

## Appendix A

Mr Mullet thanked Members for visiting the application site. He advised that his client had been happy to reduce the size of the proposed extension from 4m to 3m and took issue with the Planning Officer's assessment of the impact of the development.

Rather than transform the plan form, obscure the rear of the original building and fill in the courtyard, Mr Mullet contended that this was a small, modest extension that would not obscure any more of the rear elevation than the existing extension. Whilst he acknowledged that the new construction would extend a further 3m into the courtyard, Mr Mullet questioned the significance of this. Most elements of the façade had been altered within the past 20 years and there had been extensive alterations to both the internal layout and the use.

The development would have limited impact upon the historical significance of the building and would not change the burgage plot. Other than cutting in the lead flashing, the extension would remain independent of the original building and would provide improved access for maintenance.

The extension would not be visible from outside the site and Mr Mullet opined that the survival of historic buildings relied upon them retaining their usefulness. The property had been in a poor state of repair when purchased some 20 years ago and the owners had spent a great deal of time and money on repair and maintenance.

It was important for the property to continue to meet current living standards to avoid it becoming less attractive and, eventually, unoccupied.

## Planning Committee Presentation 2 Ashford Close, Woodstock- 19/02266/FUL

4<sup>th</sup> November 2019, 14:00- WODC Committee Room 1

- Application benefits from detailed Officer report which sets out situation clearly
- 2 Ashford Close is unusual as consists of dwelling and connected workshop
- Workshop is intrinsically linked to house- workspace can only be accessed through house (not garden as stated in Officer report) and looks directly onto private garden. Arrangement means workshop cannot be occupied separately from house without fundamental harm to privacy of home
- Applicants (in common with most homeowners) have no need for a workshop, the space is therefore left vacant
- Application seeks flexible use to allow space to be used as part of house, or as a workshop. Proposed flexibility means employment use is not lost- a future occupier can make use of the space
- In meantime permission will ensure current owners can make use of the station building ensuring it is heated, maintained, and preserved for the future
- Applicants are conscious the matter is before the Committee due to an objection from the Town Council who are concerned that the building should be conserved and opportunity maintained for employment. The applicants share these aspirations, hence this carefully considered proposal:
  - i) No physical works are proposed or required internally or externally- this means the building maintained as existing
  - ii) Proposal is to ensure building is used, therefore, heated and maintained. NPPF identifies appropriate use best way of safeguarding historic buildings- the proposal is endorsed by Conservation Officer for this reason
  - iii) Proposed flexible use ensures building remains available for employment in the future
- Proposal is considered to accord with Local Plan and NPPF aspirations to protect the historic environment and maintain employment opportunities and is recommended for approval by Officers- hope Committee able to lend their support and allow the beneficial development

Good Afternoon. I am Neil Warner of JPPC, we are the Agent for the application and speak today on behalf of the applicants, Mr D and Mr W Townsend.

Members will have been sent a letter setting out these comments, for ease of reference. I will not take up too much of your time repeating the content of the letter, but would summarise our comments as follows, with reference to each of the suggested refusal reasons.

### Reason 1 – Policy E1:

We dispute whether the site can be considered an employment site, for the purposes of Policy E1. The Local Plan provides “employment sites” include land and sites with office-based, industrial and warehouse/storage uses (known as the B-use classes). The Haulage Yard is not within the B use classes – it is a sui generis use.

It is not a site where people are employed even – rather a site where the vehicles, which are the tools of the trade of the haulage contractor, are parked.

It is not similar to an office, industrial site or warehouse – the sort of operations that policy E1 envisages when seeking to protect them in such use. Its redevelopment would not cause the loss of employment and we suggest refusal reason 1 is therefore erroneous, or not applicable.

Even if Policy E1 is relevant, we believe we comply with two of those circumstances; firstly as it is a sui generis use the site can only be used as a haulage contractors yard – any other use would require a grant of planning permission (thus the first bullet point is met – it cannot reasonably put to another employment use) and in any event the haulage yard is a “bad neighbour” and unsuitable in this location (bullet point two being met).

We do not believe that, in such a backland position, behind an existing unrelated dwelling, planning permission would be granted for any alternative employment use.

### Refusal Reason 2 – Policy BC1

The wording of the refusal reason suggest there is some form of hierarchy within Policy BC1 putting employment uses first or that some harm results from not demonstrating a local housing need. The Policy is clear – there is no hierarchy which requires a consideration of employment uses first and it is also clear in confirming that the housing figures are “not an absolute target or a maximum ceiling to development.” We do not see why these proposed 2 dwellings would be harmful in the context of this policy?

### Refusal Reason 3 - character

We would request Members note that the site is previously developed land, it contains some large, utilitarian buildings which aren't necessarily attractive

In terms of the edge of the village position, we would ask Members note the buildings on Manor Court to the east which have a similar position behind other buildings, to the layout proposed here.