



Ballbrook Avenue elevation to Craig House

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1.0 Introduction



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a formal application for Planning consent. The scheme proposes a single storey rooftop extension the former telephone exchange, Ballbrook Avenue, Didsbury. This building is located in the Ballbrook Conservation Area.

This document has been prepared by Atelier MB Urban Architects for our Client, M20 Offices 5 Ltd and must be read in conjunction with the full supporting information package, including our Heritage Report and the Planning Statement by Ludlam Associates.



Site location plan- site edged red.



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2.0 Context



2.1 Planning Policy

National Policy

Please refer to the separate Planning Statement by Ludlam Associates, and the Atelier MB Heritage Report for further details.

2.2 Location

Craig House is on the edge of the Ballbrook Conservation area, a leafy district of West Didsbury, Manchester. The Conservation Area is predominantly defined by wide residential roads of Edwardian semi-detached houses, with hipped gables and low brick garden walls to the front.

However, the cluster of buildings to the end of Ballbrook Avenue are of a distinctly different character, and date from 1920s onwards. Craig House (the former telephone exchange) forms part of this cluster, which are visually and physically distinct from the residential properties that make up the rest of Ballbrook Avenue. These municipal properties characteristically have higher eaves heights and larger floorplates. The other buildings in this group are the former post office (now restaurant) to the rear (facing Lapwing Lane), and the former bank (now offices and residential) which sits on the corner.

2.3 Building

Craig House is a two storey brick built property, with a flat roof set behind a parapet. Fronting Ballbrook Avenue, there is a regular array of large sash windows.

To the bank side of the building, a small side element of the property is lower in height, reflecting a lower floor to ceiling level internally. Outwardly this presents as an entrance lobby/porch feature, with a large timber panelled entrance door with fanlight over.

The parapet detail to the main building has a tall appearance as it rises beyond the cornice detail just above the 1st floor windows. The overall height is approximately 2.5 storeys, against the 3 storeys of the adjacent bank building.

2.4 Historical Context

This report is to be read in conjunction with the separate Heritage Statement prepared by the Atelier MB. An extract is included below:

Craig House was built in 1927, designed by the architect Charles P. Wilkinson, an employee of the Office of Works who was responsible for a number of post office and telephone exchange buildings in the North-West of England, including the former post office site on Lapwing Lane which backs on to the site. These three former ‘services’ buildings form a group and are distinct in character to the housing which makes up the rest of Ballbrook Avenue.



View from the far end of Ballbrook Avenue. Craig house to the left of the bank.



Aerial view of the Conservation Area



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3.0 Site Analysis



3.0 SITE ANALYSIS

3.1 Location and connectivity

Located in the Ballbrook Conservation Area, the building is part of a cluster of properties which form an amenity hub/parade including shops and restaurants along Lapwing Lane. This is not far from the main West Didsbury commercial hub of The site is also just off the tram and bus routes into the city centre, and out towards Didsbury and beyond.

3.2 Building Condition and Use

The existing building is tenanted, and the incumbent employer would like to expand their accommodation here, rather than be forced to relocate to larger premises out of this locality.

