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Design Access and Heritage Impact Statement

For

Conversion and alteration of redundant bank (old A2) and associated offices to ground floor shops (class E) and seven residential units (C3)

At

23 High Street, Royston, Herts SG8 9AB



The Property

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1295729

Date first listed: 11-Jun-1976

List Entry Name: BARCLAYS BANK

Statutory Address 1: BARCLAYS BANK, 23, HIGH STREET

Details

1. 5255 HIGH STREET (West Side) No 23 (Barclays Bank) TL 3540 1/123 II GV 2. Late C19 in Tudor style, carefully designed. Red brick, stone dressings, tiled roof with polygonal chimney stacks, 2 stone coped gables, 2 storeys and attics, stone plinth, floor and sill bands. Multi-light stone mullioned lattice casement windows, some with stone transoms. 2 storey oriel canted bay window on left. Projecting gabled full height bay on right. Central doorway up steps. Included for group value.

Nos 7 to 13 (odd) and 17 to 25 (odd) form a group.

Listing NGR: TL3561040607

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The existing building is the old Barclays Bank which, once closed, was partially stripped out under permissions 22/02309/FP & 22/02310/LBC - *Decommission Barclays Bank to include: externally removal of existing external signage, removal of existing alarm box in front elevation and existing night safe to be sealed shut. Internally removal of internal counters, removal of all internal furniture, removal of the external ATM in entrance lobby and existing aperture to be infilled with brickwork to match existing.*

Further stripping out of finishes and modern fabrics has been undertaken via approval under application 24/01826/LDCLB.

The original building had been mostly demolished, with the exception of the High Street frontage and front chimney stacks under a previous consent 79/01733/1LB and construction of a new bank under consent 79/01734/1LB , granted in December 1979, which is the building in existence today. The side chimneys and internal faces of the front façade are partially constructed with supporting concrete framing and blockwork walls.

It can be clearly seen from the previous consents and the building itself, that other than the external frontage and external chimneys, the main elements of heritage importance have been removed, with mass concrete foundations and basement structures, concrete floors and framing, and steel and modern steel and timber roof construction, with modern finishes and services throughout.

Proposal and Principle of development

The principal consideration is the design and impact of the proposed development on the listed building, the character and appearance of the surrounding area, together with the living conditions of the new residential occupiers and adjoining occupiers. The scheme provides for 7 new properties for rent on the ground, first and second floors of the property. There is no change to the front external façade, and limited alteration to the internal roof elevations and the rear and side elevations, in terms of minor modifications to rooflights and dormer roofs.

The building sits to the back of the pavements to High Street and King Street and is terraced by properties on either side. There are no provided parking spaces or refuse provision to the existing building. All flats are designed in excess of the minimum technical house standards and provide a good standard of accommodation for the end user with natural lighting and ventilation to all habitable rooms. The only building fabric affected by these proposals is modern and does not impact on the historic building fabric. The main core / layout of the structure is retained, with only alterations to the modern stud partition walls installed at the time of the conversion to offices. The limited changes to the rear and side appearance of the building will therefore have no impact on the surrounding area or neighbouring occupiers.

Parking and highway impact is improved due to the reduced parking requirement from 14 to 8 spaces.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021) has a presumption in favour of sustainable development on the proviso that any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as a whole.

The development is sustainable, reusing the building fabric. It is in an accessible location, close to the railway station and right in the town centre High Street, public transport, supermarkets and shops, schools and the Priory Memorial Gardens, all without the need for additional transportation. The application site is situated within the town where the Council will normally permit development provided the proposal meets the aims of other relevant policies, and we believe that it clearly meets those policy aims. While the

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development has a lack of amenity space it is well served and located close to Therfield Heath and Priory Memorial Gardens.

The site does not fall within a Flood Risk Area but is within the conservation area.

Planning Policy:

The proposals are in accordance with - North Hertfordshire Residential Guidelines and standards LP57 and have been considered with the policies below.

Policies –

SECN 12 – Well designed places to live in

SECN5 Delivering sufficient supply of homes.

LP8 Development in Towns

XD1 – Sustainable development

XD3 Protecting Living Conditions

XSP8 Housing

XT2 Parking

Planning Considerations:

- Living conditions of neighbours
- Any harm caused to the character and appearance of the area and street scene.
- Any harm to trees of amenity value.
- Future use

There are no changes to the street scene by virtue of the conversion and the property. There is no detrimental impact on the attached adjoining buildings, the relationship of the use classes proposed are no different to the relationship that the previous use of the building had to the surrounding properties. The proposed change of use would result in harmony with the surrounding residential properties.

There are no trees or landscaping with the site. We would consider that while any suitable use for a listed building would help sustain it for the future, a residential use is likely to provide an enhancement in long term future use.

Shops (Class E)

Within the main redundant banking hall, two small shop units are to be provided either side of a central access served from the existing entrance, which are fully separate from the residential units. The previous floor plan for the hall provided a stepped approach. The proposal is to provide new ambulant design steps with the entrance way to serve both units, and the lower floor area of the shop unit is raised to provide a level floor within the shop.

