

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 28 FEBRUARY 2019  
REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING  
AND GOVERNANCE)

6/2018/2498/LB

1-5 PARK STREET HATFIELD AL9 5AT

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHANGE  
OF USE OF THE EXISTING GRADE 2 LISTED BUILDING FROM OFFICE (B1) TO 4 X  
RESIDENTIAL FLATS (C3).

APPLICANT: MR. E FLYNN

(Hatfield East)

## **1 Site Description**

- 1.1 The application site is located to the south east of Salisbury Square and fronts onto Park Street at its junction with Broadway and Fore Street. The site lies within the Old Hatfield Conservation Area and also within an Area of Archaeological significance as outlined in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005. The application building is Grade II Listed and the list description of the building is as follows:

*“Houses and shop. C17 timber frame. Long range with cross wing on S. Roughcast. Plain and machine tile roof. 2 storeys. 2 and 5 windows, left hand end slightly projecting with hipped roof. Ground floor shop with 2 wooden Tuscan columns at door on angle. Right hand part has 2 blank 1st floor windows and raised wall surface below roughcast. Half-glazed door on left with early C19 cut bracketed hood. Tall mid C17 red brick chimney stack towards right with 6 square joined shafts. Late C19 flush sash windows to whole range. Moulded wood cornice.”*

- 1.2 The building maintains an element with a shop appearance, however, the existing lawful use of the building is as offices. There are two single doors on the east elevation separate to the double shop entrance doors on the south east corner of the building, one near the south and one on the north flank.
- 1.3 The building has no external space, albeit a small courtyard area to the south west corner which is enclosed on all sides by walls.
- 1.4 Internally, the building was up until recently laid out as offices. At ground floor level, there is a large open plan office to the north side, alongside a kitchen and toilets. To the south, there are three separate office spaces, alongside the enclosed external courtyard. At first floor level, the space is divided into eight different rooms. There are two first floor doors onto fire escape staircases on the west side of the building.

## **2 The Proposal**

- 2.1 The proposal is for Listed building consent for internal and external alterations in connection with the change of use of the existing grade 2 listed building from office (B1) to 4 x residential flats (C3). The works comprise the alteration of the existing space to form two 1 bedroom flats on the ground floor and two, 2 bedroom/home office flats on the first floor. The external changes include the modification of a window to form a door to access units 3 and 4. Together with replacement windows and doors.
- 2.2 The works are largely internal involving the subdivision of existing rooms including new partition walls and closing off internal doors, as well as the creation of one new internal door opening at first floor level (Unit 3). At ground floor, the space would be divided into seven rooms including an entrance hallway for separate access to units 3 and 4. The works would also result in seven rooms at first floor level. The works would also create and reinstate new internal entrances to the basement to be used as storage for the occupants of the new dwellings.
- 2.3 There is an associated application for planning permission for the change of use and the external alterations. This is assessed under application reference 6/2018/2497/FULL.

### **3 Reason for Committee Consideration**

- 3.1 This application for Listed Building consent was not specifically called in. However, in relation to the associated application for planning permission, Councillor Hebden has called in this planning application.
- 3.2 Councillor Hebden's reason for call-in states:

*"I would like to call in this application as I believe that this is of great local and public interest that requires open discussion to ensure the correct decision is made. This building has been subject to unsuccessful planning applications and remained unused for some years; good use of this property would certainly enhance the local area. Having reviewed the application I believe that clarity is required, prior to any decision being made, regarding – the viability of the project, internal works, disruption caused by building works and parking availability."*

- 3.3 On this basis, is considered appropriate for this associated Listed Building consent application to also be presented to the Development Management Committee so a full assessment of the issues can be made.

### **4 Relevant Planning History**

- 4.1 Application Number: 6/2017/1369/LB    Decision: Refused    Decision Date: 19 January 2018  
Proposal: Change of use of the existing grade 2 listed building from B1 office to 4 no. residential flats (C3) with associated internal and external alterations.
- 4.2 Application: 6/2018/2497/FULL  
Decision: Pending  
Decision Date: Pending  
Proposal: Change of use of the existing grade 2 listed building from office (b1) to 4 x residential flats (c3) with associated internal and external alterations

## **5 Relevant Planning Policy**

- 5.1 -National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF)
- Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016
- SADM 15 – Heritage

## **6 Site Designation**

- 6.1 It is Grade II listed and within the Old Hatfield Conservation Area. It is also within an Area of Archaeological Significance.