3.3 Opportunities and Constraints

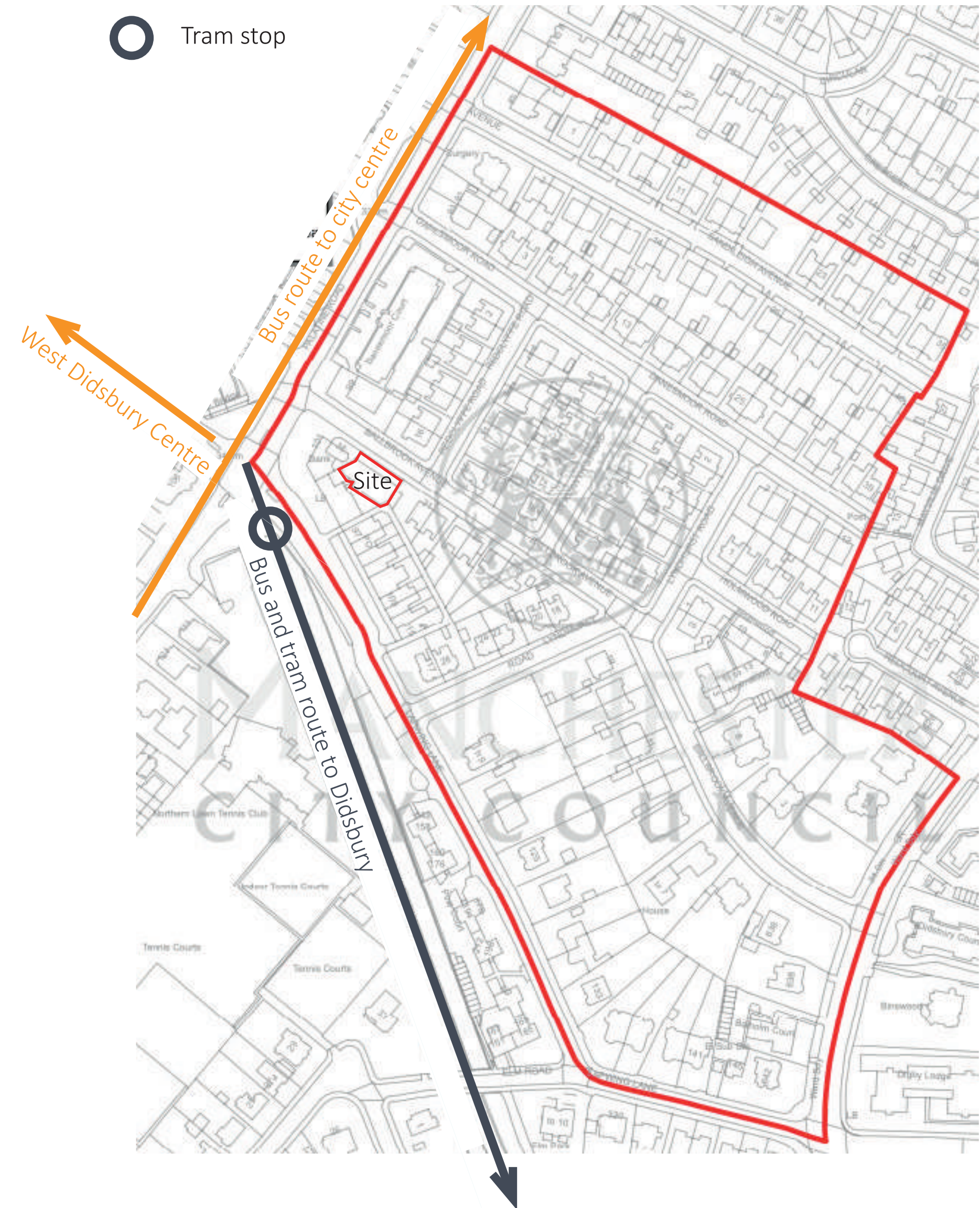
We understand the following key aspects of the building and the brief:

Opportunities

- Existing property with sitting tenant
- Highly accessible locality
- High level of good quality amenities within close proximity
- Good floor to ceiling heights

Constraints

- Floorplate limited by site boundary
- Close proximity to residential properties
- Listed building opposite (no. 99 Palatine Rd)
- Close proximity of other properties to rear and side.



Location Plan- Transport Connectivity



4.0 THE BRIEF

Atelier MB Ltd have been appointed by the owner of the property, M20 Offices 5 Ltd, to develop proposals to increase the office floorplate via a rooftop extension, to enable the sitting tenant to expand.

We have been asked to review the existing proposals prepared by the client, and make adjustments in light of comments provided by the Planning Officer.



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5.0 Design Development



5.1 Rooftop Extension

Our client has received feedback from the Planning Officer with regards to the originally proposed scheme. These relate to concerns with regards to the design in the setting of the Ballbrook Conservation Area.

- Design, appearance and form of the proposed extension
- Impact to the street-scene and character of the conservation area.

We have therefore reviewed the original proposals with our Architectural Historian (Laura Jessup of Atelier Heritage), and have made the following adjustments to the proposals:

- Reduction in apparent height

This has been achieved by setting the rooftop extension inbound of the existing parapet walls. This pushes the extension away from the front elevation, reducing its prominence visually. The extension is also set in from each side in plan, again this reduces the visual mass, producing a deferential form which is distinct from the original elevational composition.

- Reduction in mass.

‘The proposed front dormers and blank brick gables emerging above the existing parapet would exacerbate the visual impact and prominence of the proposed new extension.’

As above, the reduction in footprint to the rooftop extension reduces the overall mass and scale of the proposals. By removing the proposed brick parapet walls from each side, the revised design sits as a distinct element from the original building, and does not detract from the neighbouring bank building.

- Revised Materiality

The revised proposals remove the use of GRP to the dormers. Instead the roof and dormers will be fully finished in natural blue-grey slating. All new windows will be timber framed, and painted in a dark slate grey to match the roof finish. All trims and flashings will be in lead.

6.0 Proposals

The concept for these proposals is to achieve the stated aims of the brief with minimal visual and physical impact on the Conservation Area characteristics.

