



PROGRESS PLANNING

Alexander House, 106 Pembroke Road, Middlesex, HA4 8NW

Planning, Design and Access Statement

August 2020

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Executive Summary

This statement has been prepared to support this application seeking planning permission for changes to the external façade of the building including, replacement shopfront; adding/rearranging/replacing openings; re-rendering; additions at second floor level and to the roof to the rear; and external alterations that will improve the amenity for future occupiers of the building (in association with prior approval application ref: 10744/APP/2020/2240 for change of use of the building from office to residential).

In terms of principle of development, there is local, regional and national support for efficiently using existing town centre buildings and to improve the amenity / quality of existing properties.

Given the modest changes to the façade and the general improvements to the elevations being proposed, the development is considered to enhance the appearance of the existing building and visual amenity of the wider area.

These proposals would also improve the quality of the residential change of use that is being sought in a separate prior approval application to the benefit of future occupiers.

The proposal would only include new openings on elevations where there are existing openings. The existing and proposed openings are located in excess of 21m from the closest windows to neighbouring properties, therefore, the proposal would not raise any overlooking concerns or loss of privacy.

The new shopfront would improve accessibility to the front ground floor level commercial unit as well as improve its appearance.

Overall, the development would reflect the 12 core principles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, as well as the aims and objectives of local Council policy.

Site Description

The application site is located on the southern side of Pembroke Road, approximately 50m west of its junction with Victoria Road. The site consists of a 3 storey office block with shops at the front at ground floor level. The building is flat roofed and of modern character and its principle elevation is extensively glazed. The building extends to a considerable depth behind this broadly square street elevation and is faced with a mixture of brick and render. To the East is a slightly lower period 3 storey flat roofed terrace, of mixed use and to the West is a part single storey, part two storey building which is the Grade II Listed Former Air Road Precautions Building, Windmill Hall. The site lies within the Ruislip Manor Town Centre as identified by the Local Plan Policies. The area is generally characterised by mixed use town centre building of varying styles and typology. The site has a PTAL rating of 4 and is located in proximity of Ruislip Manor Tube Station. The land is also located in Flood Zone 1 which is not an area at risk of flooding.

Planning History

The existing building is 3 storeys with parking situated on either flank side of the building. Prior Approval Application ref: 10744/APP/2020/929 was consented in early 2020 for conversion of this office building to 23 residential units.

Subsequently another Prior Approval Application ref: 10744/APP/2020/2240 has been submitted for 23 units to replace the previous consent. This proposal seeks to re-arrange some of the layouts of the original flats and does not seek to increase the number of units.

This new planning application seeks minor façade changes that will facilitate this latest change of use scheme to residential whilst also improving the appearance of the building.

The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for changes to the external façade of the building including, replacement shopfront; adding/rearranging/replacing openings; re-rendering; additions at second floor level and to the roof to the rear projection; and external alterations that will improve the amenity for future occupiers/users of the building (in association with prior approval application ref: 10744/APP/2020/2240 for change of use of the building from office to residential).

Policy Context

The proposed development would be assessed against the Development Plan Policies contained within the Hillingdon Local Plan comprising the Core Strategy and Development Management Plan (DMP), the London Plan, and the NPPF and supplementary planning guidance by Hillingdon and the Mayor of London.

Principle of Development

The proposed changes to the façade of the building including a new shopfront; rearrangement, replacement and insertion of new openings; and rendering of elements of the elevations are sought in order to enhance the appearance of the building or improve the residential amenity for future occupiers of the development once the pending prior approval application is approved, implemented and completed. These changes should be considered in association with this proposed change of use from office to residential under application ref: 10744/APP/2020/2240.

In terms of principle of development, there is local, regional and national support for efficient use of existing town centre buildings and to improve the amenity / quality of existing properties. The proposed changes that would improve the amenity for future occupiers and accessibility for users of the existing shop should be welcomed.

Design and Appearance

The proposals include infill extensions at second floor level and at roof level to an existing single storey rear projection. The purpose of both of these additions are to increase the head height and internal quality of the space that will subsequently be available to residents. Replacement/insertion/realignment of openings is also sought in order to improve the quality of the internal space and to enhance the appearance of the building (see existing and proposed elevations below).

The existing building appears to have been neglected for a number of years and it appears to be in need of some modernisation. The use of a small element of render on the upper floor level would help tidy the appearance of the building and by replacing the windows throughout, the building will appear much more modern and have a clean cohesive finish.



Existing side elevation of the building

The existing arrangement of windows that can be seen above is poor and currently makes for a relatively unattractive building. The proposed changes to openings will significantly improve its appearance and the setting of the adjacent listed building.



Existing West Side Elevation



Proposed West Side Elevation

It is worth noting that the entrance to the office building which is shown on the above elevational plans will be widened and made more presentable.



Existing Front Elevation



Proposed Front Elevation

With regards to the front elevation, the brick pilasters on each side that frames the frontage would be retained along with the metal detailing on the roof, thereby retaining the more positive elements of the existing character of the building. The new windows would be given a new more symmetrical finish that will repond positively with the rigid square framed character of the original building when viewed from the front. At ground level, larger display windows which include stall risers and fanlights will replace the existing two poor quality entrances. A new more central and accessible entrance will be provided in the middle of the building for the shopfront.

The proposal will declutter the building and the changes sought are considered to give it a more balanced and uniform appearance.

Given the modest changes to the façade and the general improvements to the elevations being proposed, the development is considered to enhance the appearance of the existing building and visual amenity of the wider area.

These proposals would improve the quality of the residential development that is being sought in the separate prior approval application to the benefit of future occupiers. Allowing residents more access to daylight and outlook. The proposals would be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing building, the setting of the adjacent listed building, and it would be in keeping with the appearance of this town centre location, in accordance with local, and national planning policies.

Accessibility Improvements

The proposal seeks changes to the pedestrian accesses to the office (future residential) and commercial ground floor unit which would improve accessibility for all users and future residents. Layout changes to the parking courts will also incorporate designated pedestrian routes into/out of the premises where there is currently a level of conflict between users. These changes are consistent with the changes sought within the associated prior approval application for change of use from office to residential.

Impact on neighbours

The site is surrounded by mainly commercial or mixed used buildings with residential on their upper floor levels. There are no residential properties immediately to the North, West, or South. To the East, the nearest habitable room windows are located in excess of 21m from the building and all of the new openings are located existing walls with openings facing in the same direction so there would be no greater level of overlooking than currently experienced. Therefore, the proposal would have no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

In terms of principle of development, there is local and national support for efficiently using existing town centre buildings and to improve the amenity / quality of existing properties.

Given the modest changes to the façade and the general improvements to the elevations being proposed, the development is considered to enhance the appearance of the existing building and the setting of the adjacent listed building and improve visual amenity of the wider area.

These proposals would also improve the quality of the residential development that is being sought in a separate application to the benefit of future occupiers and improvements to the entrance of the existing commercial unit would improve accessibility for future users of this premises.

The proposal would include new openings on elevations where there are existing openings. The existing and proposed openings are located in excess of 21m from the closest windows to neighbouring properties, therefore, the proposal would not raise any overlooking concerns or loss of privacy.

Overall, the development would reflect the 12 core principles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, as well as the aims and objectives of local Council policy.