

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 8 September 2016 **Ward:** Guildhall
Team: Major and **Parish:** Guildhall Planning Panel
Commercial Team

Reference: 15/01892/LBC
Application at: Rowntree Wharf Navigation Road York
For: Internal alterations associated with partial conversion of ground and first floor offices to 34 no. apartments
By: Bonner One Ltd
Application Type: Listed Building Consent
Target Date: 11 July 2016
Recommendation: Approve

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 This is a listed building application for the conversion of part of the ground and first floor of an existing former mill building into residential flats at Rowntree Wharf, York. Members may recall that this application was deferred from the last planning committee (4th August 2016). This was to allow re-consultation on the full planning application to be undertaken on additional information submitted in relation to cycle and bin storage and the design and siting of steps to provide evacuation from the building in the event of a flood.

1.2 The site is within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area, Rowntree Wharf is a Grade II listed building and due to its height and enclosure by water features (Wormalds Cut and the River Foss) on three sides, is a landmark building in this part of the city. Constructed as a roller flour mill by W G Penty for Sidney Leetham in 1896. Converted (upper floors) to flats, 1990). At the time of construction, the mill was at the forefront of technology. The building is attached via a mezzanine level access at first floor to a relatively new multi storey car park building providing car parking for the existing office and residential use. A separate application for planning permission has been submitted in respect of the use of the building and associated alterations to allow the residential conversion (15/01892/LBC).

1.3 The proposal includes the remodelling of the internal space of the ground and first floor, external alterations to create additional cycle parking, bin storage and landscaping and the introduction of stepped emergency flood and fire exit (only in the event of flood) from the site via the two storey adjacent car park. Vehicular access is from the existing access from Navigation Road. 27 of the existing car parking spaces in the adjacent multi storey car park are provided for the development. The total number of residential units is 34 of which 21 are studio flats, 7 are 1 bedroomed, 5 are two bedroomed and 1 is three bedroomed.

1.4 In terms of the alterations necessary to allow the conversion these include:

- Removal of internal partition walls and replacement with new partitions to create the individual residential units.
- Removal of a modern staircase within the north eastern corner of the building.
- Alteration to the existing suspended ceiling.
- External flood evacuation steps to the multi storey car park

1.5 Servicing will be via the existing service channels used for the area of the building already converted to residential development. No alterations are proposed to the existing door and window openings.

PLANNING HISTORY

1.6 05/02251/FUL and 05/02258/LBC - planning application and listed building consent for the conversion of fifth floor offices to eight apartments with the provision of additional car parking - granted permission January 2006.

1.7 There have been a number of applications and listed building consents for works to individual flats within the Rowntree Wharf development. These applications are not considered significant to the consideration of the current application.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Areas of Archaeological Interest GMS Constraints: City Centre Area 0006

Conservation Area GMS Constraints: Central Historic Core CONF

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 2; Rowntree Wharf Navigation Road York YO1 2XA 0892

2.2 Policies:

CYHE2 – Development in Historic Locations

CYHE4 – Listed buildings

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL

3.1 The comments below are those set out in the previous committee report any update of consultee comments or further objections as a result of re-consultation will be reported direct to committee.

Planning and Environmental Management - Conservation Architect

3.2 No objections to the removal of the staircase in the south east corner it is a modern insertion. The revised heritage statement brings nothing new. The large open floor spaces, and the construction of the floors, including the cast iron columns, bear testament to (are tangible evidence of) the past use of the building; that is, they contribute to its significance. The revised plans expose one or two more of the columns on each floor to view in the corridor, but this is not enough to give the impression of a continuous run of columns. The passage should be made straight. As indicated in the heritage statement, the suspended ceilings need to be higher so that the tops of the columns can be seen, again, particularly in the more public areas. If this can be achieved, we would be closer to achieving a balance between harm (creating small cellular spaces undermining an appreciation of the larger spaces and the structure which are part and parcel with the open spaces and floor capable of bearing considerable load). Any need to alter window to achieve privacy should be via blinds not by changes to the windows.

EXTERNAL

Historic England

3.3 The application has been viewed by their specialist staff. Historic England do not wish to offer any comments on the application.

Publicity

3.4 One letter of comment specific to the listed building has been submitted; it is considered that the alterations proposed should be in keeping with the listed building.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY ISSUES

4.1 The main considerations of this listed building consent application is:

- impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

POLICY CONTEXT

4.2 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest when considering whether to grant listed building consent.

4.3 Central Government guidance dealing with the heritage environment is contained in chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It directs local planning authorities to give great weight to the conservation of heritage assets and to refuse development that would lead to substantial harm or total loss. Where the harm would be less than substantial the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum viable use (paragraph 134 of the NPPF).

4.4 The City of York Draft Local Plan (DLP) was approved for development control purposes in April 2005. Its policies are material considerations in the determination of planning applications, although it is considered that their weight is limited except when they are in accordance with the NPPF. The relevant policies are HE2 development in historic locations and HE4 listed buildings. The main thrust of these policies is compatible with section 12 of the NPPF.

