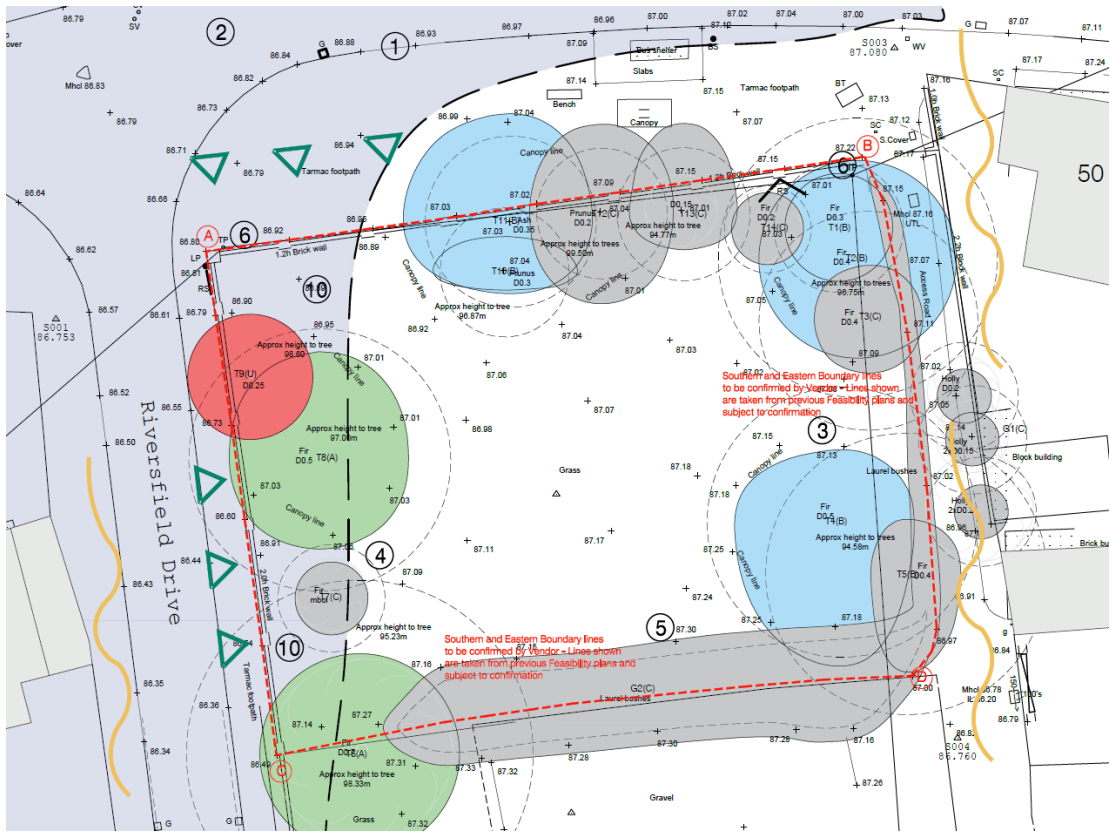
The following section illustrates images and drawings with commentary of the initial Proposals submitted to Pre-app. This DAS will then move to illustrate how the scheme has changed to accommodate feedback received throughout the Pre-app processes.

- SITE

As part of the pre-application submission, Gould Singleton Architects have produced a plan as existing based upon a detailed topographical survey of the site and surrounding highways. Heights of the adjoining buildings have all been surveyed and in due course at detailed Planning, detailed streets scenes will be able to be produced to demonstrate massing on how the development sits within the wider street scene.



From the topographical survey we have, with the support of the Arboricultural Consultant, produced a constraints plan which highlights restrictions for development for the site.



Constraints Plan

Our scheme proposals for new development are shown on our drawing 20-1875\003a.



Proposals Plan

The amount of development being proposed is for a new local Co-operative convenience store provides 2500 sq.ft of retail sales area supported with an entrance lobby of 185 sq.ft with back of house storage facility of 1,250 sq.ft, which is positioned at first floor level at the front part of the development. The scheme is supported by 14 car parking spaces within the development curtilage, accessed from the main High Street via the reinstated access point.

