

**Fountain House, 1-7 Howardsgate,
Welwyn Garden City**

Planning and Heritage Statement

Appeal Ref:

LPA Ref:

Firstplan Ref: 16281

Date: April 2018

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Section 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning and heritage statement considers the proposal for formation of new roof to accommodate additional storey at third floor level to provide 9 self-contained flats (7 x 1 bedroom flats and 2 x studio flats), rear lift tower, ground floor entrance lobby and provision of condensing units in acoustic enclosures.
- 1.2 The application follows a previous approval for a similar mansard scheme for 8 self-contained flats (1 x 1 bedroom and 1 x 2 bedroom) which was approved in November 2017 (6/2017/0400/FULL). The only changes compared with this approved scheme are:
- Subdivision of the two bedroom flat to provide 2 x studio flats; and
 - Provision of five additional condensing units in acoustic enclosures on the roof.
- 1.3 The first and second floors of the building gained a separate prior approval for conversion from office to residential use in September 2017 6/2017/1686/PN11. This has not been implemented and a revised application is being submitted to increase the number of units on these floors. This is a separate proposal and this report deals with the roof level accommodation only.
- 1.4 The proposed residential units at roof level will make efficient use of land in a highly sustainable town centre location. This is in accordance with the NPPF, local policy and the recent Housing White Paper - which seeks to make as much use as possible of previously-developed land for homes.
- 1.5 The flats proposed will be of a high quality with open plan kitchen/living/dining spaces and room sizes which meet the nationally described space standards. A noise report has been submitted to ensure that there will be sufficient sound insulation. The impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers has been taken into consideration.
- 1.7 The design of the extension is as previously approved and reflects other mansard roofs in the vicinity, which are prevalent in the conservation area. The proposed height is will be no taller than neighbouring buildings and will continue to remain subservient to the public open spaces which it faces.
- 1.8 The scheme was previously considered by officers to largely respect the character and context of the conservation area. However, the increase in bulk and scale of the building was found to cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset. Weighed against this, the benefits of the

proposed development, in relation to the provision of much needed housing in a sustainable location, maximising the use of a previously developed site, employment during construction and increased use of nearby facilities were found to outweigh the harm. The new proposals should be considered to continue to have benefits which outweigh any less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area.

- 1.9 The remaining sections of this report set out the relevant background information (Section 2), a scheme description (Section 3), planning policy background (Section 4), planning assessment (Section 5), a heritage statement (Section 6) and the conclusions (Section 7).

Section 2 Background Information

a) Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The site is located on the corner of Parkway and Howardsgate in Welwyn Garden City Centre. It is in a prominent location given that Parkway and Howardsgate are the principal axis and second principal axis forming the town centre. The two roads are wide with central landscaped boulevards and have been described as having a continental character, unlike anywhere else in the UK. At the junction is Coronation Fountain which provides an attractive focal point.
- 2.2 However, although the site is in a prominent location, the prominence of the building is reduced by the deep set back from Howardsgate and corner of the building is inset. This set back serves to draw attention to the wide public spaces which are a key feature of the area.
- 2.3 The building is a three storey property comprising a restaurant, nail parlour, bar and nightclub at ground floor level with offices at first and second floor levels. The offices have been vacant since February 2017 and are subject to a separate prior approval process for residential conversion (6/2017/0101/PN11).
- 2.4 The property is constructed of brick with large windows and a pitched roof. It dates from the late 1960s and is not particularly attractive. However, the building is in keeping with its surroundings and has horizontality which is a key feature of buildings within the conservation area.
- 2.5 The properties surrounding the site are of a variety of heights and masses. However, they complement each other with a prevalence of brick neo-Georgian character, displaying horizontal character which draws attention to the wide open spaces. This includes a prevalence of mansards and dormer windows at roof level.
- 2.6 Adjoining the property on Parkway is Charter House which comprises three storeys with mansard roof and a smaller section of two storeys with mansard. Beyond Charter House, is Park House which is occupied by John Lewis and includes a five storey building fronting Bridge Road and a three storey rear section along Parkway. On the opposite side of Parkway are large detached residential villas.
- 2.7 Adjoining the property on Howardsgate is No.13 which was the original Barclay Bank building by de Soissons, now occupied by the Two Willows public House and No.15 which is the original Post Office

building be de Soissons, now occupied by Prezzo. Both of these properties are key unlisted buildings of merit.

