

Mr James Holmes

18 Regent Street, Barnsley, S70 2HG

External alterations including installation of shop fronts at ground floor on building frontage, changes to the external facing materials, new and replacement windows and new pedestrian building entrance to the upper floors

Site Description

The application relates to a 1960's, 4 storey, 'L' shaped, flat roofed office building (previously class B1, currently Class E) located to the North of Regent Street in the Courthouse Campus district of Barnsley Town Centre. There is a small canopy at the front of the building over the front entrance together with a paved forecourt area. To the right of the building is an archway that leads to a private parking area to the side/rear. The building has a total of circa 25,000sq ft of internal floor space. The building is currently vacant but was last used to house a pensions office.

The building is located within a Conservation Area. Regent street consists of a mixture of offices, (predominantly solicitors), restaurants, estate agents and apartments.



Proposed Development

This application follows on from the Prior Notification application to convert part of the ground floor and all of the upper floors into 39 apartments (Ref: 2021/1110). It should be noted that the use of the ground floor cafe unit is permitted development as it falls under the current use class of the building i.e. Use Class E, as such, it does not form part of this application or application 2021/1110.

This application seeks permission to make external alterations to the building including installation of shop fronts at ground floor on the building frontage, changes to the external facing materials to the front/part side of the building, new and replacement windows and new pedestrian building entrance to serve the residential accommodation and upper floors.

In terms of the materials proposed, the frontage/part side would be Ashlar K Rend – coloured sandstone to match the neighbouring buildings with reconstituted art stone or K Rend detailed moulding around the openings. The shop fronts would be painted timber. Windows would be uPVC sash windows in black and doors would be black aluminium.



IMAGE 1 - INDICATIVE IMAGE OF K REND ASHLAR TOOLED FINISH (REFER TO DETAIL). COLOUR TO BE SANDSTONE (NOT CREAM AS ILLUSTRATED).

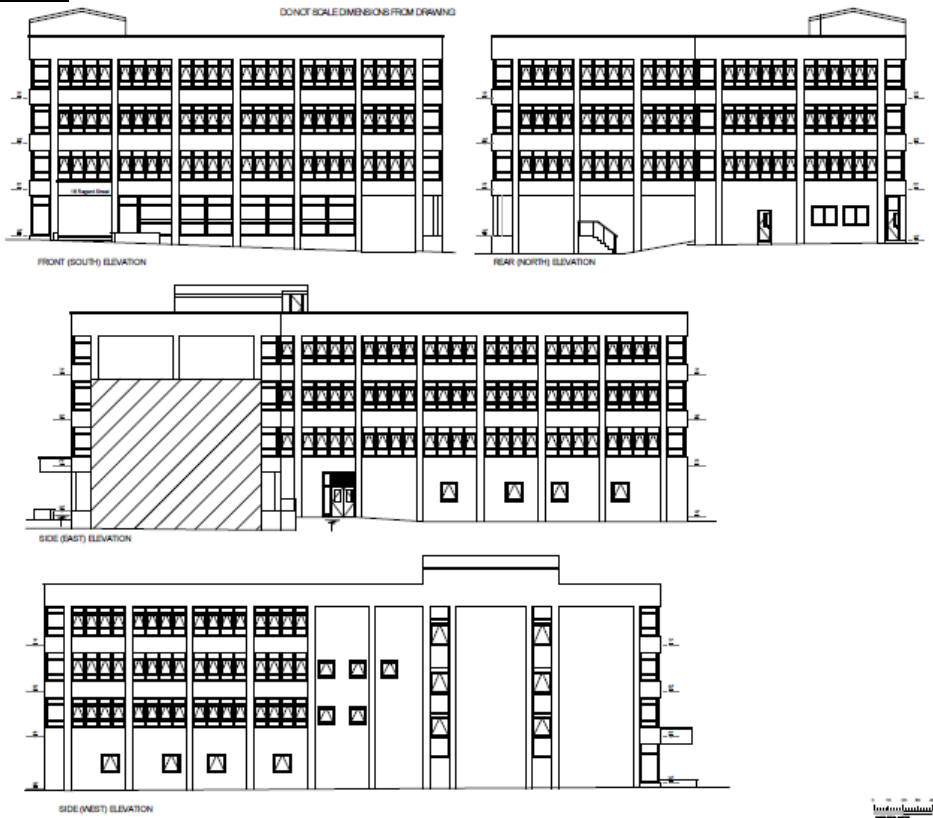


IMAGE 2 - INDICATIVE IMAGE OF K REND DETAILED Moulding (REFER TO PROFILE DETAILS). COLOUR TO BE SANDSTONE (NOT CHARCOAL AS ILLUSTRATED).

