

ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

In Support of Full Planning Permission

Change of Use and Conversion of Ground Floor Restaurant (Class E) to One Self-Contained 2-Bedroom Residential Flat (Class C3) Including Replacement Windows, Doors and Cycle Storage

1A–1C Mansfield Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 6EB

1. Introduction

This Energy and Sustainability Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the change of use and conversion of the existing ground floor restaurant unit at 1A–1C Mansfield Road, Baldock, to form one self-contained two-bedroom residential flat.

The application also includes the replacement of the existing timber windows and doors on the ground and first floors with bespoke white uPVC units designed to replicate the existing opening styles and proportions.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the North Hertfordshire Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (September 2024), which requires proportionate sustainability and energy information to accompany minor developments of fewer than 10 dwellings.

The proposal relates to the re-use and refurbishment of an existing building and does not involve any extensions, increase in built form, or additional land take.

2. The Site and Existing Building

The application site comprises an existing two-storey mixed-use building situated on Mansfield Road within the built-up area and Town Centre Area of Baldock.

The ground floor has most recently operated as a restaurant/takeaway use, however this unit has been vacant since April 2026. The first floor remains in residential use.

The building is located within a highly sustainable urban location with immediate access to:

- Shops and services
- Public transport
- Employment opportunities
- Healthcare facilities
- Community infrastructure
- Baldock railway station

The proposal seeks to bring the vacant commercial unit back into active use through conversion to residential accommodation.

The submitted plans confirm the proposed unit will provide a two-bedroom flat with an internal layout comprising:

- Open plan kitchen/living/dining area
- Two bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Internal storage
- External cycle storage for two bicycles

3. Existing Energy Performance

The existing building has been assessed under a valid Energy Performance Certificate and currently achieves an Energy Rating B (score 39), which demonstrates that the building already performs well in comparison with typical existing stock.

The EPC identifies:

- Main heating source: Grid supplied electricity
- Existing total floor area: 69sqm
- Existing building emissions: 61.33 kgCO₂/m² per year

This provides a strong existing baseline for the building's energy performance.

The accompanying EPC recommendation report identifies glazing improvements and air tightness improvements as practical measures to further improve energy efficiency.

The proposed development directly incorporates these improvements as part of the refurbishment works.

4. Sustainable Reuse of Existing Building

The proposal represents an inherently sustainable form of development through the re-use of an existing vacant building.

By retaining the existing building structure, walls, roof and overall form, the proposal significantly reduces embodied carbon compared to demolition and new build construction.

The scheme will:

- Retain the existing structural fabric
- Avoid unnecessary demolition waste
- Reduce the need for new construction materials
- Extend the life of the building

- Bring a vacant building back into productive use

This aligns with sustainable construction principles and supports efficient land use within an established urban area.

The re-use of previously developed land within a town centre location is consistent with national sustainability objectives.

5. Energy Efficiency Measures

Although the proposal is a conversion rather than new-build development, several improvements will enhance the thermal and energy performance of the property.

The most significant measure is the replacement of the existing timber windows and doors.

The existing windows are in poor condition and contribute to thermal inefficiency.

The proposed bespoke double-glazed uPVC replacements will:

- Improve insulation values
- Reduce heat loss
- Improve air tightness
- Reduce draughts
- Improve internal thermal comfort
- Reduce energy demand

These works directly address recommendations within the EPC and will improve the operational performance of the building.

In addition, internal refurbishment works will allow opportunities for further thermal improvements where practical, including upgrading insulation to walls and ceilings where feasible.

6. Energy Hierarchy

The development follows the recognised energy hierarchy.

Lean – Use Less Energy

The proposal reduces energy demand through fabric-first improvements including:

- Replacement double-glazed windows and doors
- Improved air tightness
- Retention of compact built form
- Potential insulation improvements during refurbishment

This minimises heat loss and reduces energy consumption.

Clean – Supply Energy Efficiently

The property currently utilises electric heating, which will remain.

The converted unit will benefit from modern energy efficient fixtures and systems, including:

- LED lighting throughout
- Energy efficient appliances
- Mechanical extract ventilation
- Water efficient hot water systems where upgraded

These measures improve operational efficiency.

Green – Renewable and Low Carbon Technologies

Given the modest scale of development, its conversion-based nature, and its location within the Baldock Conservation Area, on-site renewable technologies such as solar panels are not proposed as part of this application.

However, the building remains capable of accommodating future low-carbon upgrades should these be considered appropriate in the future.

7. Sustainable Transport

The site occupies a highly sustainable town centre location, reducing reliance on private car use.

Future occupants will benefit from excellent accessibility to day-to-day services and public transport.

The site is within walking distance of Baldock railway station, which provides direct services to London, Cambridge and surrounding areas.

Local bus routes and pedestrian links are also readily available.

The proposal includes secure external cycle storage for two bicycles, encouraging active travel and sustainable transport choices.

No off-street parking is proposed, which reflects the sustainable location of the site and supports reduced car dependency.

8. Water Efficiency

The development will incorporate water efficient fixtures and fittings where practical, including:

- Dual flush WC systems
- Low flow taps
- Water efficient shower fittings
- Efficient white goods

These measures will assist in reducing water consumption and improving overall resource efficiency.

9. Waste Reduction and Materials

The proposal minimises waste generation through refurbishment rather than redevelopment.

By retaining the majority of the existing structure and fabric, material consumption is significantly reduced.

Where replacement materials are required:

- Materials will be used efficiently
- Existing materials will be retained where possible
- Waste will be minimised during construction
- New materials will be sourced responsibly where feasible

This supports sustainable resource management principles.

10. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a sustainable and proportionate form of development through the conversion and re-use of an existing vacant commercial unit within a highly sustainable town centre location.

The scheme provides environmental benefits through:

- Re-use of an existing building
- Reduced embodied carbon
- Retention of existing built form
- Improved thermal performance
- Replacement of inefficient glazing
- Reduced waste generation
- Sustainable travel opportunities
- Water efficiency improvements

Importantly, the existing building already benefits from a strong EPC B rating, providing a solid baseline energy performance, with the proposed works expected to maintain or improve upon this.

Overall, the proposal accords with the sustainability objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the North Hertfordshire Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (2024), and represents an appropriate sustainability response for a minor residential conversion.