- 2.8 On the opposite side of the junction with Howardsgate is a three storey plus mansard building occupied by Zizzi.
- 2.9 Photographs of the site and surrounding area are attached at Appendix 1.

Appendix 1

b) Planning History

i) The Site

- 2.10 Planning permission was granted for installation of air conditioning units was granted in October 2000 (N6/2000/1139/FP). The retention of two air conditioning units on external wall at first floor level at rear of building was granted in June 2004 (N6/2004/0531/FP).
- 2.11 Planning permission and conservation area consent was granted on 21st October 2004, for 'New roof formation to accommodate additional storey at third floor level to provide six self contained flats (1-2 bed) and change of use from Class B1 (office accommodation) of first and second floors to provide sixteen self-contained flats (1-2 bed), including new replacement windows, rear lift tower and ground floor entrance lobby' (N6/2004/1136/FP and N6/2004/1131/CA). A non-material amendment and approval of conditions applications relating to the above consent were refused in November and December 2016. The refusals were on the basis that the pre-commencement conditions had not been discharged within five years of the consent being granted. The Council therefore considered that the consent was not extant.
- 2.12 Prior approval for the change of use from office (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to include the creation of 14 units was granted in September 2017 (6/2017/1686/PN11). Before this a previous prior approval application for 15 units has been withdrawn in March 2017 (6/2017/0101/PN11).
- 2.13 Planning permission for formation of new roof to accommodate additional storey at third floor level to provide 8 self-contained flats (7 x 1 bedroom flats and 1x 2 bedroom flat.), rear lift tower and ground floor entrance lobby was granted in November 2017 (6/2017/0400/FULL). The materials condition on this consent has subsequently been discharged (6/2018/0343/COND).

2.14 Planning permission for replacement of existing steel windows on first and second floor with new aluminium windows. Replacement of existing ground floor entrance door on Parkway elevation was granted in December 2017 (6/2017/2019/FULL).

ii) The Surrounding Area

2.15 Planning permission was granted for replacement of existing pitched roof with a mansard style roof extension in connection with the provision of 12 self-contained flats, together with alterations to the windows at first and second floor levels at Stonehills House, Stonehills in September 2016 (6/2016/0818/MAJ).

2.16 This approval followed a Prior Approval for the change of use of the first and second floors from B1 (a) offices to C3 dwellinghouses providing 8 no x 1 bed flats, 3 no X studio flats and 12 no x 2 bed flats (N6/2015/0192/OR).

2.17 In granting the planning permission for the roof extension, the officer's report concluded that

“The development would make use of previously developed land in an existing town with suitable infrastructure, transport links and physical and environmental conditions. The physical alterations to the building would cause less than substantial harm to a heritage asset. The public benefits from the proposal, including a contribution to the housing stock, making best use of the site as well as the energy efficiency savings which would result from the development are felt to outweigh the less than substantial harm.”

2.18 The Council considered car free development to be acceptable in this location. It was also found that no amenity space was acceptable by virtue of the sites proximity to outdoor spaces. No planning obligations were sought as the development was considered to be too small scale for pooling under regulation 123 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

Section 3 Application Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks permission for replacement of existing pitched roofs with a mansard to provide 9 flats. The mix of units will comprise 2 x studios and 7 x 1 bedroom flats.
- 3.2 Each 1 bedroom flat will include an open plan living space, double bedroom and bathroom. The studios will be open plan. Two of the flats will have private terrace areas.
- 3.3 The mansard will be constructed of clay tiles with brick to the rear and will include aluminium framed windows and doors. Aluminium and laminated glass balustrades are proposed to the terraced areas. Detailed drawings are submitted to negate the need for conditions.
- 3.4 The application shares many similarities with the previous scheme approved in 2017, including the height and pitch of the roof. However, the two bedroom flat is now proposed to be split to provide two studios.
- 3.5 Furthermore, in order to provide each flat with mechanical ventilation as part of the noise mitigation scheme additional condenser units are proposed at roof level. These are set well back from the front elevation, behind the previously approved screen.
- 3.5 The flats will be accessible via the existing entrances to Fountain House from Parkway, and the rear entrance within the service yard. This will include a lift provided close to the rear entrance which will ensure access for all. The arrangements are the same as those approved in 2017.
- 3.6 The access arrangements have been designed to fit with the first and second floors which were last use as offices but are subject to a separate prior approval for residential use. The provision of lobby doors at each level ensures that there would be security for the office and residential users should there be any reason why the first and second floors are not implemented.
- 3.7 Refuse and cycle storage will be provided close to the rear entrance. Some of works have been implemented as part of the 2004 consent but have been deemed unlawful owing to the pre-commencement conditions not being discharged. Retrospective consent is therefore sort for these works together with enlarged stores to ensure sufficient capacity.