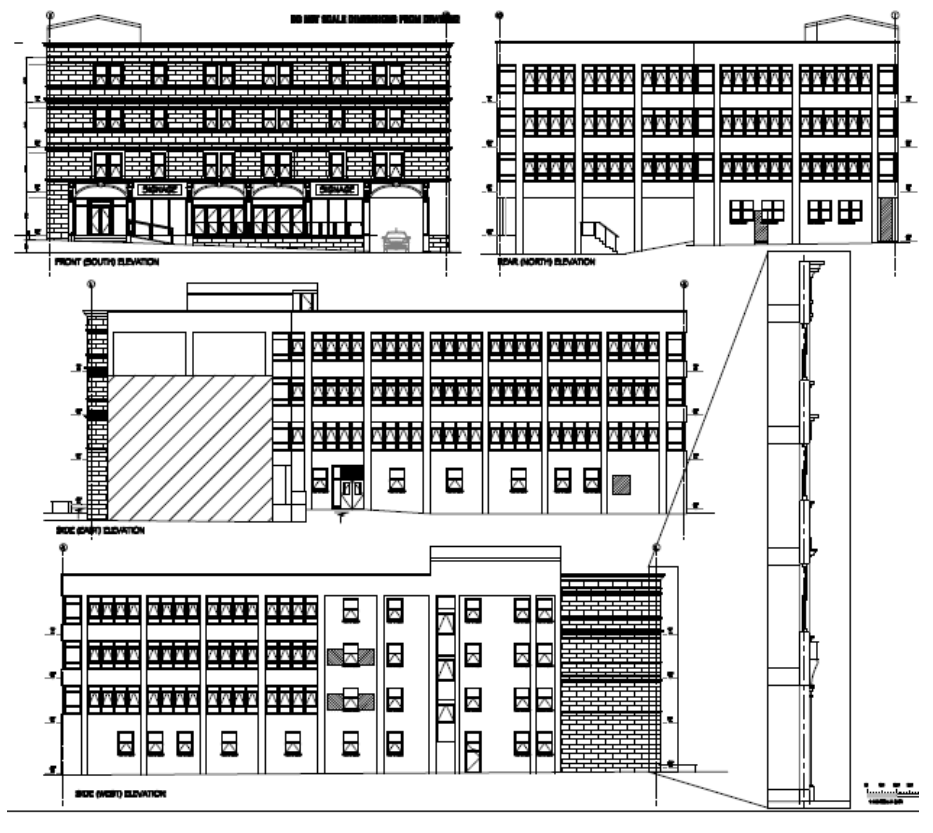


IMAGE 3 - INDICATIVE IMAGE OF RECONSTITUTED ART STONE WINDOW SURROUND. COLOUR TO BE SANDSTONE. WALLING NOT INDICATIVE OF RENDER FINISH.

Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations



Policy Context

The site is located within the Regent Street/Church Street/Market Hill Conservation Area and Courthouse Campus are of Barnsley Town Centre, therefore, the following policies are relevant:

Policy T4 New development and Transport Safety

Policy SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

Policy LG2 The Location of Growth

Policy GD1 General Development

Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making.

Policy Poll1 Pollution Control and Protection

Policy CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy HE1 The Historic Environment

Policy HE3 Development Effecting Historic Buildings

SPD's

Those of relevance to this application are as follows:

- Design of Housing Development
- Parking
- Sustainable Travel

Other

South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide

NPPF

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraphs of particular relevance to this application include:

Para 7 - The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Para 11 – Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Para 92 - Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places

Para 111 - Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Para 126 - The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable

development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

para 194: Requires applicants to proportionately describe the heritage significance of an asset

para 195: Requires Local Planning Authorities to Identify and take into account heritage significance including the setting and the effect of a proposal

para 199: Great weight is given to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the degree of harm

para 200: Any harm to or loss of significance will require clear and convincing justification

Consultations

Highways – No objections

Reg Services – No objections

Conservation Officer – initial concerns with proposed materials and finishes but no objections following the submission of additional details and subject to a condition requiring a sample panel to be created and approved.

