

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 10.4.2014 Ward: Guildhall
Team: Major and Parish: Guildhall Planning Panel
Commercial Team

Reference: 13/03816/FUL
Application at: Hilary House St Saviours Place York YO1 7PL
For: External alterations to building including replacement windows,
doors and spandrel panels
By: St Catherines Developments Ltd
Application Type: Full Application
Target Date: 21 February 2014
Recommendation: Approve

1.0 PROPOSAL

APPLICATION SITE

1.1 The application relates to Hilary House, a 5-storey office building, above a semi-basement car park which dates from the 1960's. The property is in the process of undergoing conversion, to be used as a medical centre at ground floor level with residential apartments above.

1.2 The site is within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area. In the conservation area appraisal the host building is identified as a detractor.

PROPOSALS

1.3 This application is for changes to the external appearance of the building. It is proposed to replace the windows and the concrete (spandrel) panels in-between. The alterations are necessary to improve the environmental performance of the building. The replacement windows would have beige grey coloured frames and the concrete aggregate panels would be replaced with Marley Equitone fibre cement panels.

1.4 The application has been called in for a decision by the Planning sub - Committee at the request of Councillor Watson, on the grounds that the proposal may impact on the conservation area and views of The Minster.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

13/03444/ORC - Prior notification for use of the upper floors as residential. Under recent legislation the change of use constitutes permitted development and does not require planning permission.

13/03491/FUL - Change of use of ground floor to surgery with 11 consulting rooms. Application was approved in January 2014.

13/03824/FUL - Roof extension to provide additional apartment. Application withdrawn.

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

City Boundary GMS Constraints: York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams GMS Constraints: Central Area 0002

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 2; 60-62 Aldwark York YO1 2BU 0832

2.2 Policies:

GP1 Design

HE3 Conservation Areas

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

Countryside Officer

3.1 Based upon the survey submitted by the applicants, officers agree there is likely to be a very small bat roost present, possibly in various parts of the building.

3.2 It will be very difficult for the proposals to be implemented and the existing features retained. As such officers recommend a planning condition to ensure that care is taken during works and the provision of replacement roost features where it is not feasible to retain existing.

Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development

3.3 Officers made the following comments on the original scheme

- The entrance steps and decorative concrete block at low level are characteristic of their time and are positive aspects of the building. It was asked if these could be retained.
- There was concern that full height windows would cause overlooking and light pollution. The latter would have a harmful impact on the conservation area.
- Concern that over-simplification of the facade would have a harmful impact. It was asked that the scheme be re-thought, with a more orderly and well

proportioned facade with some refinement of detail, use of better quality materials and no loss of depth.

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3.4 Object to the proposal and consider it conflicts with Local Plan policy GP1. The design is already out of scale with the rest of the area. If the building were increased in size, this would contravene policy GP1, as are the proposed materials as most of the neighbouring buildings are of brick construction. The development would also harm the residential nature of the area with a considerable extra traffic from both the medical practice and the residences.

Publicity

3.5 Objections (14 in total) make the following points -

- The Council should acquire the building and demolish it, as it visually harms the conservation area. The cosmetic changes proposed will not make a significant difference to the harm created by the building.
- The original scheme was deemed not to be an enhancement to the conservation area. Objection was raised to the full height windows – which would cause light pollution, and noise pollution if windows were left open.
- The existing building is an eyesore due to its design and scale being out of context. This would not be alleviated by the scheme.
- Overlooking over neighbours - in particular 31 Spen Lane next door.
- More dense tree planting to screen the building would be preferred.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY ISSUES

4.1 The site is within a designated conservation area (Central Historic Core). Within such areas, the Council has a statutory duty to consider the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area.

ASSESSMENT

4.2 The scheme has been revised since the initial submission. As requested by the Conservation Officer, the entrance steps and blockwork panels to the semi-basement car park would be retained. The changes to the elevations have been refined. It is no longer proposed to add full height windows and balconies. The windows would retain their existing size (approx 1.8m high).

4.3 To accommodate residential use and comply with Building Regulations the building needs to upgrade its thermal performance. The proposals include double glazing, and the cladding panels would allow for increased insulation. Repair and re-use of the existing panels has been investigated, but has been discounted for the reasons that their depth allows no space for adding insulation, and due to their variable condition and finishes. The replacement panelling can be thinner, and it can therefore accommodate insulation and project no further than the existing panels.

4.4 The proposed changes retain the architectural integrity of the current building, reasonably maintaining its proportions and level of detail.

- The vertical fins would remain the dominant feature on the facade, as the cladding panels and new windows would maintain their existing depth. The proportions of the glazing and the solid panels would be retained. The solid panels would be slightly lower on the building, around 300mm - which is necessary to hide the building services (installed at ceiling level, as shown on the section drawings).
- The panels proposed are Marley Eternit Equitone, tectiva version, coloured Hessian. These panels have some variation/texture and are considered reasonably appropriate to the residential setting, in comparison to other materials such as aluminium which would appear less decorative.
- The replacement windows would be aluminium rather than timber. Aluminium frames are appropriate to the building style. The change to the glazing pattern, using one full height window in each reveal adds some variety to the elevations and this change is regarded as an improvement.
- Doors which would be replaced are of no architectural merit.

4.5 Objections have been made regarding overlooking of neighbouring properties. The residential use of the building may occur without planning permission under permitted development rights, subject to prior approval being obtained. This was granted on 12 December 2013. The windows are not being increased in size or amount, there would be no difference in overlooking between the building as existing and as proposed.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 In determining planning applications within conservation areas, the Council has a statutory duty to consider the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area. Thus in order for the scheme to be unacceptable it would need to be determined that the proposals are harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The scheme as revised is for replacement

windows and cladding panels only. The products proposed are of reasonable quality. Overall the proposals would at least maintain the character and appearance of the conservation area. Approval is therefore recommended.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 TIME2 Development start within three years -

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:-

Proposed drawings

Elevations STC/344/001 201B
Sections 301

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 Materials

The proposed external materials shall be as shown on the approved plans unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

Windows - Velfac powder coated RAL 7006 Beige Grey
Cladding / spandrel panels - Marley Equitone tectivia (hessian coloured)

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4 Large scale details

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

Typical section drawings of the stairwell and ground floor windows (to show relationship between the windows, cladding panels and their surrounds.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5 Bat mitigation

No development shall take place until the following bat mitigation and conservation measures have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall commence in accordance with the approved details.

- a) An emergence survey at the appropriate time of year, if the work is to be carried out between April and September. The survey shall be carried out no more than 1 month prior to work commencing.
- b) Details of how the work is to be implemented to take account of the possible presence of bats.
- c) Details of what provision will be made within the development to enhance the features suitable for bat roosting. Features suitable for incorporation include the use of special tiles, bricks, soffit boards, bat boxes and bat lofts. Proposals must demonstrate a net gain in provision.

Reason: To take account of and enhance habitat for a protected species.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH

In considering the application, the Local Planning Authority has implemented the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) in seeking solutions to problems identified during the processing of the application. The Local Planning Authority took the following steps in order to achieve a positive outcome:

Requested alterations to the scheme in order to address concerns and improve the visual appearance of the scheme.

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