Section 4 Planning Policy

4.1 This section of the report sets out the relevant planning policies to the application. The site is located within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area, the town centre boundary and is included within the primary retail core as a mixed use frontage.

a) **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)**

4.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. The document specifically states that at the heart of the planning system, there is a "*presumption in favour of sustainable development*", which should be seen as a "*golden thread*" running through both plan-making and decision taking.

4.3 The Framework sets out the 12 Core Planning Principles that underpin decision-taking. An important Core Principle states that planning should:

"Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value."

4.4 The design of the built environment is set out as being an important consideration in Section 7. Paragraph 58 stipulates that decisions should aim to ensure that developments optimise the potential of a site to accommodate development, respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

4.5 With regard to heritage assets, the NPPF at paragraph 132 stipulates that when considering the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

4.6 Paragraph 133 states that local planning authorities should refuse consent for proposed development which will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

4.7 Paragraph 134 sets out that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

b) Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2005 as saved 2008)

4.8 Policy SD1 explains that applications will be approved where it can be demonstrated that the principles of sustainable development are satisfied and that they accord with the objectives of the Local Plan.

4.9 Policy R1 promotes development on previously developed land. Policy GBSP2 confirms that development will mainly be concentrated in the towns of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield.

4.10 Policy H2 deals specifically with windfall residential development. It sets out that all applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

(i) The availability of previously developed sites and/or buildings;

(ii) The location and accessibility of the site to services and facilities by transport modes other than the car;

(iii) The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development;

(iv) The ability to reinforce existing communities, including providing a demand for services and facilities; and

(v) The physical and environmental constraints on development of land.

4.11 Policy H6 confirms that in central areas with good accessibility residential development will be expected to be close to or exceed 50 dwellings per hectare provided that the development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area and can satisfy the design policies of the Plan.

4.12 Policy H10 confirms that in all residential developments involving 5 or more dwellings the Council will seek to secure a proportion of dwellings to be built to lifetime homes standard. In each instance dwelling type, site location and topography will be taken into account.

- 4.13 Policy D1 requires a high standards of design. Policy D2 explains that development must respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. Development proposals should as a minimum maintain, and where possible, should enhance or improve the character of the existing area. The Supplementary Design Guidance is also relevant.
- 4.14 Policy D6 confirms that development must enhance and contribute to the legibility of the development itself and of the area in which it is located. Policy D7 seeks for new development to contribute to safer communities, to help with the reduction of the fear of crime. Policy D9 explains that new development should be designed to allow access by the disabled, young children in prams and pushchairs and those who are temporarily disabled through accident or injury.
- 4.15 Policy TCR13 sets out that the Council will seek to maintain and enhance the unique architectural character of, and the quality of the environment in, Welwyn Garden City town centre. All new development must be designed to respect the architectural style of the town centre and enhance the public realm.
- 4.16 Policy D5 explains that the impact on movement patterns must be taken into account. New development will be required to make provision for pedestrian, cyclist and passenger transport facilities. Policy M6 explains that all new development is required to promote cycling. Policy M14 explains that the Council will require parking provision for new development to be made in accordance with the standards set out in the Council's supplementary planning guidance on parking.
- 4.17 Policy R3 deals with energy efficiency and sets out that development should include measures to maximise energy and incorporate the best practical environmental option (BPEO) for energy supply. Policy R10 sets out that new development will be expected to incorporate water conservation measures where applicable.
- 4.18 Policy R19 seeks to ensure that development do not generate an unacceptable level of noise and that future occupiers are adequately protected from the noise and vibration of surrounding land uses.
- 4.19 Policy IM2 sets out provision planning obligations to be agreed between the Council and developers. Policy M4 expands on this for transport contributions.

Section 5 Planning Assessment

5.1 The key issues for consideration in the determination of this application are the principle of the development, the standard of accommodation, the impact on the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers, the impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, highways and parking, waste and sustainability.

a) Principle of the Development

5.2 The provision of additional residential accommodation at roof level was previously considered to be acceptable in 2017. This consent remains extant and is a material consideration as it represents a strong fallback position.

