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25.07.2011

COMBINED 'HERITAGE' AND 'DESIGN AND ACCESS' STATEMENT

RE: PROPOSED SMALL EXTENSION TO EXISTING OFFICES AND CHANGE OF USE OF UPPER FLOORS TO FORM TWO SELF-CONTAINED FLATS

Amount:
The external alterations to the building affect the High Street elevation only by the re-introduction of the access door to the upper floor residential accommodation. The existing building is one of the largest and most dominant in the street facing the triangular open space, the doorway shown in an attached reproduction will provide the independent access to the upper floor living accommodation which was lost when the door was removed. This change will we believe have little if any impact on the street scene..

The rear alterations are modest, consisting of a small extension extending the existing single storey extension and kept at the same low profile. One or two windows are changed but will be designed to match the existing style whilst existing windows will be retained and repaired where necessary. Where possible secondary glazing will be added or where this is impracticable dispensation will be sought from Building Control.
The second floor escape stair is new but deliberately tucked into a corner of the existing building.

Internally the important features such as the three second floor fireplaces will be retained and restored, doors where these are not required to be upgraded for fire separation will be repaired. Any new doors will be designed to be similar to those existing and any doors removed due to fire requirements will be reused elsewhere, this in line with the observations of the Conservation and Planning officers.
The original stair from ground to first floor no longer exists, the first floor balustrade and the stair from first to second floor are regrettably unable to meet current standards or for fire escape use. The new stair will nevertheless replicate the design motifs of the existing stair.

Although not a part of the application, the structure will be repaired where water penetration and

structural movement has occurred, a structural survey has determined that there are no serious structural problems other than tying in walls to floors and checking timber condition as work proceeds. The attached Structural Engineers report forms part of this application.

Layout:
The layout as shown on the drawings results from the limitations of converting an existing listed building to residential accommodation to current standards. Largely this makes use of existing configuration of rooms and the rear single storey Ground Floor extension follows the established form, the layout has already been agreed in principle with the Conservation and Planning officers.

Scale:
From the High Street, the only visible change will be the re-introduction of the residential access doorway, it follows therefore that scale is unaltered. At the rear, the single storey extension to the bank is kept very low which will result in virtually no visible alteration outside the site, the re-alignment of the existing external stair barely affects the current situation. A new external stair required for fire escape purposes from the second floor will be designed to minimise the visual impact. It is proposed to clad the stair with solid panels rather than copy the open steel form of the existing stair. It is located within a re-entrant corner of the building and thus only visible from the upper floor windows at some distance to the rear and from some upper floor windows to the South. It is therefore our contention that the impact on the existing buildings is minimal.
There is no landscaping in any real sense of the word, this being a town centre property. The rear Yard will be repaved replacing the existing concrete.

Appearance:
Under the 'scale' section above we describe the limited external changes to the building, the rear ground floor extension to the bank will match the existing single storey element, the re-introduced door off the High Street will be based upon the archive photograph enclosed with the application which has already been well received by the Conservation and Planning officers.
The second floor escape stair is designed to minimise its appearance by the use of solid infill panels rather than black steel railings and choice of a sympathetic colour and its discrete location.

Access:
Direct access is to be reinstated from High Street where an original door once existed as is shown on the attached photograph. The existing rear access is retained as shown on the plans providing access to bin storage and forming the alternative fire escape route as is currently the case.

Use:
The two new flats will be for residential use only and is in-line with local policy to encourage residential use back into town centres and increase the housing stock. The vacant residential potential can now be brought back into use and the first floor is The second floor has been unused for very many year, the first floor is very largely surplus to requirements by the bank where staff levels have fallen over time.
There is easy access to bus routes and main line railway services, the town centre with a wide range of shops, civic and leisure facilities is immediately accessible.

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL
26 JUL 2011
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Heritage:
The building is listed Grade II and this has been taken into account as we have developed the alterations we need to make to effect the change of use and bearing in mind the observations of the Conservation and Planning officers visits to the property, we believe that we have successfully achieved a solution greatly in favour of the conservation of the building whilst carrying out essential repair work and bringing it back into full use.

Graham Nicolls 24.07.2011

