

Preliminary Design and Access Statement

Project: Proposed Redevelopment of Budgens, Upper Galdeford, Ludlow **Ref:** Mrrs.1 DDAHS

Date: 18.06.2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This design, access and heritage statement is submitted in support of a pre application advice submission and is to be read in conjunction with design drawings and other supporting documents:

Mrrs.1 -

- 001 1:1250 Location plan; 1:500 Block plan
- 201 Topographical Survey
- 300 Proposed Ground Floor
- 301 Proposed First Floor
- 302 Proposed Second Floor Plan
- 303 Proposed Third Floor Plan
- 304 Proposed Roof Plan
- 310 Proposed Elevations: South + East
- 311 Proposed Elevations: North + West

Context Study

1.2 The site, on Upper Galdeford, Ludlow, is the former Budgens supermarket at the entrance to Galdeford Car Park. The site is located on the fringe of the town centre in close proximity to two Conservation Areas. The site is seen as an important strategic location in the townscape, which justifies an urban design and context-led design approach.

Our client, Morris and Co. Ltd., has asked us to explore options with a view to creating a mixed use, high quality development. This report documents key factors which have influenced design decisions resulting in the submitted design. Please read with the Pre-Application Context Study.

2.0 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

2.1 Brief History

The proposed development site occupies a parcel of land beyond the eastern extent of the historic Town Wall at the node where Tower Street Upper Galdeford and Lower Galdeford converge.

Tower Street was the site of the Galdeford Gate which it is believed was similar in design to Broadgate. The gate was demolished in 1764. Subsequent uses included the gaol and police station. The excellent connectivity of the proposal site lent itself to hospitality uses. Some of Ludlow's numerous pubs, The Bell Inn and The Portcullis, were located on the site. The Portcullis remained until the mid 1980s when it was demolished to make way for the supermarket which currently occupies the site.

2.2 Topography and views

The site occupies at a high point in the town at the top of Lower Galdeford. The existing levels remain consistently near 114.70m on all sides.

In practice the site is most visible as a series of close vignettes and oblique views. The views up Lower Galdeford primarily focus on 9 Tower Street, the neighbouring property with the west end of the site becoming visible reasonably close to the Tower Street Junction. The southeast and southwest corners along Upper Galdeford are particularly sensitive townscape features. The site is more dominant along Upper Galdeford looking west. Approaching Tower Street, St Laurence's tower becomes visible. From the north the site is shielded by the library's stair core. The prime frontage along Upper Galdeford is south facing.

The commanding location makes long views across the site important which will influence the final scale and massing of the proposed scheme. Long views to the castle and the church suggest massing should be kept within a similar range to existing neighbouring buildings.

Framed views are available from the car park but for the most part existing landscaping features and adjacent buildings mask the site.

2.3 Permeability: Vehicular and Public Transport

The site is extremely well served by public transport with nearby bus stops and the railway station being within a short walk.

Located at the fringe of the town centre, the site abuts Ludlow's largest central car park. The roads serving it provide quick access to local neighbourhoods and destinations further afield via the A49.

Vehicular permeability to the west of the site is restricted by the historic medieval urban grain of the town although good pedestrian links are available

The Upper Galdeford taxi rank contributes to the night-time economy, reinforced by A5 uses nearby.

2.4 Permeability: Pedestrian

One of the characteristics of Ludlow is the variety of the routes available to the pedestrian. Pedestrians have the choice of walking the main street network with more obvious frontages or taking advantage of the network of alleys. The site benefits from both types. The north and west boundaries are served by pedestrian routes while the east and south are bounded by a more conventional street network.

Proximity to amenities such as the library, surgeries, retail, the car park, the station and nearby neighbourhoods ensure this town centre fringe location is well served by pedestrians due to its connectivity.

2.5 The frontage along Upper Galdeford is strong in terms of permeability reflected by its nodal position in the movement framework. It is a visually important component of the townscape. The relationship with the historic town centre and conservation areas clearly identifies Upper Galdeford as the primary frontage.

Away from Upper Galdeford permeability is less effective due to a car-focused shared vehicular/pedestrian surface in the car park and generally poor legibility.

2.6 Legibility

The primary frontage along Upper Galdeford has a very close relationship with the adjacent conservation areas. Materiality, scale, massing and architectural style are influenced by the proximity to the conservation areas. Two nodes exist along this frontage: the Tower Street node and the car park junction node.