Here we illustrate the differences between the previous proposal, and the revised scheme which is now issued for consideration.

- Reduced footprint of rooftop extension
- Inclined elevations reduce mass of rooftop extension
- Slate cladding to match bank roof
- Dark window frames to match slates
- Removal of brick gable ends to extension



Top: Previous Scheme
Below: New Proposals



7.0 ACCESS STATEMENT

This proposal is for 1 no. storey to added to an existing property. The existing property has 1 no. storey plus ground floor and is served by a single staircase.

The staircase will be extended to serve the new storey. The new staircase will be designed in accordance with Approved Document M. These proposals do not alter the access to or into the building.



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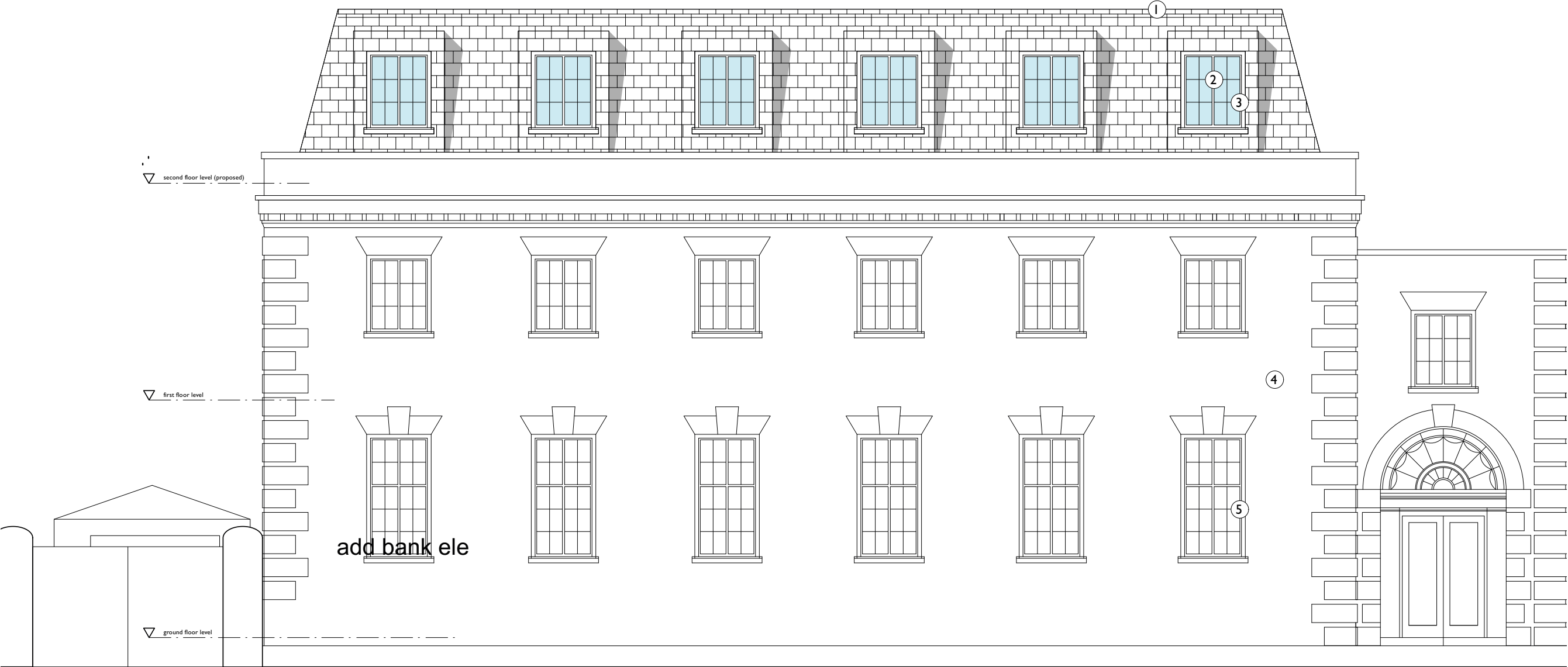
8.0 Conclusion



8.0 CONCLUSION

The proposals to which this report relates, are a revision of previous proposals submitted by the building owner. These proposals have modified the previous design to offer a more sympathetic and deferential addition to a significant building in the Ballbrook Conservation Area.

The proposals presented are of an appropriate form, scale, and materiality such that they offer the desired accommodation without detriment to the building and its setting. The scheme provides much needed additional commercial accommodation within an existing office building in an existing area of commerciality. They are therefore considered to be fully in compliance with relevant planning legislation and local policies, and should be supported on this basis.





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