

**UNIT 8, GOODSON INDUSTRIAL MEWS, WELLINGTON STREET**

Change of use of existing storage/light industrial unit from B8 to E(D)

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**1. Officer Recommendation:****OBJECTS:**

- The application is contrary to TNP Policy WS12 and Local Plan 2035 Policy EMP3 in proposing the loss of employment land without supporting evidence of a lack of viability or market interest.
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**2. Key Issues:**

- Employment

It is proposed to permanently change the use of a building in Class B8 use to a gymnasium in Class E. The warehouse is of a modest size, some 240 sq.m. gross internal area and under standard methodology would be capable of hosting up to 3 jobs.

It is stated within the application form that the proposed use would support 2 full-time equivalent jobs. Use Class E (d) is permitted to change use to any within that broad class, meaning that the unit could change to a use with a greater yield of job opportunities without planning permission.

Should this proposal be permitted, further onward change under permitted development to residential use would be only mildly constrained by:

- the need for the unit to have been in continuous Class E use for a period of at least 2 years prior to any application for prior approval
- the need to judge the impact of the change of use on the character or sustainability of the Conservation Area, which covers most of the unit's ground area.

The conversion should, therefore, be given careful consideration. Members will recall from earlier applications on this unit that the site is considered to be outside of the Town Centre and is protected by Thame Neighbourhood Plan Policies WS12 and Local Plan Policy EMP3, which seek to retain employment land. It is claimed that the unit has been actively marketed for a period of one month (January 2024) without interest other than from the applicant. This does not begin to meet the requirements of either employment policy.

- Parking and Access

The number of parking spaces will be 5 (as per existing arrangements), and 6 cycle spaces will be provided. Despite being a town centre location, to ensure sufficient parking provision the application should be subject to no objection from the Highways Officer.

- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

The site is largely within the Thame Conservation Area however as no external changes are proposed to the dwelling, and only a modest alteration of the parking arrangements, there would be no change to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

- Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

It is considered that the proposals would not give rise to any adverse consequences in terms of loss of light, privacy, or outlook. Given that the use would be adjoin and be close to residential uses a condition restricting hours of operation would be reasonable.

### 3. Planning History:

SODC Ref	Description	TTC Decision	SODC Decision
<a href="#">P15/S3848/FUL</a>	Redevelopment of Goodsons Industrial Mews retaining existing commercial units 1A, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9 in employment use. Alteration of unit 1-4 to provide 4 no apartments at first floor. Demolition of units 5, 6, 7, 8 and erection of 8 houses, 2 maisonettes and 15 flats (29 residential units in total). (As amended by drawings accompanying Agents letters dated 8 February 2016 and 11 February 2016 reducing unit numbers and amending design).	Refused	Granted 22/12/2016
<a href="#">P20/S1355/FUL</a>	Redevelopment of storage (Class B8) to provide 8 dwellings (one 1-bed and seven 2-bed apartments) (Class C3) with associated access and landscaping works. (Amended plans received 19.2.21)	Objects	Withdrawn prior to determination
<a href="#">P21/S0056/FUL</a> Units 1-4 and 6-8	Redevelopment of an office building (Class E) to provide ten 2-bed apartments (Class C3) with associated access, landscaping and demolition works; external alterations including the installation of solar panels to employment units (Class E).	Supports + response	Withdrawn prior to determination 25/05/2021
<a href="#">P22/S0064/FUL</a>	Redevelopment of storage (Class B8) to provide 8 dwellings (1 x 1-bed and 7 x 2-bed apartments) (Class C3) with associated access and landscaping works. (Re-submission of P20/S1355/FUL) (As amended by plan received 03 March 2022)	Objects – Unneighbourly due to loss of privacy, out of keeping with the area	Refused 08/08/2022

### 4. Risk Appraisal

Dependent on the Town Council's recommendation to SODC is it likely that there would be a contrary decision by SODC? If so then a councillor should be nominated at the meeting to represent the views of the Town Council at the planning committee.

### 5. Policies Relevant to the Application

The following policies are of particular relevance when considering this application.

### **Thame Neighbourhood Plan**

- WS7 Retain small scale employment in the town centre
- WS12 Retain existing employment land in employment use
- GA6 New development to provide parking on site for occupants and visitors
- ESDQ15 Developers must demonstrate in a Design and Access Statement how their proposed development reinforces Thame's character
- ESDQ16 Development must relate well to its site and its surroundings
- ESDQ17 Development must make a positive contribution towards the distinctive character of the town as a whole
- ESDQ18 New development must contribute to local character by creating a sense of place appropriate to its location
- ESDQ19 The Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings must provide sufficient detail for proposals to be properly understood
- ESDQ20 Building style must be appropriate to the historic context
- ESDQ28 Provide good quality private outdoor space
- ESDQ29 Design car parking so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development

### **SODC Local Plan 2035 Policies**

- DES1 Delivering high quality development
- DES2 Enhancing local character
- DES3 Design and access statements
- DES5 Outdoor amenity space
- DES6 Residential amenity
- DES7 Efficient use of resources
- DES8 Promoting sustainable design
- EMP3 Retention of employment land
- ENV5 Green infrastructure in new developments
- ENV6 Historic environment
- ENV7 Listed buildings
- ENV8 Conservation areas
- ENV12 Pollution – impact of development on human health, the non-strategic natural environment and/or local amenity (potential sources of pollution)
- INF1 Infrastructure provision
- STRAT1 The overall strategy
- TH1 The strategy for Thame
- TRANS2 Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility
- TRANS4 Transport assessments, transport statements and travel plans
- TRANS5 Consideration of development proposals