

# Hyphen

1-7 Howardsgate, Welwyn, AL8 6AL  
Design and Access Statement

Filing reference: 6246/3.4

Client: GPL 2014 Ltd

Revision P0

# 1. Introduction

This design and access statement has been prepared by Hyphen to support a planning application for a new roof formation to accommodate additional storey at third floor level to provide two studio flats and seven one-bedroom flats, rear lift tower and ground floor entrance lobby. Hyphen act as an agent on GPL 2014 Ltd.' behalf.

The design submitted in this application follows the design approved in 2017 by a consent 6/2017/0400/FULL also including a new third floor extension. The internal layout of the newly created third floor has been adjusted against the 2017 scheme to provide two studio flats and seven one-bedroom flats. This is to better meet the current housing demand for smaller flats. The design is discussed in detail in section 2 of this statement.

## Existing Property

The building was constructed in the late 1960s and the architectural detailing corresponds with the trends of that period. The building is locally known as Fountain House due to the nearby fountain.

The ground floor of the building is split into several commercial units. A restaurant (Cote) is located in the largest corner unit. The other units are occupied by a hairdresser and a beauty salon. Two units are currently empty. The eastern part of the ground floor is occupied by the Two Willows pub, with the land belonging to the owners of Fountain House. The ground floor areas are separated from the upper floors and have independent means of access and escape.

The first and second floor were used as offices but have been vacant since January 2017 and currently have prior approval for change of use to residential (class C3) Ref: 6/2017/1686/PN11.

The northern end of the building is occupied by licensed premises on the ground and first floor. This has a basement and a small back of house area at the rear of the second floor. There is a separate access and escape with no connection internally with the rest of the building.

## Proposal

The proposal is for a new residential extension that would be located on the roof of the existing building. It is proposed that the extension would accommodate two studio flats and seven one-bedroom flats. The flats would be accessible via extensions to existing staircases serving the first and second floor via fire lobbies. Two flats would benefit from a roof terrace. The terraces are situated in the same locations as in the 2017 scheme - in the south-east corner, and along the east elevation of the flat located in the northern end of the building. A new lift, located adjacent to the rear entrance, and an accompanying entrance lobby are proposed to serve the apartments.

Works to the lower floors are not the subject of this application with the exception of the above-mentioned lift and entrance lobby, and external building services proposed to serve the new floor that are passing through the lower floors.

## Listing Status, Conservation Area

The building is not listed and is not of a particularly high architectural value although it is situated within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. A heritage statement prepared by First Plan is a separate document forming part of the application.

## Location

The site is located at the junction of Howardsgate and Parkway. Howardsgate leads to the Welwyn railway station and is surrounded predominantly by shops, cafes, and restaurants. Parkway has a residential character.

On Howardsgate the site neighbours with the Two Willows public house (previously known as the Cork or formerly Barclay's bank). The adjacent property on Parkway is the Charter House, an office building occupied by

the NHS. NHS occupied the first and second floor of Fountain House until January 2017 and the buildings were connected at second floor level via a glazed link.

There is a service yard to the rear of the building accessible via Wigmores N road. The yard is used for deliveries to the commercial units, for parking, and there is also a refuse store.

There are two entrances to the upper floors of the building, the main one is via Parkway giving access to a staircase and the secondary access is possible via the service yard, where the stair served as a fire exit from the upper floors. The ground floor commercial units and the two licensed premises have their separate entrances to front and rear.

## 2. Design

### Volume, Shape, Proportions

In terms of architectural massing we have maintained the design approved in 2017 as we understand it is deemed appropriate for the location. It is proposed that three existing sections of mansard roofs will be removed and a new roof extension will be built on top of the flat roof for the full length of the building.

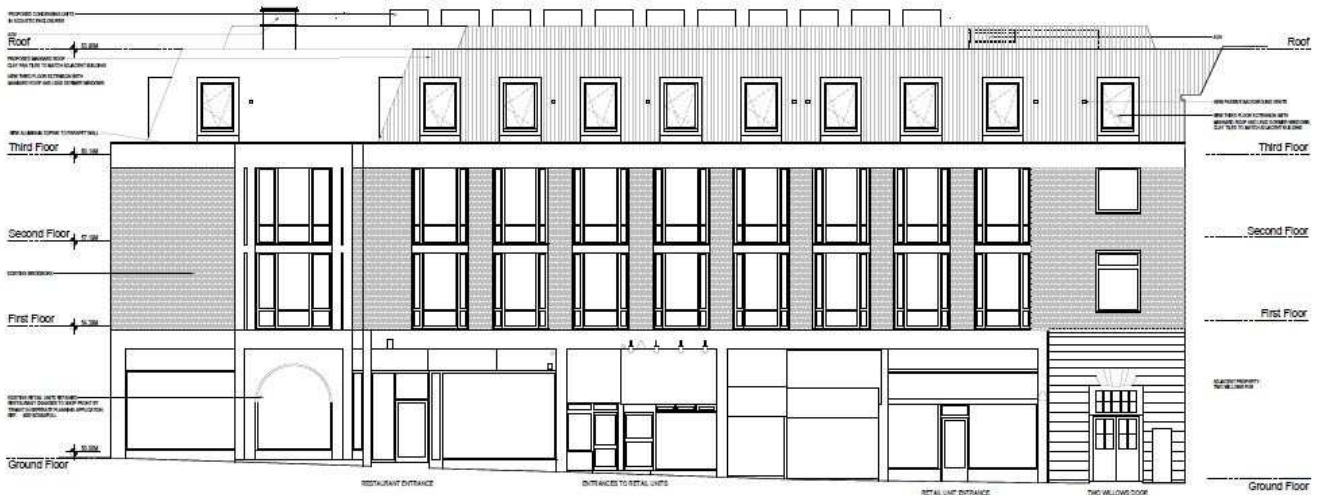
The extension will be constructed as a steel frame with a 70 degree-sloping mansard roof facing Howardsgate and Parkway. The mansard roof will be set back from the parapet wall more than the existing mansards, to follow the 2017 design.