4.5 The planned consultation on the Publication Draft of the City of York Local Plan, which was approved by the Cabinet of the Council on the 25 September 2014, was halted pending further analysis of housing projections. Since then officers have initiated a work programme culminating in a "Local Plan - Preferred Sites 2016" document and other supporting technical documents. Members have approved these documents for consultation which commenced on the 18th July 2016 and will run until the 12th September 2016. The emerging Local Plan policies can only be afforded weight at this stage of its preparation, in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF and at the present early stage in the statutory process such weight is limited. However policy D5 says development affecting the setting of a listed building will be supported where its setting is protected; alterations and extensions will generally be supported when they do not harm the special architectural or historic interest of the building or its setting. Demolition of a listed building should be wholly exceptional, requiring the strongest justification.

4.6 The site is located within York's Central Historic Core Conservation Area (CHCCA). The CHCCA is described within a number of conservation area character appraisal documents. Rowntree Wharf is within character area 15, Fossgate and Walmgate. It says that 'One of the most prominent landmarks in the area, Rowntree Wharf, can be seen from many points. The best view is that from the walkway on the northern side of the Foss, just outside the Conservation Area boundary.'

4.7 In the absence of a formally adopted local plan the most up-to date representation of key relevant policy issues is the NPPF. It is against this Framework and the relevant sections of the Planning (listed building and Conservation Area) Act that the application proposal should principally be addressed.

Impact on the Special Architectural and Historic Interest of the Listed Building.

4.8 The Conservation Officer advises that the lower floors of Rowntree Wharf have most recently been in use as offices, and to some extent retain large open spaces punctuated by cast iron columns with staircases between the floors. There has however been subdivision by partitions, insertion of suspended ceilings and raised floors in connection with office use. The machinery has gone, but the open spaces, cast iron columns and layout of the building are a tangible link to its use and the technology used in the construction of the building. The significance of the listed building is as a roller mill of late 19th century date, constructed to the design of a prominent local architect, within historic core of the City of York.

4.9 The first floor level has already been formed into smaller compartments and the original open plan layout is not in evidence, columns have been built around and the ceiling has been lowered covering their top section. The new layout will form different compartments and the final amendment to the layout shows straight corridors (originally proposed to be curved) so that evidence of the layout of the columns within the building are retained. Ground floor level has existing compartments set along the outer edge of the floor area however the central area of the floor plate remains open and two lines of columns remain exposed. The proposed layout at ground floor level will lose the sense of spaciousness by creating compartments for each apartments arranged around the window openings, however, like the upper floor, amendments to the scheme have sought to modify the corridors to show a continuous run of columns and the upper section of the columns will be revealed. The scheme proposes no external alterations to the elevations of the Grade II listed building; there are not proposed to be any alterations to the windows. The applicant has confirmed that the windows will not be replaced or double glazed. The floors have already been raised to accommodate services for the previous office use and the ceilings have been lowered.

4.10 The proposed evacuation steps are to be attached to the multi storey car park building a modern edition to the listed building provided when the upper floors of the building were originally converted in to residential units. There will be no harm to the significance of the listed building as a result of the positioning of the steps because the multi storey car park separates the proposed steps from the historic features of significance to the listed building.

4.11 It is considered that the harm to the heritage asset would be less than substantial and in officer view there are a number of public benefits that outweigh the identified harm. The NPPG advises that public benefit could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). The proposed development will provide housing in a sustainable city centre location, bring the floors of the building into use,

introduce a use that is compatible with the residential use within the upper floors of the building and ensure the building's future maintenance.

Officers consider that these benefits are sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the building even when attaching additional weight to the requirements of the Planning Acts. The proposal, therefore, complies with national and local planning policies in respect of the historic environment.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The site is within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area, Rowntree Wharf is a Grade II listed building and due to its height and enclosure by water features (Wormalds Cut and the River Foss) on three sides, is a landmark building in this part of the city. Constructed as a roller flour mill by W G Penty for Sidney Leetham in 1896.

5.2 For the reasons set out in this report the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to heritage assets that, when balanced against the public benefits of the proposal, is considered to be acceptable.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 TIMEL2 Development start within 3 yrs (LBC/CAC)

2 PLANS1 Approved Plans

3 Large scale details of the following items shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of building works. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

- Full details at a scale of 1:20 and 1:50 of the junctions between the internal face of the external walls and the new stud work.

- Large scale details of the alterations to the suspended ceiling and the connection between the ceiling and the upper part of the columns.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with the details in the interests of preserving the special setting of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Contact details:

Author: Diane Cragg Development Management Officer (Mon-Thur)

Tel No: 01904 551351

Application Reference Number: 15/01892/LBC

Item No: 4b

Page 6 of 7

