

Proposed Retail Scheme at Former Fire Station, Hatton Garden, Liverpool.

CONVERSION OF GROUND FLOOR AND BASEMENT TO FORM RETAIL UNITS/GYMNASIUM & HEALTH CLUB

WORK NOW COMPLETE



Design and Access Statement

13.10.2014 Rev F

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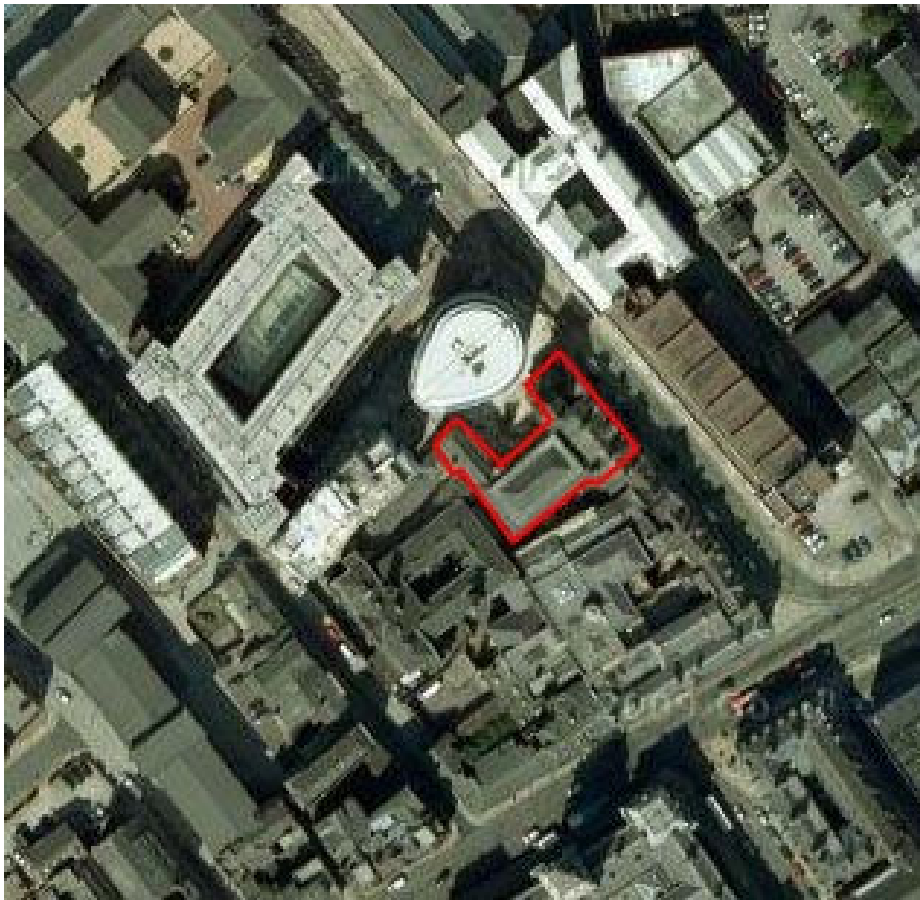
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PLANNING JUSTIFICATION AND DESIGN / ACCESS STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The application site consists of the former Central Fire Station and ancillary offices on the western side of Hatton Garden within Liverpool city centre. It had been vacant for a number of years following the reorganisation and rationalisation of the city's fire service. On 9th September 2011, planning permission and listed building consent were granted to convert the existing building to student accommodation with manager's office and associated facilities.

The current proposal involves the conversion of the former ground floor bays that were used for the storage of fire appliances into retail/commercial units on the Hatton Garden frontage with a gymnasium and health club in the basement.



Location Plan.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Built in 1898 by Thomas Shelmerdine, the City's Corporation Surveyor, the building is generally three storeys high with a basement and attic. It was purposely designed and built as a fire station providing cover for the city centre and the old inner areas of the city. The ground floor frontage contained a number of bays for the storage of fire fighting appliances whilst the upper floors and the rear were dedicated as office and administration accommodation. In the latter half of the last century, part of the first floor at the rear was used as overflow courtrooms and ancillary offices for the adjacent magistrates courts with a bridge link between the two buildings. The building is included in the statutory List of Buildings of Special or Historic Interest, categorised as Grade II. The description refers to it as being of red brick with stone dressings and a slate roof; it has a symmetrical composition in an Arts and Crafts Jacobean style. It then details its main architectural features which relate almost exclusively to the front elevation; the rear part of the building is described as being utilitarian with banded brick and a mansard roof. One of the most striking elements of the structure is the tower which is situated at its northern extremity.

The original building was one of a large group of buildings situated around the Dale Street/Hatton Garden quarter which were generally used by institutional bodies and Local or Central Government departments. Many of these uses have now ceased and alternative uses are being sought for the remaining buildings with some of them, such as the adjoining postal sorting depot having been demolished and redeveloped for a combination of residential and commercial uses.