## **7 Representations Received**

- 7.1 The application was advertised by means of neighbour notification letters, a site notice and a press notice. A total of six representations were received, one in support of the proposal and five objections. One Comment has also been received. The comments for each are summarised below:

### *Objections*

- Harm to the listed building (x 2 17 Fore Street) (see associated listed building consent application reference 6/2018/2498/LB).
- Gross overdevelopment of the site (x 2 17 Fore Street, 18c Salisbury Square)
- Lack of marketing for the site as offices (x 2 17 Fore Street)
- Impact on the Eight Bells Pub (x 2 17 Fore Street, OHRA)
- Not a viable development/Loss of offices (OHRA)
- Inaccurate plans and unauthorised external staircase that exist (18c Salisbury Square)
- Overlooking (18c Salisbury Square)
- Parking issues (OHRA, 18c Salisbury Square, 10 Park Street)
- Noise/Disruption during construction (OHRA, 18c Salisbury Square)
- Lack of consultation from the developer (OHRA)

### *Support*

- It should be approved. Old building have their constraints, compromises may be required (7 Park Street)

### *Comment*

- The building has been vacant for years, the subdivision proposed is not the “optimum” conversion. It is not accepted that residential is the only viable use. If the application is granted, suggested conditions pertaining to materials and keeping photographic records are suggested (Gascoyne Cecil estates)

## **8 Consultations received**

- 8.1 Place Services– No objection subject to conditions
- 8.2 Hertfordshire County Council (Historic Environment Advisor) – No objection subject to conditions to safeguard the Heritage Assets.

## **9 Analysis**

- 9.1 Section 16 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act states that the local planning authority shall have “*special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*”. The specific historic environment policies within the NPPF are contained within paragraphs 184-202. Paragraph 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July, 2018) states, ‘*In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*
- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
  - *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
  - *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’.*
- 9.2 Paragraph 193 of the Framework outlines that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, ‘great weight’ should be given to the asset’s conservation and the more important the asset the greater the weight it should be given. Paragraph 194 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and world heritage sites, should be wholly exceptional. Where the harm is considered less than substantial Paragraph 196 states that this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, its optimum viable use. The NPPF therefore does allow for a degree of harm to a heritage asset in particular circumstances.
- 9.3 The proposal to convert the building from office space into four flats can be sensitively accommodated within the building without causing undue harm to its significance, particularly bearing in mind the small size of the plot and the lack of amenity space and parking (although these issues are considered as part of the assessment of the associated planning application). The conversion would cause a degree of harm by permanently subdividing the building and therefore impeding the ability to experience and understand the internal layout, however, the proposed scheme utilises existing divisions within the building to logically divide it into four units.
- 9.4 Few alterations are proposed within the basement, other than remedial works to address structural concerns, especially with the 17th century staircase, caused by poor interventions made in the 1970s. On the ground floor it is proposed to create two units, both served by existing external doors on either corner of the building. A further door would be fixed shut and left visible externally, and an existing 20th century sash window will be removed and the opening enlarged to form a doorway. Concerns were raised about the loss of this window and the potential resulting loss of the historic layout of the fenestration, however, the Planning and Heritage Statement submitted with the application has successfully demonstrated with photographic evidence that this window dates from the mid-late 20th century as there was formerly a shopfront in this position. The proposed door would provide access to a communal hallway, enlarged slightly following pre-application comments and now better proportioned, with access through to the 17th century staircase. It is considered to be beneficial that this staircase, as

a key historic architectural feature of the building, remains in communal use. This proposal leave the staircase as a communal feature for the upper flats. Other alterations to the ground floor are also beneficial in removing late 20th century additions, including the proposed replacement of the 20th century shopfront with a more sympathetic design including fanlight and stallriser details.