- PROPOSED BUILDING MASS

In studying the constraints plan and considering new development for the site, the main criteria that has influenced the submitted design is heritage impact, impact on trees and how the scheme can integrate with the existing highway infrastructure.

Images of the massing around the site are shown below



View from the North West Corner over High Street



View from the South West Corner over Riverside Drive



View from North East front over High Street

It has been decided that the extent of development is best positioned over two floors with the primary floor providing space for the retail convenience store with an entrance lobby and minimal space for back of house facility which will simply provide a vertical shaft for movement of new stock to the first-floor stock room which is positioned above the front part of the main building footprint.

Having studied the existing Conservation Area and the roof profile of the surrounding buildings, a pitched roof design has been adopted both at ground floor and first floor levels in proportions similar to that that are evident in the existing Conservation Area. This is not the norm for a small convenience store of this nature. However, we believe that this is an essential part of the design to ensure that the character of the Conservation Area be preserved with this new proposal.



It is proposed to position the building on the eastern boundary in a north south orientation to preserve the filtered views through to Riverside House from the High Street. These will be further enhanced with management of the Laurel hedge along the dividing

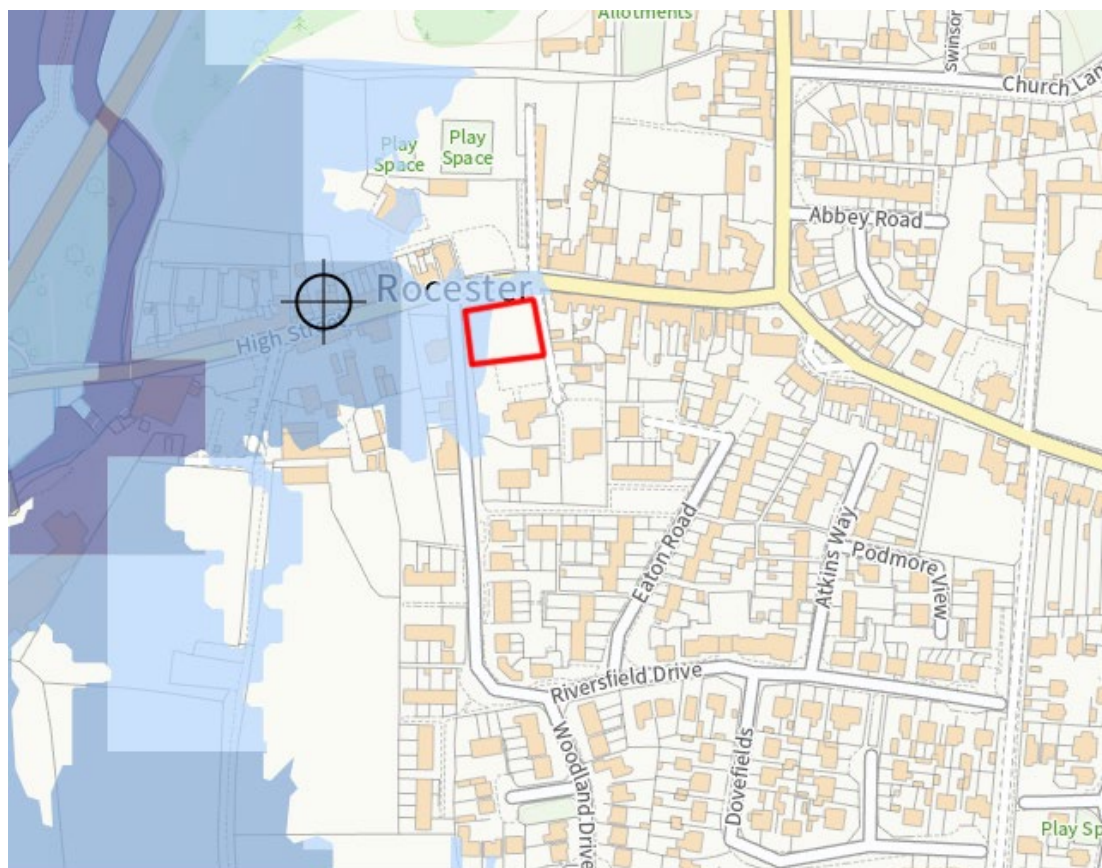
boundary of the development site and that of the retained land of Riverside House to the south. Examples of the filtered views to Riverside House are shown above.