5.3 The principle of residential development should still be considered to be acceptable. The site is previously developed land which is located in a sustainable location. Residential development is therefore in accordance with policies R1, GBSP2 and the NPPF.

5.4 The provision of residential development as a windfall site accords with Policy H2 as the site is well placed for services and facilities including within Welwyn Town Centre and its proximity to the train station and bus station. There is a national shortage of housing as outlined in the recent White Paper and it should be considered that the site can make a small but valuable contribution to housing land supply.

5.5 In addition a high density of housing should be considered to be appropriate in accordance with Policy H6.

b) Quality of Accommodation Provided

5.6 The standard of accommodation was previously considered to be acceptable in the 2017 permission. Double aspect units are provided where feasible and whilst only two units have private terraces, the site is located close to the public gardens along Parkway and Howardsgate and therefore the shortfall of amenity space should be considered to be acceptable in this case.

5.7 With regard to the proposals to subdivide the two bedroom flat to create two studios, the new studios comply with the national technical space standards and are double aspect. One of these units benefits

from a roof terrace. The revised scheme should therefore be found to have a high standard of accommodation.

- 5.8 Concerns were previously raised in the officer's report regarding overlooking from the large terrace to the rear of the north section of the building into living space windows of the north facing elevation in the south section of the building. This was dealt with by a condition requiring a 1.8m high obscured screen. This is now shown on the submitted drawings.
- 5.8 With regard to the previous application, it was confirmed that the residential development is noise sensitive, and the building is within close proximity of noise-generating commercial uses. However, the mitigation suggested within the provided noise report was found to sufficiently overcome potential noise issues for future occupiers. These mitigation measures continue to be proposed. The proposals therefore accord with Policy R19.
- 5.9 The scheme includes the provision of a lift which will enable access by the disabled, young children in prams and pushchairs and those who are temporarily disabled in accordance with Policy D9.

c) Impact on Residential Amenity

- 5.10 The proposed development is primarily at roof level with associated refuse and cycle stores located in the rear service yard. There will be no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

d) Design and Heritage

- 5.11 Design and Heritage matters are discussed in Section 6 of this report. It is concluded that the design is appropriate for the existing building and the conservation area given the prevalence of mansards in the local area, the varied heights of properties in the area and the use of traditional tiles and appropriate detailing. Indeed, the design changes since the 2017 approval are minimal. The only external change is the provision of five additional condensing units on the roof and these have been set well back from the front elevation and screened in a similar way to the previously approved 22 condensing units. They are therefore not considered to harm the character and appearance of the conservation area, furthermore should any harm be found this is outweighed by the planning benefits.

e) Transport

5.12 The proposed development does not include any off-street parking. This was considered acceptable in the granting of the 2017 scheme given that the site is located within the City Centre. It should continue to be considered acceptable for the nine unit scheme.

5.13 Nine cycle parking spaces are proposed within a secure store close to the rear entrance. This meets the Council's standards and accords with Policies M6 and M14.

f) Sustainable development

5.14 The proposed development will include a good standard to insulation and natural daylight. It will also include water efficient appliances. The proposals therefore accord with policies R3 and R10.

g) Waste Management

5.15 A large refuse store is proposed close to the rear entrance. This can provide sufficient storage for the nine residential units and the use of the first and second floors of the property. A separate refuse store is provided for the commercial uses.

Section 6 Heritage Statement

6.1 The site falls within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. As such, due consideration has been given to the provisions and objectives of the NPPF.

a) **Character of the Conservation Area**

6.2 Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area covers a large area of the town to the west of the railway line. It includes the Town Centre and adjoining residential area. It was designated in 1968, shortly after the 1967 Civic Amenities Act which provided for the designation of Conservation Areas.

6.3 The Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) describes the character and history of Welwyn Garden City and sets out a framework for its conservation. It explains that Welwyn Garden City became world famous almost from the time of its foundation by Ebenezer Howard and the presentation of its Master Plan by Louis de Soissons, both in 1920.

6.4 The appraisal explains that

“All sources of evidence and commentary seem to agree that, delightful though its architecture, in ensemble is, the principal historic significance of Welwyn Garden City lies in its planning- possibly the highest expression of the visionary physical, social, cultural and economic ideals of their period, drawn together by the Garden City’s founders, management and professionals. In planning terms the level of significance is global, attracting study and visits from many countries. Its success led directly to the creation, in the UK and abroad, of other new towns such as Harlow, Stevenage, Radburn, New Jersey and Greenbelt, Maryland. It is often held up as the apogee of civilised, sustainable new settlements and a model for others to follow.”