The elevations of the third floor extension facing the rear yard will match in appearance the walls of the lower floors. We have proposed no changes against the 2017 approval.

In terms of proportions we believe the additional storey is a balanced volume on its own and would also be in context with the lower floors. It is proposed that the windows of the roof extension will follow the spacing of the first and second floor windows to assure the whole building is uniform in its appearance.



*Pic.1- Existing building*



Pic.2- Elevation as proposed

### Materials and roof construction detail

With respect to materials proposed for the extension, they follow the 2017 consented design and consent 6/2018/0343/COND. The mansard roof will be covered with clay tiles Wienerberger Old English to match the roof of the adjacent property – the Charter House.

The dormers will be constructed as timber frames and will be clad with lead as the external finish.

The new perimeter walls facing the service yard will be constructed as cavity walls with the external leaf being made of brickwork to match the lower floors. We have proposed Sandfaced bricks from IBStock with a reference West Hoathly Medium as they are the nearest match to the existing bricks.

The existing roof parapet wall, which is heavily stained, will be surveyed and its construction and materials confirmed. We are proposing to apply a thin acrylic render system to the surface of the horizontal parapet band. The system specification will be adjusted following the results of the investigations.

It is envisaged that the coping level of the roof parapet wall will need to be raised slightly – refer to application drawing A380. This is necessary because of the new flat roof design that needs to accommodate current technical standards for roof drainage and thermal insulation). The new parapet wall areas will receive the same finish as the existing one to appear visually as one horizontal band.



Proposed roof tiles  
Wienerberger Old English



Proposed bricks  
IBStock West Hoathly Medium



Proposed render  
Parex Direct system

Pic.3- Main materials proposed for the extension.

The new windows are proposed to be of aluminium, colour matching the existing windows on the lower floors – white.

All new external pipes (as shown on elevations) will be in black metal to match the existing exposed pipework.

The existing ventilation ducts from the restaurant and from the bar will be extended to terminate above the new roof level – refer to submitted building elevations. These ducts are visible only from the service yard.

The new lift tower will be constructed as a cavity wall with internal leaf of a loadbearing blockwork and external leaf of a facing brickwork matching the existing building.

The roof over the rear entrance lobby will be finished with lead sheeting.

## Flat layouts

All flats have a hallway through which the habitable rooms and the bathroom are accessible.

The living/dining and kitchen areas are combined in each flat type. Bathrooms will be fitted with baths (+ shower fittings), WCs, and basins with vanity units. Each flat has a built-in storage cupboard that will contain a hot water cylinder and a distribution board.

## 3. Access

### Car Parking and Vehicular traffic

It is proposed that the scheme will be a car-free development. Visitors to the development would be able to park in the public Pay and Display car parks located in Welwyn Garden City. Transport Statement prepared by TPA is a separate document forming part of the application.

### Bicycle Parking

Nine cycle spaces will be provided in a secure storage by the rear entrance. This is in accordance with Welwyn parking standards.

### Access into and within the building

The main access to the apartments will be of Parkway through extension of the existing stair. In order to improve accessibility of the building a new lift is proposed as part of the scheme. The new lift will be located by the rear stair accessible via the service yard. It is envisaged that the lift car will have dimensions 1150mm x 1550mm. In terms of Building Regulations requirements, the scheme is not required to comply with the Approved Document Part M. The existing staircases will be upgraded as practicable to ensure compliance with the Approved Document K. The third floor is proposed as step free, but the roof terraces will be two steps higher than the new third floor level. This is necessary to accommodate the new roof build up.

## 4. Drawings submitted with the application

- A920 rev.P2 Site Plan
- A013 rev.P4 Existing Ground Floor Plan
- A014 rev.P3 Existing First Floor Plan
- A015 rev.P2 Existing Second Floor Plan
- A016 rev.P2 Existing Roof Plan Plan
- A910 rev.P4 Existing Elevations South and East
- A911 rev.P5 Existing Elevations North and West
- A160 rev.P5 Proposed Ground Floor Plan

- A161 rev.P4 Proposed First Floor Plan
- A162 rev.P3 Proposed Second Floor Plan
- A163 rev.P7 Proposed Third Floor Plan
- A164 rev.P4 Proposed Roof Plan
- A250 rev.P5 Proposed Elevations South and East
- A251 rev.P4 Proposed Elevations North and West
- A252 rev.P2 Proposed schematic selection
- A380 rev.P2 Roof Details
- A382 rev.P2 Roof Details
- A384 rev.P1 Roof Details
- A390 rev.P2 Roof Terrace Balustrade Detail
- 16082/300 rev.A Below Ground Drainage Layout (by Ellis and Moore)
- FGP-669-55-NS-01 Rev.T4

Issued	Revision	Author	Checked
23/04/2018	P0	Jan Melichar	Paul Davis