Images of the new Mass in context with existing buildings

Positioning the building on the eastern boundary seeks to preserve the 2No. Category A trees located on the western boundary. Having consulted with the Arboriculturist, we believe that the incorporation of the car parking spaces adjacent to the tree canopies can be successfully achieved without detrimental impact on the existing trees through a 'no-dig' construction solution which will be adopted to all areas of car park within the root protection areas.

In light of the possible surface water flooding, positioning the store on the eastern boundary ensures that the new development is safe-guarded against such a risk and it is anticipated that no variation to existing levels will need to be made to the proposed car park which could have a detrimental affect on flood zone capacities.



Extract from EA Flood Map showing – VERY LOW RISK

Whilst we have yet to carry out any flood risk assessment work, it has been identified from the Environment Agency surface water flooding map that the north western corner of the site adjacent to the junction between Riversfield Drive and High Street could have the potential for surface flooding. This has also been considered in this feasibility plan and should the scheme move forward to detailed Planning, a detailed flood risk assessment will obviously be commissioned and submitted to support the scheme proposals, together with a drainage and SuDS strategy.

In positioning the building along the eastern boundary, this will have an impact on some of the category B trees and it is anticipated to mitigate this loss by providing new trees along the western boundary and, wherever possible, along the northern boundary fronting the High Street.

The existing access serving residential developments to the west and south of the development via the private access drive will be maintained via the existing vehicular

access from the High Street. By positioning the two-storey element to the front of the development, this ensures that the loss of natural daylight from the south to the rear private amenity gardens of the adjoining residential properties is minimised.

- SERVICING AND LAYOUT

It is anticipated that servicing be from High Street across the public footpath to the new service area in the north eastern corner of the site with all customer parking being through a reinstated access from High Street through to a new car park which will provide 14 car parking spaces, of which one will be for disabled parking. It is anticipated that two of the car parking spaces will provide EV charging.

The layout of the car parking spaces has evolved with discussions with the Arboriculturist so as to preserve the category A trees on the western boundary and provide sufficient space for new planting to mitigate against the loss of trees along the north and eastern boundaries.

Whilst it is anticipated that normal car parking spaces generally within the UK are 2.4 metres by 4.8 metres long, our scheme proposals provide car parking spaces to a larger size of 2.5 metres wide by 4.8 metres long and have provided significant manoeuvring space within the central part of the site and as part of the pre-app submission, the Transportation Consultant has demonstrated the vehicle tracking to a number of these spaces using a medium sized vehicle.

- ELEVATIONAL DESIGN AND MATERIALS

Having reviewed the streetscape of Rocester, the majority of the buildings are two storeys. However, these have now been lifted to three storeys on new developments closer to the village centre.

We propose that our building takes the form of a duo-pitched roof with the lowest part of the roof being parallel to the main public footpath along High Street, which is the theme of all development along High Street. In order to reduce the ridge height and respect the ridge heights along High Street, we propose to break the first-floor accommodation into two no. duo-pitched roof heights with a central valley, keeping the scale of the roof profile similar to that of other properties within the village.



Southern side of High Street

Windows on the front elevation will be kept to a domestic scale at first floor, similar to adjacent development, and the wider windows serving the retail space will be positioned on the western elevation facing the car park, apart from the window identifying the main entrance. It is anticipated that the pallet of materials for the new building will be using traditional red clay bricks similar to that used in the High Street with an interlocking roof tile that gives a plain tile appearance.