Access

The primary ground floor level is several steps up from the two external access doors, and the floor forms part of the structure of the building. Access to the building for both shops and residential therefore remains unchanged.

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Windows

The existing modern windows will be replaced with new UPVC windows to match the existing increased opening lights for improved ventilation and thermal values, together with acoustic trickle ventilators.

New aluminium windows will be provided to the two basement windows added.

The existing heritage windows to the front elevation will have the decorations carefully stripped down, corrosion repaired and the whole redecorated, and the hinges and latches eased for improved use.

Biodiversity

As the development is within the building envelope, and the built footprint completely fills the site, the habitat score for the existing site will be zero.

Cycle and bin storage

There is currently no provision within the property for either cycle or refuse storage. With the closing of the secondary escape stair from the old bank hall, this provides an area for both refuse and bike storage.

Parking

As noted above the parking for the proposals is a reduction on that required by the current use. The area around has provision for temporary on street parking, and permits are available for annual parking within several surrounding car parks.

Conclusion

The proposal is in keeping with the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan policies and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. It does not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties. It is therefore hoped that the Council will recognise the benefits of this development, and grant consent.

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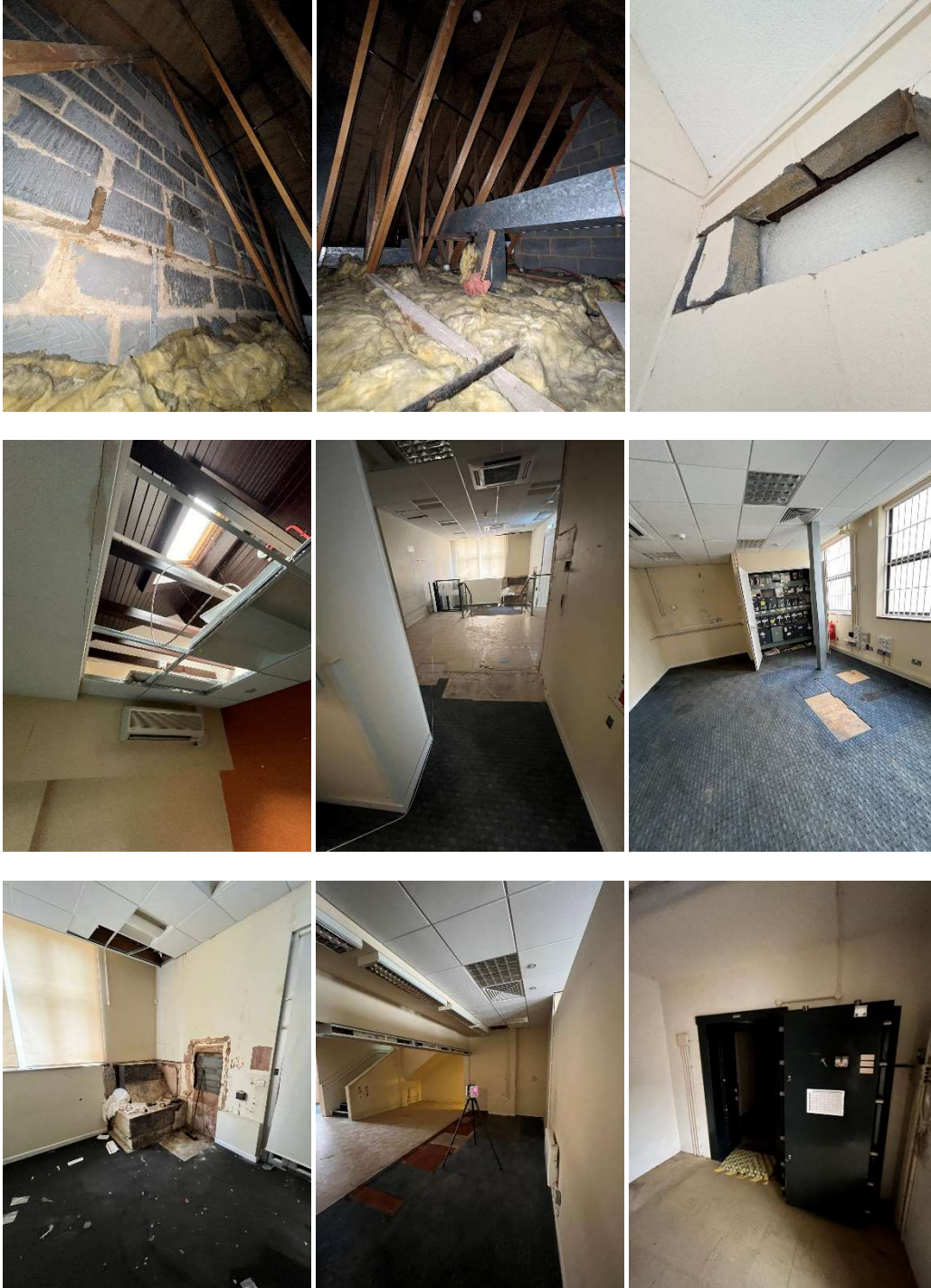
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IMAGES



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