

**Development Management**

Coventry City Council

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Coventry

CV6 9SL

[www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)

**Pre-application advice**

Application No.	<b>PRE/2025/0071</b>
Enquiry dated:	24-07-2025
Site at:	75a STANWAY ROAD COVENTRY. CV5 6PH
Proposal:	Demolish and rebuild existing factory unit or demolish and replace with up to 2 dwellings
Meeting(s) and Site Visit(s)	Wednesday 13th August
Case Officer:	Grace Goodman
Applicant:	( ) Jason Fletcher - email: kenilworthtown@aol.co.uk

This professional advice is always given in good faith, but this will not be binding on the council, and is given without prejudice, based upon the information available at the time when development proposals are submitted. If an application is subsequently submitted which fails to take on board advice given below, then the council may refuse it without further discussion with the applicant or their agent.

The advice provided is based on the information submitted with this enquiry and a desk top study/site visit, using our available office records.

## **SUMMARY**

The application is for pre-application advice on whether the existing factory can be demolished and replaced with two houses or if replacing the factory with a new factory is the best option.

The factory is a single storey, stand alone building surrounded by residential dwellings that front onto Stanway Road and Mickleton Road with a narrow, 2m wide lane in between No. 75 and No. 77 Stanway Road to access the factory. The factory is in a fairly poor state and appears to be used currently for storage purposes. The site is located within the Earlsdon Conservation Area.

This response sets out what I consider the material planning considerations are and some of the issues discussed on site to aid your deliberations for the site going forward. The response will mostly relate to the proposal of residential development on site as I gathered from the site visit that residential is the preferred redevelopment option. Redevelopment for commercial or residential purposes are likely to raise a number of issues as set out below. However, I have included a suggested validation list should you decide to take the proposals forward.

## **RECENT/RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

Applications - S/2005/0636 - Retention and continued use of extension to factory premises | Historic Reference: 4290/F - Approved

Applications - S/2005/0635 - Retention and continued use of extension to factory premises | Historic Reference: 4290/E - Approved

Applications - S/1984/1112 - Retention and continued use of extension to factory premises | Historic Reference: G/C/4290/E - Approved

Applications - S/1984/1113 - Retention of factory premises | Historic Reference: G/C/4290/F - Approved

Applications - S/1974/1231 - Retention and continued use of extension to factory premises | Historic Reference: 4290/D - Approved

Applications - S/1972/1701 - Erection of extension to provide first floor offices above existing office | Historic Reference: 27135 - Refused

Applications - S/1967/1214 - Retention and continued use of extension to factory premises | Historic Reference: 4290/C - Approved

Applications - S/1958/1032 - Retention of extension to factory | Historic Reference: 4290/A - Approved

## **POLICY**

### **National Policy:**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The updated NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The new NPPF increases the focus on achieving high quality design and states that it is "fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve". The NPPF carries a presumption in favour of sustainable development and states that, for decision taking, this means "approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

### **Local Policy:**

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2016, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policy relating to this application are:

Policy DE1: Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy HE2: Conservation and Heritage Assets

Policy JE3: Non-employment uses on employment land

Policy JE5: Location of R&D, Industrial and Storage/Distribution Development

Policy AC2: Road Network

Policy AC3: Demand Management

### **Emerging Local Policy Guidance – Local Plan Review Reg 19 Consultation:**

Policy DE1: Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy HE2: Conservation and Heritage Assets

Policy JE3: Non-employment uses on employment land

Policy JE5: Location of R&D, Industrial and Storage/Distribution Development

Policy AC2: Road Network

Policy AC3: Demand Management

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents (SPG/SPD)**

## **APPRAISAL OF DETAILS SUBMITTED**

### **Principle of development**

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) clearly sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development, Policy DS3 of the adopted Local Plan is consistent with the NPPF in this respect. From the planning history of the site, the land appears to have consistently been used as factory since the development of the wider area. However, whilst the site has a long history of use as a factory, redevelopment for industrial/commercial uses is unlikely to be acceptable in this location due to the location of the site, surrounded by residential properties and with restricted/limited access which would not serve a modern commercial property. Recent use of the site appears to have been limited and anything which intensified the current use of the site would be problematic in this location. In view of the lack of information and ambiguity regarding the use of the site, it may be prudent to gain confirmation of the sites use class in line with the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). This can be obtained with a Lawful Development Certificate if you can provide evidence of how the property is used.