Moving north from Upper Galdeford the context changes. Due in part to the car park's inherent lack of containment and the backs of the neighbouring housing scheme, legibility suffers creating more ambiguous secondary frontages. Here, the defining relationship is with the contemporary library building to the north and the long views to the north and east. The aspiration is to introduce strong frontages to repair the urban grain. It is possible to achieve this by relaxing the strict design code employed along the primary frontage. A unified contextually derived contemporary solution referencing the best of Ludlow's Georgian tradition is possible.

The relationship with the library building and its strong terraced monopitch is seen as a key design influence to the north. The space between the library and the proposed development site creates comfortable proportions for a public open space should this become an opportunity in the future. This would enhance pedestrian permeability to the library.

2.7 Adjacent property: 9 Tower Street

Planning was achieved for a mixed-use scheme in April 2017. The scheme consisted of 10 apartment units across 3 storeys over a ground floor retail unit, and an element of commercial office space.

The scheme employs a traditional design language and appropriate materiality to reflect the proximity of a number of Ludlow's historic assets. The ridge height is 118.00m (12.8m over shop floor level) which compares to the rear of The Feathers at 116.16m.

2.8 Summary/SWOT Analysis

Topography and existing views suggest the principal frontage faces Upper Galdeford with the southwest and southeast corners being of particular sensitivity in terms of streetscape.

Massing and scale need careful consideration to protect long views; proximity to historic assets and conservation areas make treatment of the principal frontage particularly sensitive.

Well connected in terms of vehicular and pedestrian permeability, enhancements to the immediate public realm will offer improvements and will reinforce the node where the roads meet. The site is well served by public transport and its proximity to the town centre make it a sustainable development in terms of transport options.

Robust design should account for potential future public realm enhancements between the proposed site and the library by others.

Legibility is good along Upper Galdeford but suffers moving north along the car park approach. Applying the principles of urban design will repair a less than ideal public realm. Active frontages and improved legibility will enhance the immediate area and create a safer, more inviting public realm during the day or night. Robust design will open the way for more sustainable possible future development.

The site is located at the intersection of several character areas. The key relationships are between the town core, the residential fringe and the library. The approved scheme at 9 Tower Street is referred to for scale and massing over the existing scheme.

3.0 DESIGN

3.1 The proposed scheme offers a mix of uses with retail on ground floor with high quality residential above over two storeys and a penthouse level.

3.2 Retail mix

Two A1 retail units are provided at ground level. Their entrances face Upper Galdeford. They are designed to provide strong active frontages along the south and east elevations for improved safety and legibility at all times of the day and night.

[See accommodation matrix]

3.3 Affordable mix

A mix of affordable units has been agreed with the council. [Refer to accommodation matrix in the pre application pack]

3.4 Amount

The overall footprint of the scheme is up to 11m shorter than the existing building.

[Refer to accommodation matrix attached for a more detailed breakdown of the quantum]

Proposed gross internal floor areas are as follows:

	m²	sq ft
Ground floor	1,267	13,638
First floor	984	10,592
Second floor	1,015	10,925
Third floor	424	4,564
Total	3,690	39,719

3.5 Layout

The scheme is designed to address the influences identified in the context analysis.

3.5.1 The principal frontage is sympathetically designed to reinforce the relationship that exists with the neighbouring historic assets and Conservation Areas, views etc. Away from the principal frontage a context-led urban design approach has been applied to provide a robust appropriate solution addressing inherent failings in the public realm.

3.5.2 The primary access to the retail and residential components takes place along the Upper Galdeford frontage. The entrance to the smaller unit is set back from Upper Galdeford to break up the travel distance for pedestrians along the east elevation. It allows a more generous public realm to be provided at a strategic corner of the site. A smaller secondary residential access is available to the north for access to refuse stores and cycle and car parking. Retail and residential components are kept entirely separate.

3.5.3 The residential component has a ground floor presence with the residents' lounge on the southeast corner of the site. The residential units are accommodated on the first and second floors with three penthouse units located above. Apartments are served by two general staircores with entrances less than 7.5m distance to enable escape. The stairs discharge to a final access in the event of an emergency. The residential units are served by a shared lift.

3.5.4 The setting out of the residential units is intended to minimise single aspect apartments where possible and to take advantage of the excellent views to the north and east.

3.5.5 The first floor accommodates a mixture of communal and private terraces on the remaining space of the retail podium. The communal areas are accessible to all residents via two separate routes offering choice in an emergency. Private terraces are provided to the 3 penthouse units. A screened plant area for the main retail unit is located in the north west corner. The exact nature of this plant space may vary depending on the retail occupier's needs.