The building is on the fringe of an area allocated as the Main Office Area in the City Centre in the City Council's approved Unitary Development Plan. As well as being listed, it is within the Castle Street Conservation Area and boundary of the World Heritage site.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The scheme involves the conversion of the existing former appliance bays into retail/commercial units. As part of an earlier scheme, the existing openings were glazed with a temporary timber screen installed for security reasons. It is proposed to retain the openings as existing with the stone pillars to each bay being kept in their original positions. There will be two retail Class A1/A3 units; the one unit nearest the tower will be used to form the entrance and provide access to the gymnasium proposed within the basement. This facility will be open for public use, although it will also be available for use by the occupiers of the student accommodation in the rest of the building.

In the Council's approved Unitary Development Plan, the site is within an area identified as the Main Office Area of the city centre where Policy E2 applies. This states that within the area, planning permission will be granted for Use Classes A2 and B1 and other complementary uses. Consequently, planning permission was granted in 2004 for a residential scheme on the upper floors with a range of Class A1, A2 and/or A3 uses on the ground floor. It is concluded, therefore, that the proposed uses are suitable for both the building and its location and comply with the UDP policy. The design and nature of the bays themselves with their clear and distinct separation add character to the front elevation and are a reminder of the original concept and use of the building. They are also ideally suited to conversion to small units, whilst the proposed uses introduce an active frontage which is in keeping with other adjoining new frontages along Hatton Garden.

The proposed scheme involves only minor alterations to the external appearance of the building, although it is considered that they will be wholly in keeping with the structure and its location, thus preserving and enhancing the character of the building itself and the conservation area in which it is situated. The glazed fronts will be replaced with new glazing including glazed double doors to allow individual access to each unit. The integrity of each bay will thus be retained along with the coherent face of this part of the building. There will be a simple common fascia board introduced at the top of each frontage where the name of each occupier can be displayed; they will not be illuminated and hence will not require advertisement consent.

The main alteration to the internal design involves the introduction of new partitions between the units. These will be located behind the existing front bay pillars and hence will be unobtrusive from the outside.

All of the units will have direct level access at ground floor level from the existing adjoining hard surfaced access drive from Hatton Garden which served the vehicles that parked in the bays. It is not proposed to continue the pavement across this carriage crossing as this would detract from the setting of the listed building and impact adversely on the original design/purpose of this unique building.

All the units will have short ramps/doors and entrances that are suitable for DDA access by all. The gymnasium access will provide a lift for access to the basement as well as a staircase, thus ensuring compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act and the Council's own requirements. The facilities in the basement will include a Fully DDA compliant Disabled W.C/Shower Room – see management strategy below:

Bin Store positions have been provided inside each retail unit. All refuse will be bagged nightly by the Manager and transported and legally tipped on his/her way home. Only on the days set by the trade refuse collectors shall the bags be on street at the front of the building on Hatton Garden. For the avoidance of doubt no external storage of waste material will be permitted on this development.

All escape travel distances are in line with the Building Regulation Part B, means of escape from the Basement will be in the form of the staircase exiting at ground level onto Hatton Garden and this requires the introduction of a new helical escape stair as submitted. The Shop Units at Ground Floor level with escape immediately at the front of the building through doors onto Hatton Garden.

The existing passenger lift will serve the Basement, Ground Floor and Student Accommodation above – see Statement by owner below:

Management Strategy & Statement for DDA Inclusive Access.

.....We spent close to £30,000 on installing the DDA Passenger lift and intercom system in agreement and at the behest of Mr Mohamidi to facilitate any disabled guest to the gym. The gym operates an management policy of anyone needing assisted access will use the intercom provide at the entrance. A member of staff will then come up and escort them to the installed DDA passenger lift within the student entrance and down to the gym via the lift, doors opening opposite the treatment rooms.....

Prepared by : Nigel K Russell RRP

Date 12.September 2014

No security measures in the form of roller shutters are proposed as part of this development, if however they are required by the end users in the future they will be internally fixed only and not fixed to the external historic fabric, to preserve the integrity and aesthetic of the listed building.

The location of the premises close to the universities and other higher education establishments on the northern/eastern fringe of the city centre and to the new residential units, including student accommodation, that are being developed in this sector of the city, adds to the attraction of the use of the ground floor for ancillary commercial uses. These are all easily accessible by either public transport or by walking with no dependency on the use of the private car. The site is wholly sustainable with a wide range of social, recreational and shopping facilities within easy reach, which will be complemented by the proposed development in accordance with the Council's UDP policies.

CONCLUSION

It is the applicant's view that the proposal would comply fully with the Council's other regeneration projects in the City Centre. The associated works of improvement to the external facade of the building will be in keeping with the design elements of the building itself, resulting in a significant improvement to its appearance thus both preserving and enhancing the character of the building itself, the Castle Street Conservation Area and its World Heritage setting. It is concluded, therefore, that the proposal complies with both national and local policies and would not have adverse effect on the amenity of any adjoining residents.

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photographs were taken April 2011 & August 2014



Original Front Elevation View



Completed Street Scene