



**Historic Building
Advisory Service**

Change of Use of First Floor Support Statement

Post Office House, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire



March 2026
Reference: 251001

**CHANGE OF USE OF THE FIRST FLOOR
POST OFFICE HOUSE
HIGH STREET
TISBURY
WILTSHIRE**

Planning Support Statement

Prepared on behalf of

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Planning Support Statement

Summary



Fig: Post Office House from the west

The Historic Building Advisory Service was commissioned by Ertrad Ltd to produce a planning support statement to accompany a planning application to consider the change

of use of the first floor of Post Office House, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire from residential (C3a) to planning class E (offices). The second floor will remain as residential use (C3a) and on the ground floor alterations will be made to ensure the post office is made more secure.

This document is to be considered to be part of the overall planning application.

At present the first and second floors comprise a four bedroom flat that was formerly where the postmaster/mistress would have lived, but there is no garden or other external recreational space associated with this property, which makes it unsuitable for family use. However, there is a demand for small one bedroom flats as well as micro office units in Tisbury and the change of use, with associated alterations will meet that objective.

Externally there will be no changes to the appearance of the building so the proposal will not have any impact on the conservation area within which this property is located. Internally the only significant alteration is to re-position the stairs from the ground to first floor so as to greatly reduce any risk of security to the post office, whilst at the same time providing a direct access provision to the upper floors from the street.

This proposal aligns with local planning policies in the form of TisPlan and the revised TisPlan2, where it is acknowledged that the rate of housing development in Tisbury has not been matched in recent years by employment opportunities. These documents encourage improved provision and support for local services and businesses in this part of the village, where the site sits in the commercial hotspot where office spaces are sought-after. There is also a high demand for smaller, lower-cost housing units, especially by younger people in the area, which this proposal will meet.

**CHANGE OF USE OF THE FIRST FLOOR
POST OFFICE HOUSE
HIGH STREET
TISBURY
WILTSHIRE**

Planning Support Statement

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 The Historic Building Advisory Service was commissioned by Ertrad Ltd to produce a planning support statement to accompany a planning application to consider the change of use of the first floor of Post Office House, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire from residential (C3a) to planning class E (offices). The second floor will remain as residential use (C3a) and on the ground floor alterations will be made to ensure the post office is made more secure.
- 1.1.2 This document takes into account the building as it presently stands and the conceptual and design procedure that has been undertaken and which forms the basis of this planning application.

1.2 Statement Content

- 1.2.1 The aim of this statement is to produce an overall impression of the property and its setting at the time of the design process and explain what the overall objective the application is intended to achieve. This also includes a consideration and details of the design process that has been undertaken to achieve that purpose.
- 1.2.2 The existing internal layout is provided to show how the alterations to the property. These drawings have been used throughout to inform the design along with a consideration of the fabric and nature of construction of the structure.
- 1.2.3 This planning support statement has been compiled generally in line with good practice to meet the requirements of NPPF in helping to provide information to enable a constructive consideration of the planning application it supports.

1.3 Survey Information

- Premises : Post Office House
- Location: Post Office House,
High Street,
Tisbury,
Wiltshire
SP3 6LD,
- Applicant: Ertrad Ltd
- Current Use: Post Office and flat above
- Listed Building? No
- Registered Park / Garden No
- Scheduled Monument No
- Conservation Area? Tisbury Conservation Area
- National Park / Landscape? Cranborne Chase
- Designated Greenbelt? No

2 GENERAL

2.1 Location



Fig 2.1: The site

- 2.2.1 The Post Office House is located on the High Street at the junction with The Avenue and The Square in the commercial centre of Tisbury, where it is also within the Tisbury conservation area. In this position the site is approximately an inverted triangular shape with the blunted point to the south, which faces the top of The Square.
- 2.2.2 The High Street is orientated on an approximately north - south axis on the west side of the building, where there is a slope in the ground from the north to the south past. The Avenue runs back along the in a general easterly direction and approximately on a more even level.
- 2.2.3 The building is at the south end of a terrace of houses and offices that run down alongside the High Street from the north. Due to the shape of the site, there is only a very small area of external space on the east side of the building that is mostly used for waste bins connected with the property.

- 2.2.4 This is in a primarily commercial part of the village where there are offices and shops on the ground floors of adjacent buildings and a mixture of offices and flats on the upper floors. There are some individual houses in comfortably sized plots just to the north of Post Office House and facing onto the High Street as well as others to the east on The Avenue as well as to the southwest across The Square.

2.2 Description



Fig 2.2.1: Post Office House from The Square

- 2.2.1 The post office sits in a raised position, due to the ground slope so that the main entrance is from the north end of The Square on the south side, where it is approached by a set of external steps. On the west elevation is an entrance to the flat above and there is a further external access on the east side as a service door to the ground floor.
- 2.2.2 The building is a three storey end of terrace structure comprising ground, first and attic floors. The entirety of the ground floor is used by Tisbury post office for direct public facing business as well as ancillary storage and staff facilities. This layout is interrupted by a stair case accessed from a private door off the High Street to get access to the upper floors.

- 2.2.3 At present the first and second floors comprise a single four-bedroom maisonette. This contains living and dining rooms, a small bedroom, a kitchen, and a bathroom on the first floor, and on the second floor there are three bedrooms. However, this residential unit lacks any external amenity space, a matter that is not considered as acceptable for such a large, family sized property.



