The John Barleycorn, 3 Weymouth St, Warminster, BA12 9NP

VACANT BUILDING CREDIT STATEMENT

4.3.1 Paragraph 65 of the NPPF (2023) states that to support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution should be reduced by a proportionate amount. Footnote 30 states that this should be 'equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings'.

4.3.2 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that 'national policy provides an incentive for brownfield development on sites containing vacant buildings. Where a vacant building is brought back into any lawful use or is demolished to be replaced by a new buildings, the developer should be offered a financial credit equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of relevant vacant buildings when the local planning authority calculates any affordable housing contribution which will be sought'

(Paragraph 026 Reference ID: 23b-026-20190315).

Paragraph 027 of the PPG states that the calculation for determining affordable housing when vacant building credits (VBC) apply, is as follows:

"The existing floorspace of a vacant building should be credited against the floorspace of the new development. For example, where a building with a gross floorspace of 8,000 square metres is demolished as part of a proposed development with a gross floor space of 10,000 square metres, any affordable housing contribution should be a fifth of what would normally be sought." (Paragraph 027 ID: 23b-027-20190316).

Paragraph 028 of the PPG, states that VBC applies where the building has not been abandoned. The courts have held that, in deciding whether a use has been abandoned, account should be taken of all relevant circumstances, such as:

• The condition of the property.

• The period of non-use.

• Whether there is an intervening use; and

• Any evidence regarding the owner's intention.

It may be appropriate for authorities to consider:

• Whether the building has been made vacant for the sole purposes of redevelopment.

• Whether the building is covered by an extant or recently expired planning permission for the same or substantially the same development.

The broad effect of VBC is therefore that, where "vacant" buildings are to be redeveloped or reused as part of a residential development, any planning permission which would ordinarily attract a requirement to provide affordable housing or a financial contribution in lieu, a credit is to be given.

The Wiltshire Local Plan Pre-Submission draft 2020-2038 (Regulation 19) September 2023 says the following:

If there are existing buildings on sites, vacant building credits could be applied and Community Infrastructure Levy payments could be reduced, if the existing buildings has been in lawful use for a continuous period of 6 months within the past 3 years.

National policy recognises the importance of bringing suitable vacant sites back into use for housing and provides an incentive for brownfield redevelopment on sites which contain vacant buildings.

A vacant building credit may be applied against the affordable housing

requirement in this case because:

• The building is vacant and cannot be said to be 'abandoned' (within the meaning of the term adopted by the courts and having regard to the buildings recent history).

• The application of VBC would incentivise development of the site, in line with the intention of national policy.

• The building has not been made vacant for the sole purpose of redevelopment.

- The entire building has been vacant since 3rd April 2016. The previous property owner unsuccessfully marketed the property for occupation from February 2019 to December 2019, with Cooper and Tanner. The full marketing report prepared by Cooper and Tanner accompanies this pre application submission and therefore not repeated in full within this report. However, we do draw on the conclusions of the Marketing Report as follows:

  "An extensive marketing campaign has been undertaken both for sale or to let.
  There has been no demand or appetite to rent the premises whether that be as a whole or in parts.
  Interest has been received to purchase the property yet these proposals have not been agreeable to the vendor/come to fruition. However, those parties that have expressed an interest in considering a purchase have primarily been from those seeking to redevelop the site for residential use.
  Based on the advertising undertaken and feedback received we can conclude that there is no demand to occupy the property for a commercial use and that a conversion to residential use i.e. multiple flats may be considered the most appropriate and viable use of the building.
  The building is Grade II listed and worthy of preservation. We are of the opinion that vacant premises do not benefit the town centre and regeneration of redundant properties assist in improving the town centre."
- The premises continued to be marketed during the early part of 2020, but with no further interest shown, was acquired by the applicant in March 2020

• The site is not covered by an extant or recently expired planning permission for development.

There are no local policies which seek to govern the application of VBC in Wiltshire although it is noted that VBC is referred to at paragraph 5.57 of the Wiltshire Local Plan Pre-Submission draft 2020-2038 (Regulation 19).

The existing (vacant) floorspace (GIA) in this case is 10,426 ft^2.

The total proposed floorspace (GIA) for the listed building plus the proposed new dwelling is

9,398 ft^2 + 1001 ft^2 = 10,399 ft^2. (See attached schedule of areas).

As the existing floor is greater than the proposed floor area this will negate the requirement for an affordable housing requirement due to the application of VBC.

11th November 2024

DHA ARCHITECTS

JOB NO	978
JOB NAME	The John Barleycorn
DOCUMENT	Schedule of Areas
REV:	G
DATE	16.08.24

LISTED BUILDING - EXISTING FLOOR BY FLOOR GIA

Floor	TOTAL/sqm	TOTAL/sqft
B	248.3	2673
G	301.1	3241
1 - Front Block	166.2	1789
1 - Rear Block	85.8	924
2	167.2	1800
TOTAL	**968.6**	**10,426**

TOTAL EXISTING FLOOR AREA	**10,426**

LISTED BUILDING - PROPOSED FLOOR BY FLOOR GIA

Floor	TOTAL/sqm	TOTAL/sqft
B	248.3	2673
G - Front Block	129.1	1390
G - Rear Block	81.3	875
1 - Front Block	166.2	1789
1 - Rear Block	81.0	872
2	167.2	1800
TOTAL	**873.1**	**9,398**

PROPOSED NEW BUILDING RESIDENTIAL UNIT GIA

Unit	TOTAL/sqm	TOTAL/sqft
1	93.0	1001
TOTAL	**93.0**	**1001**

TOTAL PROPOSED FLOOR AREA	**10,399**