6.5 The 1920 masterplan included the formal civic and business centre with Parkway and Howardsgate and contrasting informal residential sectors.

6.6 The Appraisal states that:

“Perhaps the outstanding hallmark of Welwyn Garden City is the spectacular layout of the town centre with the spacious Parkway and Howardsgate – the latter almost Continental in feeling - and the vista from the White Bridge.”

- 6.7 Parkway is described as providing a dramatic approach to the town centre from both the north and south. It is the principal axis of the centre. The Appraisal describes the vista looking south from the northern end as superb, with the Coronation fountain forming a distant focal point in a spacious and landscaped setting. From the south end, looking north the view demonstrates an essential principle of Garden City design, while the mature trees in the distance provide a harmonious background to the more formal landscaping of the central green spaces of the boulevard.
- 6.8 Howardsgate is the second principal axis of the centre. It is described as the formal space running perpendicular, eastwards from Parkway, at the heart of the commercial sector. The concept can probably be traced back to the principles of a Roman Forum, a focus of community interaction, lined in this incarnation with shops, offices and cafes, filled with planting, seating and distinctive poster stanchions, assisted by a traffic calming road layout and management scheme.
- 6.9 Two of the earliest commercial buildings in Welwyn Garden City provide an impressive architectural frame at the entrance to Howardsgate. Both the former Barclays bank (The Two Willows) and the HSBC branch to the south, were designed by Louis de Soissons in 1929. They are similar in scale, but feature subtle differences in detailing.
- 6.10 With regard to architecture, the Appraisal explains that the predominant style is neo-Georgian. This is a very simple neo-Georgian, pared-down, free of too many features and therefore was eminently suitable for the 20th Century. Although not worthy of individual listing, the collection of neo-Georgian buildings is a significant feature defining the character of Welwyn Garden City.
- 6.11 The Appraisal also explains that generous open spaces - and the associated spatial interrelationships - are at the heart of Welwyn Garden City’s planned layout. This is particularly apparent in the town centre. The Campus, Parkway and Howardsgate are generously laid out on a pan-European scale, not that common in the UK. The relationship with the open spaces is particularly apparent on aerial photographs.
- 6.12 The focal point of the open space at the junction of Parkway and Howardsgate is Coronation fountain. The fountain was designed by Peacock and Ayres in 1953. The appraisal explains that the movement

of water in this central position creates a significant focal point within and to the area, being clearly visible from all directions.

6.13 The appraisal includes key views and vistas within the Conservation Area. This includes vistas along Parkway from either end, view from Parkway east along Howardsgate, view from Howard centre towards Parkway and views from The Campus.

b) Contribution Existing Building make to Conservation Area

6.14 Fountain House was constructed in the late 1960s and first appears on the 1965 – 1971 OS Map. It is located on the important junction of Parkway and Howardsgate.

6.15 It was constructed as an infill building and post dates the neighbouring properties including Park House (John Lewis), Charter House, 13 Howardsgate (The Two Willows Public House) and 15 Howardsgate (Prezzo). It is also later than Coronation Fountain. A 1960 aerial photograph shows the site laid out as landscaping along with other parts of the town centre. In the book *The New Towns - The Answer to Megalopolis* (1963) Fountain House is not yet built and the centre is described as still being in a fluid state.

6.16 Appendix 1 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (Analysis Map) shows part of the building as a key unlisted building. However, it is considered that this is an error given that the property is not listed on page 46 of the Appraisal.

6.17 The application property should be considered to make a neutral contribution to the conservation area. It is in keeping with the horizontality of many of the buildings in the conservation area, and the scale and massing of other properties - being three storeys with pitched roof. The use of brick also ensures that the property blends with its surroundings. However, it is not of high architectural quality or particular note.

6.18 Part of the building's contribution is how it interacts with its surroundings in a low key way. The set back from Howardsgate emphasizes the open spaces of Howardsgate and Parkway, reflecting a similar set back on the opposite side of the street. This also helps draw attention to The Two Willows Public House (originally Barclays Bank) which is a key unlisted building by de Soissons (1929).

