KEITH SWAIN DESIGN

Engineering Designs

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FIRST RESPONSE STATEMENT

Thank you for your detailed advice. I have updated the plans and the various statements setting out our desires in respect to this building and in an attempt to receive from the Planning Office a co-operative interchange of constructive comments. I have to say that not all of what is said in the advice note from the Planning Office is fair to the applicant and that some parts of the advice is brutal but you are fully entitled to your opinions. I had hoped that an interchange of constructive discussion would ensue after the site meeting and that a position could be reached whereby the building in question would be as the applicant proposes being **repaired, renovated, and refurbished** in a manor to your acceptance and the applicants requirements for modern living. The reading of your advice feels more like an attempt to criticise rather than help the applicant apply the best approach to bringing this building into viable use and it begs the question as to a lack of enthusiasm by yourself in helping towards the survival of this unique building. The associated main plans as indicated in the statements will continue to be updated as more information comes to light. Turning may attention now to the content of your detailed advice and relating my comments to each of the items you cover.

3.1 I make it clear in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and Heritage Statement 1 (HS1) that the application is for repair, renovation and refurbishment. The intention is to retain as much of the elements of the building as is possible. The basement will not be structurally altered in any way and will only be used for modest storage. There are no external areas such as a yard. The listing statement □interesting survivor of this building type□is now included in the DAS and HS1. I do state that only a few good examples survive today and that the new owners are prepared to invest in the repair and maintenance of such a building. I state recognition to the desirability of listing such buildings due to the historic importance of keeping the overall fund of character and features often found on these properties.

3.2 I reiterate that the front elevation has serious deformation due to failed lintels and will need repair in reclaimed brickwork from the site. Without this element of re-build the lintels may continue to deflect under the loads of normal habitation. The chimneys have separated from the party wall and should be re-built locally, however, if not allowed then a steel brace will need to be designed and installed. In regards to the proposed replacement support beam/s (due to loadings) then only a small amount of existing lathe and plaster (say 10-20mm each side of beam) will be affected by the installation.

3.3 A conservation accredited structural engineer will need to be appointed at some stage to over see the project. This is normal practice on construction work of this nature.

3.4 The building use is to be mixed commercial and residential.

3.5 I do not believe the building is wind and/or watertight. The roof has a hole in it and some slates are already dislodged by the weather. The building has not been adequately maintained throughout its life. Ordinarily when parts of the structure begin to fail then the owners would naturally engage in some repairs so the weary condition is due to lack of maintenance.

3.6 The proposed use is shop and dwelling unit and as such requires fire, thermal and acoustic isolation measures to meet with Building Regulation standards under part 'B' part 'L' and part 'E'. These measures have physical properties and have to be installed requiring opening up elements and attachment to elements of the building.

3.7 I do not accept that the level of demolition is wide ranging.

3.8 The proposal no longer includes total re-build of the front elevation. The lintels that have excessive deflection will need to be either replaced or supported internally with a vertical support post at mid-span.

3.9 The shop front detailing is requested as a condition of approval. It is not necessary at this stage to dismantle any of the framing and effectively expose important features that are currently covered up as these will inevitably come to light during the site works. Note that when parts are dismantled they then have to be assembled back and there is a likely hood of unnecessary damage to potentially important hidden features.

3.10 The re-build of the front elevation was for structural reasons and not as you claim for cosmetic reasons. Though when looking at the terrace of buildings obliquely there is a clear feel of dilapidation about number 31. Your comments make me feel like the applicant and I do not care. I make it clear in the statements that re-build will take place on a like for like basis. I do accept there is some ambiguity in the drawings and statements so the drawings have been altered to remove ambiguous notes.

3.11 There is a clear note in the HS1 that the front windows will be retained and restored along with structural elements of support as mentioned earlier.

3.12 The plastic rainwater goods should be replaced with cast iron equivalents. Removal of plastic pipes is mentioned in the Waste Management Plan. It is also a matter for the neighbour properties in terms of legal notification.

3.13 The whole rear elevation will be retained as it is now.

3.14 The windows are not original and will be replaced in accordance with the HS1. The second floor front window looks original and is to be refurbished.

3.15 Rear soil and waste pipe will be replaced with cast iron type.

3.16 A slate roof is proposed to the rear annexe and there is no alteration the height. The roof pitch angle may not be suitable for slates, however, this matter will be discussed with Building Control at a later date.

3.17 Only rotted or infested timber will be treated or removed if absolutely necessary. The main roof will need some additional support strength due to the age and visual

condition of the timbers. The appointed engineer will advise on site. It is not wise at this stage to speculate since destructive access to the underside will need to be made in order to gain "close up" access.

