



Archi-tekt
PARTNERSHIP

118 High Street Uxbridge, UB8 1JT

Design & Access Statement
Sept 2021

1.0 Introduction

This design and access statement accompanies the planning and listed building application for the development of 118 High Street, Uxbridge. It should be read in conjunction with the full set of planning drawings and all supporting documents, including The Heritage Assessment report prepared by The Heritage Collective.

1.1 Project Scope and Description the scope of the project seeks to retain the building's historic and later extensions. The project involves the following alterations to the existing listed building and its setting: -internal alterations to the original listed building to bring it back original.

1.1.1 Site Location The site is located on 118 High Street in the heart of the Metropolitan town centre of Uxbridge, 4 minutes walking distance from Uxbridge Underground station and in close proximity to Fassnidge Park. The building has its principal frontage onto the main High Street and additional entrances and exits onto Harefield Road and Warwick Place. The site includes land on the junction of Harefield Road and Warwick Place currently used as private car parking spaces. The site area including the external land is approximately 0.045 hectares.

1.3 Brief The owners of 118 High Street seek to give a new lease of life to the vacant, Grade II listed office premises and their 1980 extension under the Class E Commercial, Business and Service.

Heritage Collective has prepared a detailed Heritage Assessment to help the design team understand the significance of the heritage asset before developing any design proposals, to establish clear areas of opportunity to enhance and improve the character of the building and its setting. The Heritage Assessment report ascertains that the existing building has been subject to substantial internal and external alterations and extensions over the years, some of which have resulted in harm being caused to the original heritage asset. The project seeks to undo the harm that has been caused by previous alterations and extensions and embrace the opportunity to improve the character and legibility of the original asset and its setting, to provide unique sustainable development.

2.0 Principle of Development

The site was most recently used by a solicitor. The proposal would retain commercial usage on the original listed building with the remaining floorspace retained as class E Commercial, Business and Service.

Policy S12 (Secondary Shopping Areas) of the Hillingdon Local Plan Saved Policies (2007) requires that retail facilities contribute to the character and function of the shopping centre and that proposals did not result in a concentration of non-retail uses which might harm the viability or viability of the centre. Acceptable ground floor frontage uses include Class A2 financial and professional services which have now been class E Commercial, Business and Service.

The application site sits at the periphery of the defined secondary shopping centre. The proposal will retain commercial usage on the ground floor frontage thereby maintaining the contribution the site will make to the viability and vitality of the shopping frontage. Policy DME2 (Employment Sites Outside Designation Employment Areas) of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2015), requires that proposals involving the loss of employment floorspace outside of designated employment areas will normally be permitted if:... (iii) sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate there is no realistic prospect of land being reused for employment purposes, or, (iv) the new use will not adversely affect the functioning of any adjoining employment land.

3.1 Significance of Heritage Asset 3.1.1

Building Fabric + Listed Structures The Grade II listed 118 High Street can be considered in three key areas:

- (i) The principal double-pile seventeenth and eighteenth-century range (herein referred to as the 'original building');
- (ii) The space between the original building and the 1980s extension, currently occupied by a 1980s two-storey extension (herein referred to as the 'link');
- (iii) The 1980s extension itself (herein referred to as 'the new building');

In addition, a historic grade II listed brick wall of differing heights located adjacent to the site abuts the rear of the original building and runs parallel to the 1980s extension and returns along Warwick Place.

The original building has a number of qualities that contribute to its architectural and heritage significance. A restrained palette of high-quality materials including cast iron gutters, brick walls, timber sash windows, clay roof tiles and leaded dormers are used to construct the original building. The restrained palette of materials is enriched through the meticulous attention to detail adopted at the interfaces between building elements including but not limited to:

- (i) Flemish bond brickwork with flush-fitted timber sash windows and surrounds to offer a sense of lightness to the facade;
- (ii) a parapeted wall at the interface of the principal facade and the pitched roof to offer a sense of hierarchy to the High Street frontage, the importance of which is further reinforced by the use of a projecting brick corbel stringer course located at a high level;
- (iii) an elevated entrance storey marked by three steps, with the entrance framed by a decorative projecting doorcase of fluted pilasters, entablatures and open pediment;
- (iv) dog toothed corbel detailing to the brickwork at the interface between the wall and the roof to form a decorative interface with the cast iron gutter;

(v) chimney stacks that are asymmetrical, offering a quaint quality to the street scene; The interior of the original building has retained its basic plan form and circulation of a central core and four rooms, divided by the chimney breasts. However, much of the fabric of the original interior appears to have been replaced with more recent replacement construction evidenced by the modern building materials identified such as plasterboard and chipboard.