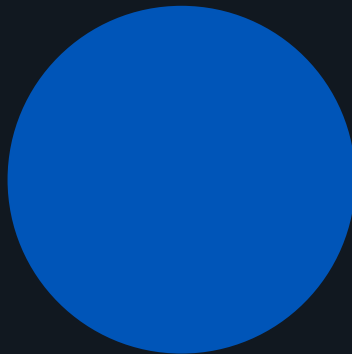
c) Impact of Proposed Scheme

- 6.19 The application proposes to replace the existing pitched roofs with a mansard to provide nine flats. The previous approval of a mansard for eight flats in 2017 is a material consideration which provides a strong fallback position.
- 6.20 The loss of the existing roofs has previously been approved and should be considered acceptable given that they are not important historic fabric and only make a neutral contribution to the conservation area.
- 6.21 The provision of the mansard roof reflects other mansards in the local area. This includes original mansards on key unlisted buildings by de Soissons such as the former Post Office Building at 15 Howardsgate (Prezzo). There are also mansard roofs on the adjoining Charter House buildings on Parkway, and on the opposite corner at 2 - 4 Howadsgate (Zizzi). The mansard roofs complement the residential properties on the opposite side of Parkway which have dormer windows within their steeply pitched roofs.
- 6.22 The height, bulk and massing of the mansard have been previously approved. As has the inset screen to conceal the roof plant, which has a design to match the mansard roof.
- 6.23 The only difference between the visual appearance of the approved and proposed schemes is the provision of five additional condenser units. These are set well back from the front elevation, behind the previously approved screen. They are therefore not considered to cause harm the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.24 The neighbouring key unlisted buildings such as 13 and 15 Howardsgate will still retain their prominence because of their forward building line within the street.
- 6.25 Owing to the variety of building heights along Parkway and Howardsgate, the extension will blend in with the street scene and will not adversely affect the key views and vistas as illustrated by the photographs in appendix 1.
- 6.26 The mansard will be of high quality including the use of clay tiles to match surrounding mansards. The windows will line through with the windows on the lower floors and the use of aluminium frames will complement the character of the existing building.

- 6.27 The rear of the property will include brickwork to match the existing and is considered to be acceptable given that this frontage faces a service yard and is not prominent within the conservation area. It is therefore appropriate that features such as new soil vent pipes are located on this elevation.
- 6.28 Overall, it is considered that the revised scheme will have the same impact on the conservation area as the previously approved scheme. Any harm should therefore be considered to be less than substantial and this impact should be considered to be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme including the provision of additional flats in a highly sustainable location.

Section 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 This application seeks permission for replacement of existing pitched roofs with a mansard to create nine flats (7 x 1 bedroom and 2 x studios) rear lift tower, ground floor entrance lobby and provision of condensing units in acoustic enclosures.
- 7.2 The application follows a previous approval for a similar mansard scheme for eight flats at roof level which was granted in 2017 (6/2017/0400/FULL). It is now simply proposed to subdivide the two bedroom flat to create two studios and to provide some additional condensing units at roof level.
- 7.3 The development will make good use of this town centre site and will positively contribute to the supply of homes.
- 7.4 The proposed flats are high quality and meet the Nationally described space standards. They will have a good level of daylight, and both studio units are double aspect.
- 7.5 The design of the proposed mansard is appropriate for the existing building and the conservation area. The existing building is not of particular architectural merit. There is a prevalence of mansards in the area which fits with the neo-Georgian architectural style. The set back from the front building lines, proposed use of traditional tiles and window positioning will complement the existing building.
- 7.6 The proposed roof plant is well screened and set back from the front elevations of the building. It will not cause any additional harm when compared with the previously approved scheme.
- 7.7 The benefits of the scheme weigh strongly in favour of the development including providing much needed housing in a sustainable location, and maximise the use of a previously developed site.
- 7.8 Overall, it is considered that the proposals are in accordance with National and local planning policies and therefore planning permission should be granted.



Firstplan Ltd
Bramah House
65-71 Bermondsey Street
London SE1 3XF

T: 020 3096 7000
www.firstplan.co.uk

Appendix 1

Photographs of Site and Surrounding Area

Photograph 1: Howardsgate Elevation



Photograph 2: Parkway Elevation



Photograph 3: Corner of building inset at junction of Howardsgate and Parkway



Photograph 4: Rear of Site



Photograph 5: Rear of Site



Photograph 6: Site viewed in context of Parkway



Photograph 7: Long view down Parkway looking south



Photograph 8: View of Site in context of Coronation Fountain



Photograph 9: Long view down Parkway looking north



Photograph 10: View along Howardsgate towards Parkway (site not visible because of set back)