3.18 There is no proposal to remove the ceiling beneath the main roof. This was a question asked and answered at the site meeting. There are two methods for insulating the roof either between the rafters or over the ceiling. The rafter method will not require eaves vents and the over ceiling will require eaves vent. The over ceiling method will be adopted along with hidden fascia soffit vents.

3.19 Existing slates will be re-used and although the drawing does name various types that are available and have been used in historic buildings, access is required to precisely identify the type on this roof. I feel it is sufficient to make the commitment to use existing slates and if any replacements are necessary then they will be identical types.

3.20 Lead work will be done in lead sheet and lead on site will be retained.

3.21 The inspection bench will be retained under the window.

3.22 First floor layout will be altered to show a front to back separation with stud partition for bathroom privacy. A frameless glass sub division can be incorporated though I do not understand the need to be able to see through as if it were a single room. The glass screen would need to be fire resisting and impose substantially higher loads onto the floor and this will be reflected in the calculations for floor beam supports. Shadow gaps are already included on the plans.

3.23 The deep internal porch space is a consequence of altering the stairs at ground floor and since the existing stairs will now be retained the porch area is reduced slightly. The area will be closed to miss use by having a main entrance door that will be open when the shop is in use and closed when the shop is not in use. The building use and management arrangements are under discussion and will involve the Building Regulations part "B – Means of escape". A security shutter mounted internally will be used when the building is not occupied.

3.24 The existing stairs will be re-used and worn/damaged treads will be repaired. Building control may argue that the stairs do not conform to building regulation.

3.25 Floor structure is retained. The HS1 says that timbers affected by woodworm or wood rot will be treated. All floor boarding will be retained with no proposals to make any unnecessary replacements. The proposal was to cover the floor over with sheet boarding to protect the original floor but is now not the case. Thermal and acoustic insulation will be installed in accordance with the building regulations. Boards will need to be carefully detached then re-fitted on a like for like basis. The level of damage to the boards by lifting cannot be determined precisely as the fixing nails may prove difficult to dislodge.

3.26 See calculations for the modern accepted loadings on the main floor supports.

3.27 Parts of lath and plaster have already collapsed. In one case (second floor) is supported by temporary posts to prevent it falling to the floor. This indicates that the "pins or nails" holding the lath and plaster in place have corroded to a collapsible state.

This indicates that other support nailing will be in similar state. The proposal in the DAS is to retain lath and plaster ceilings with very minor removal and reinstatement.

3.28 The ground floor ceiling will not now be boxed in and remain visible. A sprinkler fire protection system is not authorised by Building Regulations part 'B'. The fire detection and warning system is a minimum standard and cannot be relaxed and will conform to Building Regulation part 'B' and strictly adhered to.

3.29 The basement floor will not be altered and is the main reason why such little detail is provided. All other floors have been commented on previously.

3.30 There is now no demolition of the chimneys. Bracing will be required to prevent any further separation from the party wall. Approval for fixing to the party wall via 'resin anchors' will be a modern form of connection whereas local re-build via tied in brickwork to existing party wall would be the traditional method.

3.31 A dwelling use will necessitate acoustic isolation at the party walls in accordance with part 'E' of the Building Regulations. Party walls are a source of unwanted noise pollution from adjoining properties and the present structure is not adequate in preventing this hence the need for acoustic wallboards.

3.32 It is not usual to present electrical, plumbing and heating at this stage. However a drawing can be prepared. It is necessary to have a layout approved showing the internal walls then the various services and devices can be planned. What can be said is that there will be no wall chasings to cater for copper pipes or electrical wires etc and no holes cut in existing timber joists. The rear soil pipe will be changed to cast iron and remain in the same location.

3.33 Accessibility is mentioned already in the DAS.

3.34 I do not agree with you in respect to altering most (if not all) of the elements and implying that they have an unacceptable impact on the heritage significance. The applicant and I have made it clear that there is a collective desire to retain, restore and maintain this building in a sensitive manor. There is a minor ambiguity between the drawings and the statements and have been corrected and re-written as part of this application.

3.35 I accept to retain the appearance on the basis of your desire to have the building retain its current visual impact on the street scene. It is true that I would have liked the building to look as good as the other buildings in this locality. I say this on the basis that if the building had been maintained in the way that buildings usually are, then the front face would not have been allowed to become deformed and this is due to poor maintenance. Indeed had the previous owners properly maintained the whole building then it would simple not appear in a dilapidated state. Never the less I yield to your requirements.

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