

West Area Planning Committee

9th February 2016

Application Number: 15/03660/CT3

Decision Due by: 3rd March 2016

Proposal: Alterations to window at ground floor level on north elevation to incorporate door and installation of staircase from new fire exit door down to ground floor. Removal of existing spiral staircase and metal mesh enclosure from south elevation and installation of new dog-legged staircase from first floor to ground floor with metal mesh enclosure at ground floor level. Increase width of fire exit door openings onto the existing staircase at first, second and third floor levels. Re-configure door openings to rear of ground floor offices, infill one door opening, increase width of remaining door opening and fit new fire exit.

Site Address: St Aldate's Chambers 109 - 113 St Aldate's Oxford
Oxfordshire – see **Appendix 1**

Ward: Carfax Ward

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Oxford City Council

Recommendation:

APPLICATION BE APPROVED

For the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed alterations and additions are acceptable in terms of design, would preserve the appearance of the Central conservation area and would not impinge on vehicle access. The proposal therefore accords with policies CP1, CP8, CP10 and HE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026.
- 2 The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan as summarised below. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that the development would otherwise give rise to can be offset by the conditions imposed.

subject to the following conditions, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

- 1 Development begun within time limit

- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Materials

Main Local Plan Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

CP1 - Development Proposals
CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context
CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs
HE7 - Conservation Areas

Core Strategy

CS18 - Urban design, town character, historic environment

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework
This application is in or affecting the Central Conservation Area.
Planning Practice Guidance

Relevant Site History:

76/00638/A_H - Provision of fire escape to south elevation. PER 22nd September 1976.

10/02599/CT3 - External alterations to building to include new windows, doors and boiler flue. External ductwork and covered cycle store to courtyard. Provision of heat recovery plant air conditioning units and safety railings to roof.(amended plans). PER 21st December 2010.

14/02102/PDC - PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT CHECK - Upgraded rear fire escape provision. PNR 19th November 2014.

Representations Received:

At the time of this report being written, no representations had been received. Consultation expires on 04.02.2016. An update on representations will be provided verbally at committee.

Statutory Consultees:

At the time of this report being written, only the following consultee response had been received:

Highways Authority: no comment

Consultation expires on 04.02.2016. An update on representations will be provided verbally at committee.

Issues:

Design and conservation area
Vehicle access

Officers Assessment:

Site description

1. Oxford City Council's office building at St Aldate's Chambers has four storeys plus a basement. While the main entrances for staff and the public are from St Aldate's, there is vehicle under-croft access from St Aldate's to the south of the building into New Inn Yard. This access is shared with the adjoining properties to the south of the building.
2. The building has various exits on the west, south and north elevations, including exits on first, second and third floors on the west elevation leading onto the fire escape staircase.
3. See **Appendix 1** for site plan.

Proposal

4. Various external changes are proposed to the building to upgrade the means of escape from the building.

Design and conservation area

5. The alterations and additions proposed are not readily visible from the public realm, and do not substantially alter or harm the appearance of the building. They are considered to preserve the appearance of the Central conservation area. The existing mesh enclosure will be replaced by a single-storey mesh enclosure which, although it will cover a larger area, will be less over-bearing than the existing arrangement. The materials proposed will match the existing; a condition relating to materials is recommended.
6. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies CP1, CP8 and HE7 of the Oxford Local Plan, and policy CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy in terms of design and impact on the conservation area.

Vehicle access

7. The additions to the north elevation will not impact vehicle access because this area is only used by bicycles and motorcycles and ample space will remain.

8. Although the new dog-legged staircase with mesh enclosure will occupy a larger footprint than the current spiral staircase, these will be located within land owned by the applicant and not on shared access land. Sufficient width will be retained for vehicles in New Inn Yard.
9. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies CP1 and CP10 of the Oxford Local Plan in terms of vehicle access.

Conclusion:

Officers recommend that Committee approves the application.

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to approve, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Background Papers: 15/03660/CT3

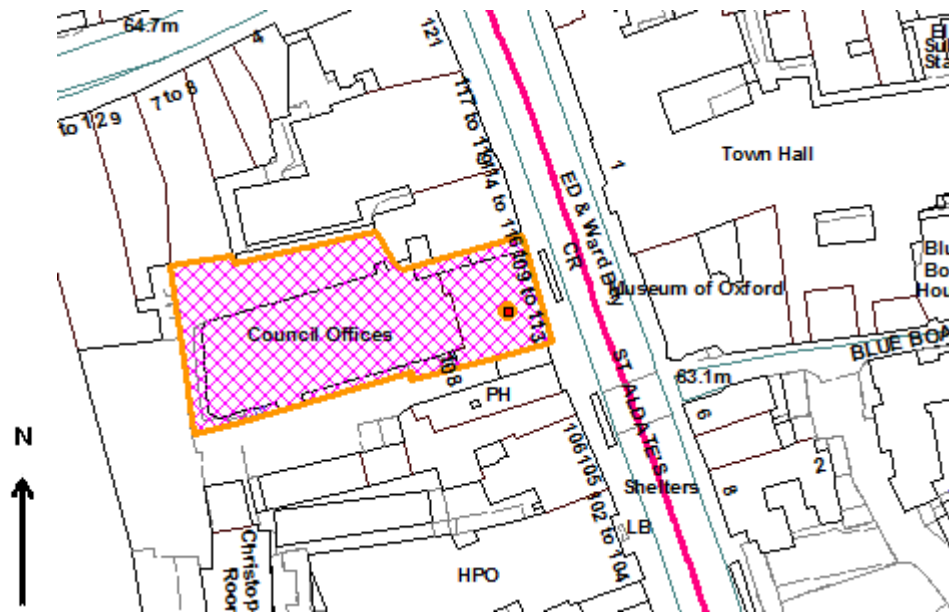
Contact Officer: Nadia Robinson

Extension: 2697

Date: 28th January 2016

Appendix 1

15/03660/CT3 - St Aldate's Chambers



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Ordnance Survey 100019348

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