The interior of the original building has retained its basic plan form and circulation of a central core and four rooms, divided by the chimney breasts. However, much of the fabric of the original interior appears to have been replaced with more recent replacement construction evidenced by the modern building materials identified such as plasterboard and chipboard.

The extension is also considered to be sympathetic to the original building. The use of English bond brickwork and a lighter more pink coloured brick with cement mortar distinguishes the extension from the original building, the rest of the extension is characterised by attempts to mimic the original building including the use of flush-fitted mock timber sash windows, a pitched clay tiled crown roof and overhanging gutter.

The mock techniques and materials are considered to be the established appearance of the original building. The mock sash windows do not follow the proportions of the original building. The clay tiles used on the roof are a lighter shade, rounded tiles are used on the hips, however, more finely crafted bonnet tiles are used on the original building. An arrangement of deep fascia and soffit boards expresses the junction between the wall and roof, whilst the original building has cast iron gutters with no fascia boards, utilising dog toothed corbel detailing junction between the roof and wall.

The extension includes an escape staircase, located directly in front of the historic, listed wall, partially obscuring it from view.

3.1.2 Setting

118 High Street is located in The Old Uxbridge / Windsor Street Conservation Area on the northeastern boundary.

The setting of 118 High Street is considered below in terms of its 3 key aspects onto the High Street, Harefield Road and Warwick Place to understand how the character changes as the building turn the corners.

(i) The High Street

The High Street is considered to be in the heart of the Conservation Area. 118 High Street is located amongst a cluster of historic, listed buildings which together contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. The Hillingdon Townscape Character Study identifies the original frontage of 118 High Street as part of the 'Fine-grain /historic town centre buildings'. The finely crafted qualities of the principal elevation described in section 3.1 can also be seen in other listed buildings on the High Street.

(ii) Harefield Road

Harefield Road connects the High Street to the A40 and also provides a direct pedestrian route to the nearby Fassnidge Park and Uxbridge Aldergrange Nature Reserve. Harefield Road is not located in The Old Uxbridge / Windsor Street Conservation Area and has been subject to a number of modern developments. The opportunity for Metropolitan living has been embraced by a number of new developments in Uxbridge, including the new Fassnidge development located opposite the PWC building. Other emerging proposals on nearby sites such as the Halfords building include new build high-density housing. 118 High Street, together with 61 High Street, frames the Conservation Area, creating an informal gate into the historic centre. The historic qualities of the original building evident on the Harefield Road elevation such as the cast iron guttering, unique dog toothed brick corbel detailing and flush-fitted timber sash windows, help reinforce the appearance of the 'entrance' into the Conservation Area. The 1980s overhaul including the link and extension compromise the legibility of the original building and its effectiveness at expressing the entrance to the historic centre. Beyond the 1980s extension, The Police Station dominates the skyline of Harefield Road. The unusual building is characterised by its post-modern style with idiosyncratic roof form, exposed structural elements, and continuous ribbon windows. An area of

planting located between 118 High Street and Harefield Road creates a form of green buffer. Large trees obscure and conceal the 1980s extension, as well as provide visual amenity to the local area. The visual amenity is compromised by the existing private car parking spaces located immediately outside of the building.

(iii) Warwick Place

The Hillingdon Townscape Character Study identifies Warwick Place as a zone of poor permeability. The character of the street is not pedestrian-friendly as it is dominated by the backs of buildings on High Street and a large car park serving the Police Station. The 1980s extension to 118 High Street includes an escape staircase exiting onto Warwick Place, reinforcing the 'back of house' character of the street, failing to positively contribute to the urban environment. At the southern end of Warwick Place, there is a more pedestrian-friendly route to the High Street via Beasley's Yard.

3.2.1 Building Fabric + Listed Structures - Proposal

The proposal is to retain existing use's and enhance the existing historic nature of the listed building. Some effort has been made to remove the non-historic elements. However, the major change is to the link area which is within the listed part for the building.

3.2.3 Summary of Heritage Considerations

The heritage driven approach to the design methodology results in a proposal that improves the character of the original building, listed structures and the setting.

The proposal will look to conserve the heritage of the area and the building by providing sustainability within the use classification Class E.