- 9.5 The proposed first floor alterations are also considered to be acceptable. Modern stud partitions would be removed to reinstate the original proportions, although in other less significant rooms partitions would be inserted. The insertion of a new doorway within Unit 3 has been sensitively designed as a jib door allowing the appearance of the existing panelling to be retained and concealing the door.
- 9.6 On balance, the proposed conversion is considered to be sympathetic to the special interest of the listed building and would not cause undue harm to the significance of the building or this part of the conservation area. The removal of unsympathetic 20th century internal additions to the building, including the fire escape staircase to the rear, and rectifying poor quality past structural interventions are enhancements which provide a degree of mitigation for the works. In accordance with the NPPF paragraph 196, the less than substantial harm caused to the significance of the building is considered to be moderate and should be judged against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the building's optimal viable use. As the exterior of the building would remain largely unchanged, with positive alterations where proposed (replacement shopfront for example), there is considered to be no impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 9.7 In order to further safeguard the Heritage Asset, conditions are recommended to require:
- A written method statement of any structural interventions in relation to the staircase;
  - Additional details of new windows, doors, shopfront at a large scale (1:1 to 1:20 as appropriate) in section and elevation.

## **11 Overall balance and conclusion**

- 11.1 With the imposition of the recommended conditions, the proposal would not significantly impact upon the special interest of the Listed Building. The proposal would be acceptable to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018, and Policy SADM 15 of the Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016.

## **12 Recommendation**

- 12.1 It is recommended that listed building consent is granted subject to conditions.
1. No development shall take place until details of the new windows, doors and the shopfront at a scale of 1:1 to 1:20 (as appropriate) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented using the approved materials and subsequently, the approved materials shall not be changed.

REASON: To ensure the historic and architectural character and setting of the building is properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. No development shall take place until a written method statement of any structural interventions in relation to the main staircase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented using the approved materials and subsequently, the approved materials shall not be changed.

REASON: To ensure the historic and architectural character and setting of the building is properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### DRAWING NUMBERS

3. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

<b>Plan Number</b>	<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Received Date</b>
16_372 L		Proposed Site Plan	1 October 2018
16_372 L	C	Proposed Basement Plan	1 October 2018
110			
16_372 L	D	Proposed Ground Floor Plan	1 October 2018
111			
16_372 L	D	Proposed First Floor Plan	1 October 2018
112			
16_372 L	B	Proposed Roof Plan	1 October 2018
113			
16_372 L	C	Proposed Elevations 1+2	1 October 2018
114			
16_372 L	B	Proposed Elevations 3+4+5	1 October 2018
115			
16_372 L	B	Proposed Elevations 6+7	1 October 2018
116			
16_372 L	C	Proposed First Floor Jib Door	1 October 2018
117			
16_372 L	B	Proposed Entrance Hall Party Wall Panelling	1 October 2018
118			
16_372 L	B	Proposed Basement Ceiling Treatment	1 October 2018
120			
16_372 L	C	Proposed Ground Floor Treatment	1 October 2018
121			
16_372 L	C	Proposed First Floor Treatment	1 October 2018
122			
16_372 L	C	Proposed First Floor Ceiling Treatment	1 October 2018
123			
16_372 L	C	Location Plan	11 October 2018
001			
135PS_G_A		Existing Ground Floor/Site Plan	11 October 2018
135PS_1_A		Existing First Floor	11 October 2018
135PS_R_A		Existing Roof Plan	11 October 2018
135PS_E1_A		Existing Elevation 1	11 October 2018
135PS_E2_A		Existing Elevations 2+3	11 October 2018