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties, a site notice was erected on Regent Street and a press notice was placed in the Barnsley Chronicle, no comments have been received.

Assessment

Principle of development

The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

The site sits within a Conservation Area, as such, paragraph 195 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to Identify and take into account heritage significance including the setting and the effect of a proposal. Great weight is given to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the degree of harm. Any harm to or loss of significance will require clear and convincing justification.

Residential amenity

This application relates to the external alterations to the building only, the residential use was subject to a prior notification application. No extensions or increase in footprint are proposed, the proposals predominantly relate to the creation of shop fronts at ground floor level on the front elevation, the introduction of some new openings and minor amendments to existing openings. Furthermore, the front elevation of the building would be clad.

None of the proposed amendments would have a significantly detrimental impact on the users of the neighbouring buildings within the area or would negatively impact on the future occupants of the building, in accordance with Local Plan Policy GD1.

There are some new openings proposed in the building which would serve habitable rooms; however, these are predominantly on the ground floor or on the Western elevation facing car parking areas serving neighbouring offices/commercial buildings. The other windows serving the residential units, subject to the prior notification, already exist.

Visual Amenity/Conservation

Alterations to the side and rear elevations are predominantly limited to relatively minor alterations to the fenestration of the building, including additional openings which reflect the style and size of the

existing openings. Furthermore, these elevations are relatively non-prominent within the streetscene, Conservation Area and surrounding public vantage points.

The main alterations proposed are reserved for the front and part of the Western elevations. The alterations include the creation of painted timber shop fronts at ground floor level and changes to the fenestration and materials on the front elevation, facing Regent Street.

This is a key site in the town and for Regent Street but also has the potential to influence and impact the setting of a number of listed buildings. Regent Street is almost exclusively includes buildings with stone elevations. The existing 1960's building is not representative of the majority of Regent Street and is not a building that contributes positively to its setting, as such, there is scope for improvement subject to acceptable design and carefully chosen materials.

The proposal is to clad the front elevation with K-rend with tooled ashlar joints in order to emulate the stone of neighbouring buildings fronting Regent Street. There are also several string courses and mouldings proposed to add interest and detailing. The Conservation Officer had initial concerns with how convincing and effective the materials would be in emulating the stone, in particular the overall colour and texture of the façade, as well as the overall longevity of the materials. As such, additional details were requested from the applicant including a cross section through the façade to show the depth elements and the recess of the windows. One of the concerns was the details and finish around the windows and the potential for the external finish to appear 'stuck on' and not integrated.

Following on from the submission of the additional details, the Conservation Officer supports the use of art-stone openings and the design and subdivision of the façade window proportions. The proposed materials overall are also generally supported, however, still some requestions remain over the texture and relief of the finished façade including how the dressings will appear. K-rend is available in numerous colours and finishes, furthermore, if the proposal is to include tooling marks in the render to emulate ashlar jointing examples need to be provided to ensure it is acceptable for the location.

The only practical way to address the above is for a sample panel to be created and inspected, as such, the Conservation Officer has agreed that generally the materials and design preserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings, in accordance with the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act, Local Plan Policy HE1 and the NPPF, subject to condition requiring a sample panel being created for the finer details and finishes of the materials to be agreed in writing.

In relation to the proposed shop fronts these naturally conform to the existing six bay arrangement of the current building. That in itself is not typical of the street scene, however, it would be difficult to amend without substantial structural alteration, as such, they would preserve the character of the Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings.

In terms of windows and doors Anthracite/dark decoration to widows has been used on several buildings on Regent Street, therefore, they would sit comfortably within the streetscene.

Highway Safety

The scheme would not alter the existing parking and manoeuvring areas, as such, colleagues in Highways have raised no objections to the proposal.

Summary

Taking into account the relevant development plan policies and other material considerations, it is not considered that there are any significant and demonstrable adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits associated with the granting of planning permission for the revised scheme. The proposal therefore complies with the development plan as a whole and the advice in the NPPF.

As such the scheme is considered to accord with policies and guidelines and is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approve subject to conditions