3.5.6 A feature of the south east corner of the proposed scheme is an oriel window projecting beyond the site boundary over the public pavement by approximately 750mm. the lowest part of this projecting feature is FFL+ 3.9m and the overall pavement with ranges from 2.975m to 3.26m.

3.6 Scale

- 3.6.1 The building along the principal frontage has been designed to relate to the historic assets and adjacent Conservation Areas. Numerous architectural devices are employed specific to Ludlow's architecture including traditional roof design, use of gables and dormers to keep the scale and appearance appropriate to neighbouring buildings. The approved scheme at 9 Tower Street was used as a benchmark for scale along with key nearby buildings.
- 3.6.2 Away from the principal frontage, the body of the scheme consists of two levels of residential over retail to create the street frontage of 11m which compares favourably to adjacent buildings.
- 3.6.3 A penthouse level is set back from the street line. The penthouse accommodation is set back some 3.4m to the north elevation and 4.9m from the east elevation. It is concealed by the roofline of the Upper Galdeford frontage with only the lift overrun taller in true elevation.

3.7 Landscape

- 3.7.1 In its existing state the entirety of the site is covered with either hard landscaping or the existing building.
- 3.7.2 The proposed scheme offers the opportunity to introduce communal terraces with a provision for planters and a brown roof in other locations.
- 3.7.3 Along the west facing perimeter of the terrace the wall extends 1.8m above the finishes level. This is predominantly a safety measure to prevent falls but it also offers an element of privacy. This wall, above terrace level, has been shown as a dotted line on elevations to prioritise the residential west facing elevation.
- 3.7.4 In the public realm hard landscaping has been redesigned to create a more attractive, high quality surface with new planters alongside the level change with the existing road leading to the car park. New seating has been provided beside the taxi rank.

3.8 Ecology

- 3.8.1 The existing building offers little in the way of green infrastructure. However, the proposed scheme introduces communal terraces at first floor and penthouse levels and brown roof provision. These measures would offer a significant benefit in terms of biodiversity and water attenuation.
- 3.8.2 A bat report has been undertaken and no evidence of potential roost locations were found.

3.9 Appearance

- 3.9.1 The design of the principal frontage employs the scale, architecture, materiality and detailing of the traditional architecture found on the fringe of Ludlow town centre and is intended to be sympathetic to the architecture of the adjacent Conservation Areas and their historical assets. The design is a product of a series of study tours of the town's historic core.
- 3.9.2 Away from the principal frontage a similar approach to massing and materiality have been employed but using a more contemporary architecture referencing Ludlow's Georgian period buildings. Crisp detailing, scale, rhythm and high-quality materials ensure the building is appropriate.
- 3.9.3 The penthouse level predominantly consists of glazed curtain walling with a projecting eaves detail.

South Elevation

- 3.9.4 The south elevation is defined by four projecting gables and two recessive elements with dormers sharing a traditional roof design. At ground level shopfront and the entrance to the residential components and residents' lounge repair the streetscape by providing a comprehensive active frontage with enhanced legibility.
- 3.9.5 The form of the southwest and southeast corners 'book end' the principal elevation. The treatment here imposes a harmonious hierarchy to the elevation at the nodal points identified in the context analysis. The three-dimensional geometry of the gabled form turns the corner with robust legibility.
- 3.9.6 At the junction of Galdeford and Tower street, the new buildings will preserve and frame an important vista along Tower Street with the tower of St Laurence's Church. The tower is visible over the neighbouring rooftops.

- 3.9.7 The elevation will consist of a combination of brickwork and two shades of render in various configurations appropriate to the site's location at the fringe of the town centre. The composition adds variety to the massing and establishes hierarchy.

Entrance doors, fenestration and shopfront design are derived from the characteristics of best practice local precedents identified over a series of study tours.

- 3.9.8 The setting out of the elevation was conceived with the existing townscape's oblique and vignette views in mind.

East Elevation

- 3.9.9 The southern extremity of the east elevation is defined by the gabled corner feature described above before stepping back to a rendered element under a traditional roofscape. The building line steps out to form the entrance to the second retail unit. This defines and encloses a more generous public realm which facilitates easier crossing of the car park access road. It also defines a change in the design language reflecting the shift in character areas.