In terms of redeveloping the site for residential purposes, this would not necessarily be unacceptable in principle given that the site is located within a predominantly residential area. However there are clear material considerations that would need to be considered in respect of any residential development. The site is highly constrained in view of it's backland location surrounded by residential properties and restricted access and it is unlikely to be feasible to have more than a one single storey unit on site at most. Further material considerations are detailed below.

### **Design and impact on visual amenity**

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) seeks to ensure that development proposals exhibit a high quality design and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area over the lifetime of the development. This aligns with the requirements of Policy DE1 of the adopted Local Plan and both the Council's New Residential Design Guide. Policy HE2 seeks to ensure all proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce the special character and conserve the following distinctive historic elements of Coventry. No indicative plans have been given for the proposed residential redevelopment, but it would be expected that that any new development on site is carefully designed in line with the New Residential Design Guide SPD and proposes the use of high quality materials, factoring in the characteristics of the immediate area and Earlsdon Conservation Area. The amenity of all current residents and future occupiers of the site would need to be considered which includes:

- Careful design of building, scale and massing to ensure they are in context with the neighbours
- Ensuring privacy with intelligent internal layouts and appropriate separation distances from the rear of all properties along Stanway Road and Mickleton Road to the boundary of the property.
- Outlook, daylight and sunlight access
- Appropriately sized private outdoor amenity space for any proposed residential
- Careful consideration of boundary treatment in line with the 'Secured by design' principle

High design standards will be especially important on this site due to its location within the Conservation Area. We generally like buildings to face onto the street and provide active frontages that ensure a strong relationship between the streets and the buildings. The location of the site would mean that the redevelopment would be considered backland development without an active frontage. Active frontages are especially important for residential developments as it allows an increased level of safety for the occupiers. The backland nature of the site and lack of active frontage would be a significant factor in assessing the acceptability of the proposal if it comes forward. Furthermore, the New Residential Design Guide states that distances between collection and storage points for waste should be no more than 25m. In this instance where the access is 30m in length, this is likely to be considered an issue for any residential development on site.

### **Amenity**

Any redevelopment for residential purposes would need to be appropriately designed and sited to ensure no harmful impact on neighbouring occupiers in terms of increased visual intrusion, loss of light or loss of privacy. Consideration also needs to be given to ensuring a satisfactory residential environment for future occupiers. In view of the historic commercial/industrial use of the site, any application for residential development is likely to require at the very least, a soil contamination desk top study and probably a full site investigation report.

### **Tree Protection**

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF (2024) attributes trees to making an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. As such the NPPF is clear in that planning decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined and that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

Policy GE4 of the Local Plan states the development proposals will be positively considered provided that:

- a. there is no unacceptable loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodlands during or as a result of development, any loss should be supported by a tree survey.

b. trees not to be retained as a result of the development are replaced with new trees as part of a well-designed landscape scheme; and

c. existing trees worthy of retention are sympathetically incorporated into the overall design of the scheme including all necessary measures taken to ensure their continued protection and survival during construction

It is noted that there are one or two trees on site which may need to be cut back or removed to accommodate the development. Also as the property lies within a Conservation area, any trees currently on site are protected and no works to them can be undertaken without prior notification to the council. As part of any forthcoming application, it is likely that an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, supported by a Tree Constraints Plan, would need to be provided for the council to consider the impact on surrounding trees both on and off site.

## **Ecology**

Paragraph 187 (d) of the NPPF (2024) states that planning decisions should minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures within the site.

Policy GE1 of the adopted Local Plan expects new development proposals to make provision for green infrastructure to ensure that such development is integrated into the landscape and contributes to improvements in connectivity and public access, biodiversity, landscape conservation, design, archaeology and recreation, whilst also maintaining the quality and quantity of existing green infrastructure, and where the quantity is not retained, enhancement to quality is expected.

Policy GE3 of the Local Plan states proposals for development will be permitted provided that they protect, enhance and/or restore habitat biodiversity. Development proposals will be expected to ensure that they:

- Lead to a net gain of biodiversity, where appropriate, by means of an approved ecological assessment of existing site features and development impacts.
- Protect or enhance biodiversity assets and secure their long-term management and maintenance.
- Avoid negative impacts on existing biodiversity; and
- Preserve species which are legally protected, in decline, are rare within Coventry or which are covered by national, regional or local Biodiversity Action Plans.

