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2009/2554

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

The following statement will show how and why the proposed change of use of the former BAE gatehouse, should be granted Planning Permission.

### **The Site**

The site lies to the west of Hatfield town centre and faces E to W (front to back) and is adjacent to Comet Way A1001, opposite the Galleria shopping centre.

The former gatehouse is a detached single storey Art Deco Listed Building, which lies between the adjacent Police Station and Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant, which are also Listed and of Art Deco design.

Nearby is the Listed David Lloyd gymnasium.

There is a complete mixture of different property types and styles, along this road and in the area generally, including new and old, residential, retail, industrial, office, leisure, etc.

The area of the building is 33 sqm or 355 sqft and is not being extended.

### **Assessment**

Since the BAE site closed, some 15 years ago, this building has not been in use.

In fact, it has only been in the last few years that the adjacent Restaurant and Police Station were extensively refurbished and changes of use sought, to make them viable for their current uses.

Over the years it has suffered from various vandalism attacks and graffiti problems.

The exterior of this gatehouse, was recently decorated, but its interior is derelict and unusable.

It has been granted a change of use for retail and this is what our clients wish to use it for, but unfortunately, its internal layout prevents this.

### **Involvement**

The Planning Department have been informally involved, to the extent of gaining advice with regards the proposed alterations.

A site meeting was also carried, involving the Councils Listed Buildings Consultant, who was insistent that the internal blockwork walls should remain intact.

The Councils Planning Department, are taking their advice from the Listed Buildings Officer and therefore agree with them.

### **Evaluation**

The following key issues have been considered at all times during the design stage:

1. The affect of removing the internal walls on local businesses, neighbours and the surrounding is zero.
2. the affect on the Listing of the building, is zero, as the listing relates to the external appearance, design, windows, tiles, etc, and not the internal arrangements/walls
3. the external appearance is to be unaffected by this proposal, which is very important as it sits amongst two other Listed and Historic Buildings.

### **Design**

Inside the building, no Art Deco remains or features are present, save for a 1.5 x 1.5m area of black and white floor tiles in the entrance lobby. Many of these tiles are damaged and they will be replaced as part of the interior refurbishment project.

It is proposed to remove three internal non load bearing plastered block walls, which form the small entrance lobby area.

There are no mouldings, fixtures or furnishings which are Art Deco, save for that mentioned above.

With its prominent location bringing an element of vandalism and graffiti to the area, the in going tenants will be charged with keeping the building in a good state of repair and appearance, so it can be enjoyed by everyone.

This will also include the preservation of the external Art Deco Listed features.

### **Additional Supporting Information**

This proposal, if granted, will create four full time employment positions and two part time positions, benefiting the surrounding area, particularly in these difficult economic times.

Whilst investigating the buildings history and that of the adjacent Police Station and Restaurant, it came to light that in order for them to be used as they are, major alterations and refurbishments needed to take place.

The approved Planning drawings for those two buildings were looked at and it is very clear that at least 60% and maybe as high as 80% of the original existing internal walls have been removed !!

Although we have no evidence of the internal features, we would imagine that as the Police Station is a vast building, many original internal Art Deco features fixed to or in the proximity of removed walls, will have been lost.

There are no such internal features in the gatehouse, meaning that the removal of the internal walls, which total 8m in length, will have no adverse affect on the building and its listed status.

As a result of the above works to the other buildings, a precedent has been set, which should allow us to be granted permission for our works.

The current owner of the building has tried to let/rent this building for over 2 years now and to date, every retail interested party, have not wanted the building because of its non user friendly layout.

### **Summary**

As this is a prominent local historic building, we feel it should be brought back in to full use, but its awkward and restrictive layout, makes it difficult to use as a small retail unit.

This permission therefore must be granted, as the building will continue to suffer from vandalism, graffiti, neglect and not be a positive benefit to the local area.

All the other three nearby Art Deco Listed buildings have been given change of use permission, together with permission to extensively alter their interiors and we so no Planning reason why permission should not be granted.