This component draws on elements of Ludlow's rich Georgian past to create a robust active frontage addressing existing legibility failings to create a safe, overlooked pedestrian route from the car park to the town centre. The frontage is treated with a parapet similar to the Georgian townhouses of Ludlow's historic streets. The form and massing relates more appropriately to the buildings and urban realm of the north and east, in particular, the Library.

- 3.9.10 Materials consist of red brickwork similar to the town's Georgian typology with recessive render elements to define three distinct bays. The retail element sits below a 'piano nobile' with a series of oriel windows and Juliet balconies above. These are designed to take advantage of the excellent views to the east and north. These create a rhythm to the residential facade. The penthouse units are stepped back from the façade and will only be visible as passing glimpses on in distant views looking toward the town centre.

West Elevation

- 3.9.11 The narrow alley running between the site and 9 Tower Street will permit only oblique perspective views of the east elevation. Nonetheless, the residential component's east façade is subdivided into bays defined by the same palette of materials. The apartments are set back from the boundary to create and overlook a communal residents' terrace. At ground level the existing articulated wall will be replaced with a wall referencing the form below the piano nobile on the east elevation using a more appropriate brickwork choice and bond. Fire escape and service doors from the retail unit will be required on the east side (subject to tenant's layout).

North elevation

- 3.9.12 The materials form and massing continue the theme developed along the east elevation. Passive solar Trombe walls offer a sustainable heating solution to the north facing apartments.

The massing has been resolved with the principles of robust design foremost. Frontages and the creation of the 'proportion structure' to develop a public realm between the site and the library in the future should the opportunity arise.

3.10 Archaeology

- 3.10.1 The site was comprehensively excavated in the 1980s when the existing building was built.
- 3.10.2 The adjacent building at 9 Tower Street was seen to have high potential for medieval and post-medieval Finds, due to its proximity to the Town Wall and Gate. The proposed site is further removed from such assets.

3.11 Access

- 3.11.1 Vehicular Access for the residential unit uses a realigned version of the existing service yard access to the north of the site. This leads to dedicated parking for twelve, including two disabled spaces. Level access is provided to the ground floor circulation.
- 3.11.2 Residential bin stores are located at the corner of the building to facilitate a manageable refuse collection strategy.

3.11.3 A dedicated cycle and scooter store for residents is provided off the car park. This is secure, covered and well lit.

Provision for dedicated outside storage is also made for residents.

3.11.4 Servicing for the retail units is proposed to be along Upper Galdeford. Refuse is to be stored within the units for collection. Deliveries and refuse will be trolleyed to and from the unit's stores.

3.11.5 The existing levels allow for easy access to the retail units and the residential entrances at ground floor.

Means of escape for residents with restricted mobility is addressed by a protected refuge within the stair cores.

A DDA compliant WC is provided at ground floor level within the residential component.

3.11.6 The scheme benefits from its proximity to the station, other public transport options, the taxi rank, amenities offered in the town centre, culture, healthcare and the nearby supermarkets to the north. This high level of connectivity is expected to ensure the number of vehicle journeys is minimised.

3.11.7 The alleyway between 9 Tower Street and the proposed site is to be retained.

3.12 Roofscape

3.12.1 The roof is arranged as a series of interconnecting pitched roofs covered with plain clay tiles to harmonise with the surrounding roofscape. The ridge heights and roof spans vary to add interest to the roofscape and to visually reduce the apparent mass of the building.

3.12.2 North of Upper Galdeford core of the site, the roofs design changes to a create series of terraces consisting of either private or communal residents' landscaped amenity space or brown roof designed with water attenuation and bio-diversity in mind.

3.12.3 The lift tower is expressed as a separate element with ppc aluminium micro-louvres and an inverted roof.

3.13 Sections

3.13.1 The retail units require a taller floor to floor height than the residential units at 4.6m. A podium level is provided to accommodate the apartment units. The building line steps back along the west to accommodate the communal residents' terrace.

3.13.2 As indicated on 3.6.3 the penthouse level steps back from the façade to limit views in from the south and reduce the perceived massing from the car park.

4.0 Sustainable transport, deliveries, refuse and recycling.

4.1.1 A large public car park is located to the north of the site. The car park is the base of the Ludlow "Co Wheels" car-sharing club.

4.1.2 A new service entrance in the west and east elevations will provide an alternative to deliveries being made through the front entrance. A new refuse and recycling store will be created within the store area to the rear of the ground floor.

4.1.3 A communal residents' refuse and recycling stores will be provided to the north for each of the apartments near the car park access road.