It is anticipated that the car park will be surfaced in a tarmac finish; however, subject to detailed input from drainage consultants, it is anticipated that some form of storm water attenuation will be required and it will be within the car park area that this will be provided for both the surfaced car park and the main building. Pathways around the building will be kept to a minimum to maintain as much green space along the frontage and western boundary.

5.0 DESIGN EVOLUTION – Formal Planning Submission and changes

Whilst the pre-application submission to the Local Authority was believed to be extremely positive, the subsequent submission to the County Council Highway's Officer was less supportive in respect of utilising access to the development from an existing dropped kerb arrangement in High Street. An alternative solution for creating

a service layby clashed with the existing bus shelter and the Millenium public art feature, together with visibility splays when travelling north along Riversfield Drive and it was, therefore, felt that an alternative approach had to be adopted.

The scheme now submitted has modified the access arrangements for vehicular movement to have access from the adopted Riversfield Drive on the western side of the site.

Our new scheme has an entrance which will allow for service vehicles to enter as well as customers to a large car park which still provides 14 car parking spaces. Through a delivery management programme, vehicles will enter the site and will position along the northern part of the site when car parking spaces are coned off for deliveries. This will still maintain the majority of use of the remaining spaces.



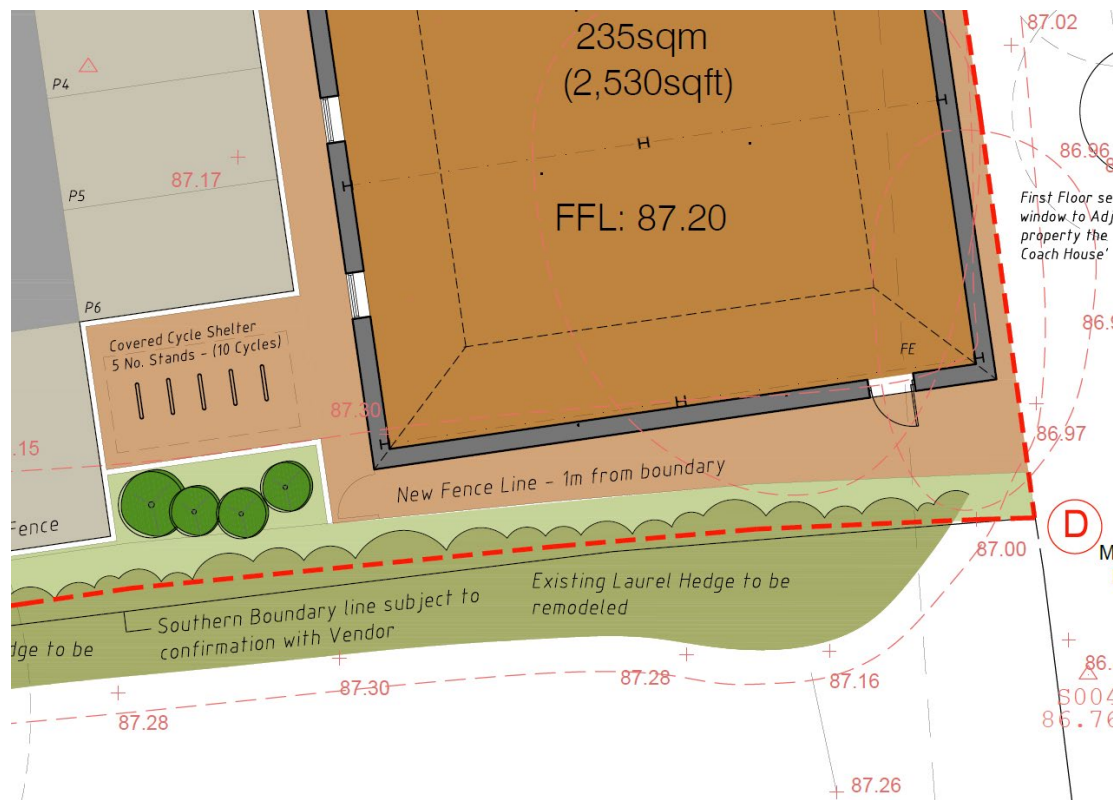
The existing northern wall will remain as existing and as much tree and vegetation will be kept along the boundary wall line.

