

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This application seeks permission for the change of use of the first floor and rear part of the ground floor accommodation from Class E (commercial) to C3 Residential use to provide 3 no flats.

The site is located on the northern side of Station Road. It is located within the Letchworth Conservation Area.

SITE PHOTOS



View across station road



View from south east towards site



Rear Yard



View from west



Rear yard and adjacent building at 8-10



Internal view at first floor level

USE AND AMOUNT

The building comes under Class E use currently, with the last use being a bank.

The proposed use for the application is residential use, with 3 no 2 bedroom flats proposed and 1 no 1 bedroom flat. All flats provide space in excess of the recognised national space standards.

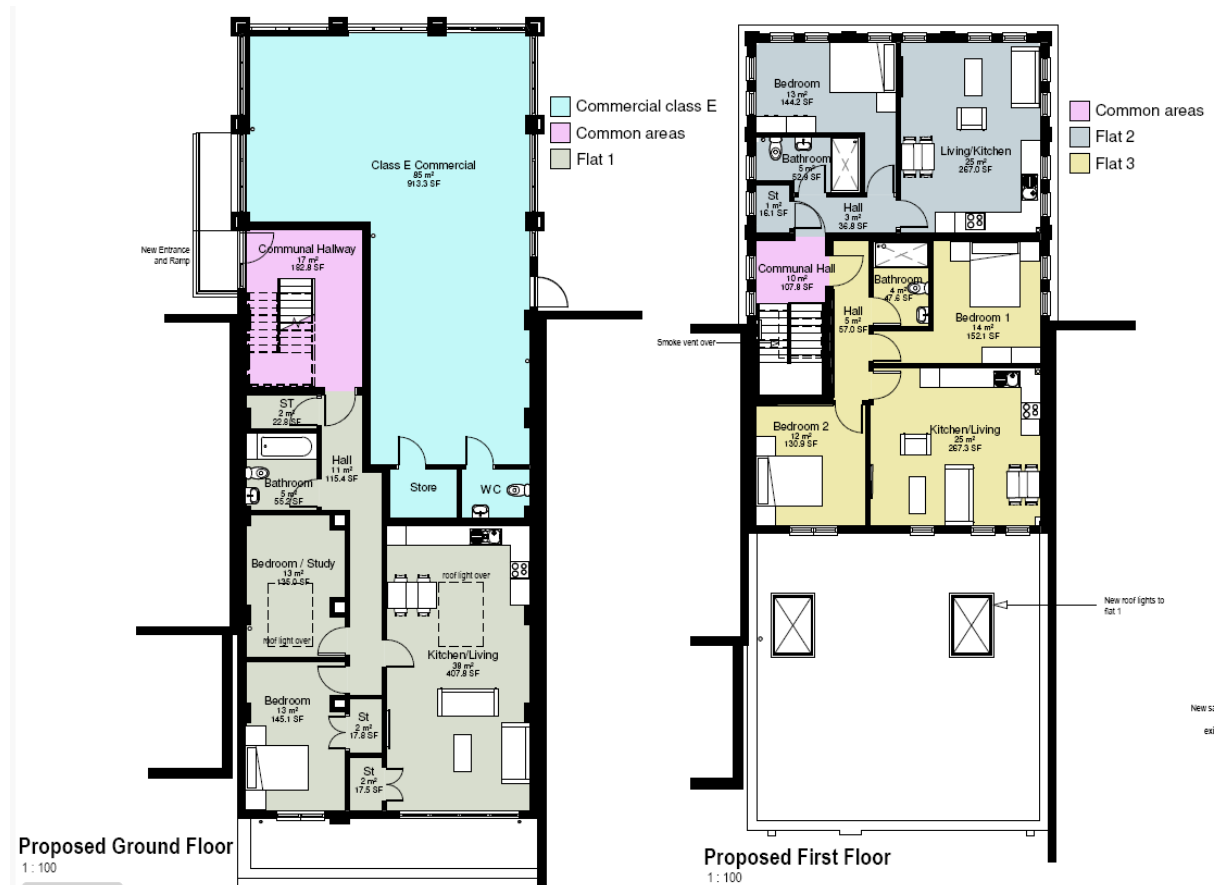
The ground floor frontage will remain in commercial use, which is a 'secondary' frontage as part of Letchworth Town Centre.

LAYOUT

The ground floor frontage is proposed to remain which will result in no significant changes to the appearance of the building and maintaining and active frontage on a secondary shopping frontage.

A new entrance is introduced on the eastern flank elevation, providing access to a communal staircase. A ground floor flat is provided to the rear of the building and two flats on the first floor. One at the front and one at the rear of the building.

The flats are arranged to facilitate the re-use of the existing windows where possible. Generous living/kitchen spaces are provided.



SCALE AND APPEARANCE

The proposals make little change to the appearance or scale of the building. The only change of note is the introduction of a new entrance and ramp on the east elevation and a roof light to provide smoke ventilation to the common staircase. Both of which impact on secondary elevations of the building. The new entrance screen follows the existing fenestration pattern and the new ramp will follow the existing palette of materials with black painted render to the low level walls.

The existing windows will be retained or replaced with windows of similar character. If the existing are retained, it is anticipated that secondary glazing will be provided behind this to improve thermal and acoustic performance.



ACCESS

Flats will be accessed via the new entrance and staircase accessed via a new ramp on the east elevation. The ground floor flat can provide more accessible accommodation without residents requiring to use the stairs.

The site is sustainably located, very close to the railway station and close to all the town centre facilities. As such occupants will have little need for a private car. The site does not have its own off-street parking provision.

Refuse storage will be in the communal yard to the rear of the building. This duplicates the existing arrangements for adjacent properties.

Two parking spaces are proposed. It is intended these are for the use of the ground floor commercial use. The flats are sustainably located close to train and bus routes as well as the provision of cycle storage.

IMPACT ON THE CONSERVATION AREA

The minimal external changes mean the proposals will have little to no impact on the character of the conservation area. A new entrance door will be provided integrated with the existing architecture.

CONCLUSIONS

The application makes use of existing accommodation in a highly sustainable location to provide 3no new dwellings. The commercial use on the secondary shopping frontage is retained.

Changes to the external appearance are minimal and sympathetic to the existing building and the wider conservation area.