Fig 2.2.4: Post Office House from the east

- 2.2.4 Externally Post Office House is a late 19th C building constructed, as is typical for many other houses in the High Street in red brick with decorative bands of yellow bricks at first-floor level and dressing around the window and door openings and quoining on the corners. The roof is pitched with three gables, on the west, south and northeast elevations and is covered with natural slates.
- 2.2.5 It has a single storey extensions faced with brick on the east side that a mono pitched roofs with a membrane cover. Over the public entrance on the south elevation there a lead roofed porch built of brick and matching the main part of the building.

3 PROPOSED WORKS

3.1 Objective

- 3.1.1 At present the internal layout of the building is much as it was in the 19th C when a village post office operation would have been a smaller and largely family run enterprise, where the owner lived over the shop. However, standards and expectation of family life have moved on, but this building has remained the same and so much of it is not suitable for purpose and remains empty and idle.
- 3.1.2 The main problem with the present layout of the building is the primary travel route through the ground floor that effectively runs through the secure, back of counter, part of the post office. That separates the public section from the associated storage part behind and involves the need to continually open and close security doors on each side of the ground floor corridor. To do so makes the operation of the post office inefficient and so the upper floors are unable to be used efficiently.
- 3.1.3 This proposal will see internal alterations to be provide dedicated access to the first floor from an external west door and allow the post office to become a single working entity. On the first floor, what is currently part of what would have been owner's living accommodation, is proposed to become micro offices and the top floor a small flat that meets local market demand.
- 3.1.4 The outcome of the change of use of the first floor and the associated internal alterations will be to enable the upper floors of this property to be brought back in full beneficial use for the benefit of the owner of the building as well as Tisbury as a wider community. On the ground floor the efficient and secure operation of the post office will help ensure its survival as an essential part of this much needed provision to the village.

3.2 The Works

- 3.2.1 It is proposed to change the use of the first floor from dwelling (class C3a) to offices (Class E), which not involve any changes of appearance to the exterior of the building. Any alterations will be purely internal.
- 3.2.2 So as to ensure safe usage of the whole of the building it is proposed to remove the present staircase between ground and first floor level, which is positioned on the east side of the ground floor and is approached through the post office in the back of counter area. In that position it presents a security problem, which would have been less if was only occupied by the post master/mistress, but with free use of this by outsiders is not acceptable. Similarly, there is no direct and protected fire escape route from the upper floors to the street door, which in the event of a fire in the ground floor could result in smoke logging the upper floors.



Fig 3.2.2: Existing ground floor travel route and stairs to first floor

- 3.2.3 In place of the existing stairs a new, single run staircase is to be installed from a lobby to be formed just inside the High Street door direct to the first floor. The front part of the post office will continue to be able to get to the rear rooms through the existing connecting doorway under the new stairs. The connecting door from the back part of the post office to the front door lobby will be upgraded to security fire resistant form.
- 3.2.4 On the east side of the ground floor to the post office the existing ground to first floor stairs are to be removed completely and the stairwell to the first floor will be closed over. That will provide a secure and fire proof separation in that position.

- 3.2.5 On the first floor, where a new stair well will be formed to the centre part of the landing, with a timber balustrade formed around the opening to match the existing. In doing so the small room on the High Street side, which is now study / bedroom 4, will have the stud wall to the landing removed to enable the stairs to be installed and where the existing window to that room will provide natural light to the altered first floor landing and stairwell.



Fig 3.2.5: Existing first floor landing

- 3.2.6 The office in the northwest corner of the first floor is to have the access repositioned as the existing position will be cut across by the new stairwell. This new door will be to fire resisting standard for this location and all the other doors servicing what will be offices will be upgraded to appropriate standards.
- 3.2.7 At the back of the landing where the former stairs are removed this space is to be used as part of the landing. The existing bathroom is to provide sanitary accommodation for the proposed first floor offices. The northeast first floor room, presently the kitchen, will be stripped of its fittings to become a single office, while the other rooms can be used in an unaltered manner.

- 3.2.8 The staircase between the first and second floors is to be retained in its present position and form, but it will be partially enclosed to ensure fire and security separation between uses and occupiers on these floors. To do this a new fire-resistant walls will be erected to the upper side of the stairs as well as having it suitably underlined to separate the two uses. A new entrance door and screen for the top floor flat will be formed on the mezzanine landing between the levels.
- 3.2.9 The second floor will remain largely unaltered, with only a small shower room inserted into the northeast room to provide sanitary facilities to this residential unit. The remainder of that room will become a small kitchen. The remaining rooms will become a bedroom and living room.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1.1 The proposal seeks to change the use of the current first floor of the building from residential (class C3a) to commercial (class E). The second floor will be altered to form a one-bedroom residential unit and so still remain as class C3a.
- 4.1.2 Post Office House is not a listed building, but it is within the Tisbury conservation area and the proposal will not affect the external appearance of the property, as the works are only internal alterations. Therefore, the character or appearance of the conservation area will not be adversely affected.
- 4.1.3 Currently the first and second floor residential and ground floor financial uses of the building share the same side entrance, ground floor communal hallway and staircase and so results in security and privacy concerns with an intuition such as the post office. When this was all occupied by the post master/mistress and their family that was not a problem, but it now means that the upper floors are effectively un-usable because of those problems.
- 4.1.4 Both the Wiltshire Core Strategy and TisPlan1&2 seek to bring public benefit by balancing provision of affordable homes with local employment and commercial uses. This proposal seeks to meet those aims by bringing the upper floors properly back in to beneficial use. To do that the staircase from ground to first floor will be relocated and so modify the floor traffic routes to separate the ground from first and second floor. The post office use will become properly secure and brought together as a single entity, while the floors above will have direct access and fire escape provision.
- 4.1.5 The top floor will be modified to become a small flat with the installation of fire proof walls and door to separate it from the new offices on the first floor. Those will all be fire separated and have communal sanitary accommodation.