As a result of the access now being positioned off Riversfield Drive, we have had to consider closely the positioning of the access drive in connection with the distance from the junction between Riversfield Drive and High Street and also the proximity of the Category A tree.

Our scheme has tried to ensure that at least one of the Category A trees is maintained and the majority of the reduced level dig forming the slight gradient from the car park level down to Riversfield Drive is kept outside the root protection areas as identified by the arboriculturist.

The existing wall will be broken to form a new vehicular access opening and the new perpendicular walls will be built of materials of the same brick and mortar and brick bond.

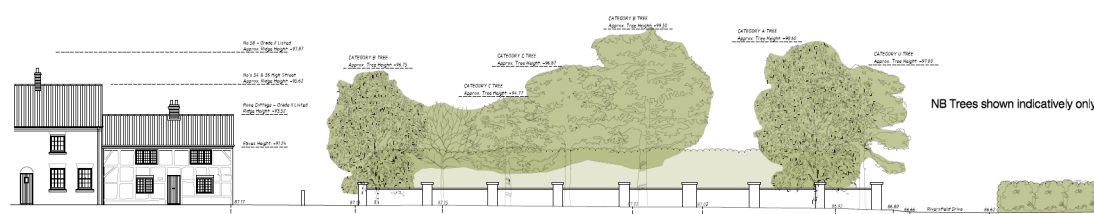
Other minor amendments to the site layout involve the creation of greater space along the southern boundary and the unit has been slightly moved forward north on the site plan to create greater space between the new boundary fencing and the retained Laurel hedge to the development to the south.



All other elements of the design and mass of the building remain constant with the pre-application submission.

6.0 BUILDING DESIGN – Scale and Mass

As part of our pre-application submission, we had considered the site very carefully and the adjoining buildings and had already indicated that a two storey development form would be provided; however, the positioning of the two storey element would be at the front of the scheme. Our formal submission now is supported with detailed elevations giving an indication of the form of development and its height and scale. To put the development in context with other buildings within the High Street, we have submitted street scene elevations illustrating how the proposed buildings roof profile, eaves height and ridge heights sit in context with other buildings within the High Street.



Existing Streetscene from High Street Scale 1:150 - Viewing South



Proposed Streetscene from High Street Scale 1:150 - Viewing South

The adjoining Grade II Listed building which sits further forward than our development is extremely low and our new development is generally in line with that of the next building in the High Street which is no. 54 with eaves and ridge heights which are fairly constant to that of other buildings within the High Street. It is important to note that our new development is sub-servient to that of the other Grade II Listed building, this being no. 56 High Street, which has a significantly higher main ridge line in the High Street.

The main two storey element facing the High Street is a fairly plain elevation with a consistent eaves line similar to that to other buildings within High Street and a window pattern that again reflects adjoining houses. 2 no. feature chimneys are positioned in the first-floor roof design, again very similar to adjoining properties.

Our design delivers a scheme which has a fairly domestic scale in appearance with single access doors which service the unit for fire escape and services.



The main building profile can be seen from the side elevation from the west which clearly depicts the extent of two storey building mass which is less than 50% of the footprint, with the remainder receiving a simple mono-pitched roof around the single storey retail area which has been designed as a mono-pitched roof so as to reduce the height of the ridge line, but also benefits for providing a suitable screening for the air conditioning units which will be out of view on a flat roof and will provide improved sound attenuation, which is detailed in the acoustic report.



We have studied the existing buildings in the High Street for shop front designs, all of which are fairly plain with simple signage zones above shop front windows which do not benefit with ornate plasters and store risers.

The eastern elevation has no windows positioned on the private access drive; however, we have created within the first-floor level some 'blind' window recesses with window head detailing above. This is not intended to have windows at a later date but more along the lines that demonstrating where historical openings may have been infilled.