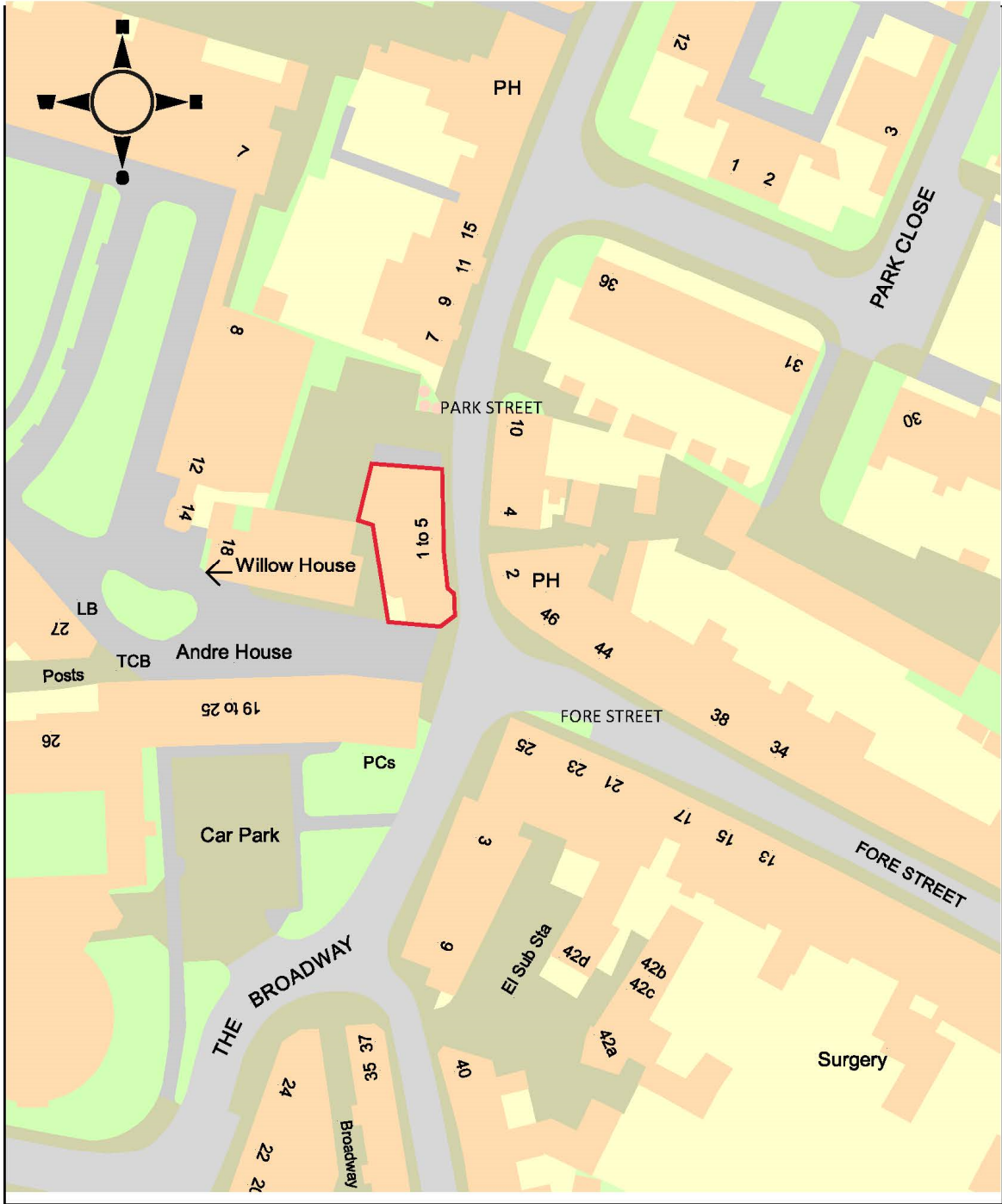
135PS_E3_ A	Existing Elevations 4+5	11 October 2018
135PS_E4_ A	Existing Elevations 6+7	11 October 2018
135PS_B_A	Existing Basement Plan	11 October 2018


REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

Sarah Madyausiku (Development Management)

Date: 07/02/2019

Time Extension: 01/03/2019



 <p>Welwyn HATFIELD</p> <p>Council Offices, The Campus Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE</p>	Title: 1-5 Park Street Hatfield		Scale: DNS
			Date: 2019
	Project: DMC Committee	Drawing Number: 6/2018/2497/FULL	Drawn: Ida Moesner
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