The Environment Act 2023 also introduces the requirements for all qualifying developments to provide at least a 10% uplift of biodiversity net gain.

In this case, it is noted that the rear of the property was cleared in 2015 and that in the past 10 years trees and scrub within the site have grown significantly, thereby significantly increasing the ecological value of the site. As such, as part of any forthcoming application, should one be

submitted, it is expected that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is prepared and a DEFRA approved Biodiversity Metric Calculation completed to obtain a value of the current site and anticipated value post development. In the first instance a net gain should be secured on site where possible. In cases where this cannot be achieved, as may be the case here, then it is likely that financial obligations will be required to off-set the loss and achieved the required uplift of 10%.

It is also recommended that a bat survey is undertaken of the existing building which is in relatively poor condition and therefore potentially providing roosting spots for bats.

## **Highways**

Policy AC1 'Accessible Transport Network' states that development proposals which are expected to generate additional trips on the transport network should: a) Integrate with existing transport networks including roads, public transport and walking and cycling routes to promote access by a choice of transport modes. b) Consider the transport and accessibility needs of everyone living, working or visiting the city. c) Support the delivery of new and improved high quality local transport networks which are closely integrated into the built form. d) Actively support the provision and integration of emerging and future intelligent mobility infrastructure.

Policy AC3 of the Local Plan acknowledges that the provision of car parking can influence occurrences of inappropriate on-street parking which can block access routes for emergency, refuse and delivery vehicles, block footways preventing access for pedestrians, reduce visibility at junctions and impact negatively on the street scene.

Parking provision should accord with the maximum standard expressed in Appendix 5 unless it has been clearly demonstrated that the site is in a highly accessible location where transport, by means other than the private car is a realistic alternative. In that respect, lower levels of provision may be considered acceptable where the site is in close proximity to the City Centre, a train station, a high-quality rapid transport route or other public transport interchange and where there is a package of measures (proportionate to the scale of development) to enable sustainable means of transport. Any variation from the maximum standard must be fully justified by proportionate evidence.

No detailed highway advice has been sought, but it is noted that the access route is extremely narrow and therefore is unlikely to be considered a suitable access way for new residential developments. A transport assessment could be undertaken to assess if parking can be provided on street and the accessibility of the site via public transport methods. In view of the restricted access route to the site, it is recommended that you consult with the Local Highway Authority (LHA) prior to the submission of an application for a greater understanding of the acceptability of any proposals from a highway perspective and of the likely requirements from the LHA.

## **CONCLUSION**

At this stage, due to the lack of information or design details, I am unable to provide you with any detailed advice, but the above information sets out the majority of the constraints that would need to be considered with any redevelopment on this site. Whilst, I consider that a single residential unit is likely to be the most feasible option, in view of the constrained nature of the site and restricted access, there are a number of issues that would need to be overcome. It is recommended a further pre-app is submitted once more refined proposals have been established taking into account the above points.

**Recommended additional advice.**

Documents/Fees likely to be required to support a planning application:

The below list is provided for guidance only and will be subject to change depending on the type of application submitted:

Please consult the [validation checklist](#) for a full list of all requirements, it is advised that your application is supported by the following documents

- The relevant fee or receipt of payment
- Completed application form
- Completed land ownership declaration
- A 1:1250 scale location plan identifying the site and its boundaries
- A scaled site plan, inclusive of any retained/proposed landscaping and boundary treatment and the position of all trees on site and those on adjacent land
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans
- Existing and Proposed Elevations
- Tree Survey/Constraints Plan
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- BNG Metric Calculation (DEFRA Approved)
- Design and Access Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Contaminated land assessment

### **Building Control Services**

Our experience suggests that an early input from Building Control can also be advantageous, providing opportunity to discuss key principles such as fire and escape, access requirements and thermal performance. Coventry's Building Control team is highly experienced/locally based and provides a collaborative, technically proficient service. We have a great deal of experience in similar schemes within this sector and would welcome the opportunity of working alongside you on this development should it come to fruition. Should you wish to take advantage of this or obtain a competitive quotation for a Building Regulation service please contact Building Control on 024 76 83 2057/2058 or [buildingcontrol@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@coventry.gov.uk).