Heights of the eaves and ridge have been considered carefully and the height of the sales area is much lower than the standard retailer's requirements, but we recognise the importance of suppressing the scale of the development as much as possible. It can be seen from the typical section through the building that we have maintained the retailer's requirements for internal storage heights at first floor level at 3m; however, we have been able to reduce the roof height by incorporating a cranked extended rafter to ensure the eaves is as low as possible.



Whilst we have yet to see the tenants internal fit-out arrangements for the first-floor accommodation, we have positioned the opening windows along the front elevation and western elevation overlooking the car park and it is likely that the manager's office, toilets and staff rooms will be positioned along these elevations with the general stock

racking for warehouse being along the southern and eastern walls where no windows are present. For access to the flat roof, this can be gained from the first-floor stock room and will only be used for servicing and maintenance of the flat roof and any air conditioning units positioned within this area.

7.0 MATERIALS PALLET

It is anticipated that any subsequent Approval will be issued with a materials condition. However, as a guide at this stage there is a commitment within the scheme to provide materials from a high-quality pallet. It is anticipated that the materials will be similar to those used throughout the existing Conservation Area using a high-quality red clay brick, potentially with a brick bond similar to that of other period buildings within the High Street, with window heads and cills being finished with a reconstituted stone cill and head which can be seen in a number of locations within the High Street. It is proposed that the main pitched roofs will be finished with a traditional plain clay tile similar to those within the area.

The eaves detailing and verge detailing to the gables is fairly simple with minimal projection and, again, similar to other buildings in the High Street. It is proposed that all of the rainwater goods and rainwater gutters will utilise a profiled powder coated aluminium product, colour and details to be dealt with under condition.



It is proposed that the small casement windows and doors will adopt a flush section design and will have opening lights and glazing bars similar to a domestic scale.

The external hard surfaces to the site will generally fall into three materials. The first being a tarmac or asphalt car park surface which will need to be heavy duty to withstand commercial vehicles manoeuvring within a confined space with the adjoining customer car parking spaces utilising a block paving material which is almost certainly going to be required to be designed to accommodate storm water run off for attenuation. Other pathways around the building will be a slip resistant concrete paving with all necessary dropped and flush kerbs to allow wheelchair access throughout the site. As advised by the arboricultural consultant in areas where hard surfacing is present within root protection zones, permeable surfacing and no dig solutions will be adopted.

8.0 LANDSCAPING

Our proposals seek to retain a Category A tree and its root protection zone has been protected as much as possible. Where this has been infiltrated with new hard surfacing, this is to be done with a no dig solution and permeable paving which will be detailed further in the arboriculturists impact statement. Surrounding the car park areas new landscaping is proposed to mitigate tree loss and it is likely that a detailed landscaping plan will be submitted prior to any commencement of works on site.

9.0 ACCESS

The proposed new car parking area provides 14 spaces including one disabled car parking space. Access into the car park will be from Riversfield Drive from the west via a new access ramp leading down to the existing highway. This new access will be flanked on either side by retaining walls holding back the slightly higher ground level and will be constructed from materials similar to that of the existing wall fronting the main road.

A covered cycle shelter accommodating 5 no. cycle stands, which has ability to store 10 bicycles, is positioned in the south eastern corner of the car park where a new footpath runs through to the main entrance.

The existing private access adjacent to Riversfield House and no. 50 High Street, which also serves commercial developments to the south, will remain unaffected by the proposals. Hard landscaping/paving will be positioned to infill the residual land

from the new side elevation of the development and with the removal of the Laurel hedging through this access drive, this will provide an improved access through the private drive. It is anticipated that the piers at the head of the access drive remain unaffected by the proposals; however, access into our site will be infilled from the corner of the building to the existing telegraph pole in the furthest most north easterly corner of the site, thus discouraging any short cut through for pedestrians.

10.0 CONCLUSIONS

Following this fairly robust pre-application process over the last six months, together with dialogue with the County Council's Highways department, we strongly believe that the scheme being presented for this small village convenience store is wholly appropriate for the village and has considered all of the constraints impacting upon the site.



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