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**STATEMENT TO SUPPORT THE PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSIONS
OF 1-3 GEORGE STREET TO CREATE SEVEN RESIDENTIAL
APARTMENTS WITH REAR ACCESS.**



INTRODUCTION

This design statement supports the planning & heritage statements for the planning application proposing the creation of seven new apartments located above the existing ground floor units at 1-3 George Street, Whalley. The apartments are proposed on 3 levels with a new mezzanine floor constructed between the existing first and second floor spaces. The works also include extensions at the rear, roof windows and dormer constructions.

The existing building at 1-3 George Street is a substantial early 20th century, three storey commercial premises with a number of retail units on the ground and first floors. The building is constructed in red brick with sandstone detailing and dressings to the front (North) elevation displaying an Edwardian character with a neo-baroque theme. The building is predominantly characterised by a pair of turrets at either end of the front elevation, beneath the turrets are stair wells that provide access to the upper floors from George Street and between the turrets above the parapet wall is a flat roofed dormer.

The building boasts a vast amount of space within the hipped, slated roof. The first floor has a fairly simple arrangement of large window openings, with modern frames. The eastern end of the building is entirely brick, as is the western end which accommodates the spar and was extended in the late 20th century. The rear of the building backs onto a narrow access road off the Church Lane properties and is very much concerned with servicing, including a sheltered loading bay with bin storage and a flat-roofed, pebble-dashed extension, and lift shaft as well as access points to a number of the units on the ground floor.



1 George Street Existing Situation

The building lies within the Whalley Conservation Area and is identified within Ribbles Valley Borough Councils' Conservation Area Appraisal map as a Building of Townscape Merit and a focal building. The building has accommodated a number of different uses since its construction (between 1910 and 1929), most notably as Maureen Cookson's women's wear store from 1974-2018 having been built as a Co-op originally with the village's cinema upstairs. Photographs below show a stone band which has the names of the various Cooperative departments, e.g. offices, and groceries and provisions, these are now hidden or entirely removed and replaced by the present shop signs.

Reference to the heritage statement produced by Stephen Haigh explains an assessment of the significance of heritage assets and their settings affected by the development.



1 George Street Circa 1962-63

A planning application for the change of use of the first floor from Retail (A1) to Restaurant (A3) was approved with conditions in March of 2019 (App no. 3/2018/1137). By virtue of the size of the existing first floor space (Photographs below) little interest was shown for use as a restaurant unit by potential tenants. Therefore, the applicants new desire is to create a residential solution which will be a more appropriate and unobtrusive use on the immediate area.



Existing First Floor Space (Original Cinema Room)

CONCEPT

The existing space within the upper floors of 1-3 George Street (particularly the tall curved ceiling in the old cinema room) is not practical for a single storey use, this is reflected in its uninhabited state since the vacancy of Maureen Cookson's store in 2018. Therefore, the concept for the proposal was principally to utilise and maximise the significant volume of upper floor and roof void spaces that 1-3 George Street possesses. In addition and extremely important is the refurbishment and enhancement of the external appearance specifically at the rear is also an important element to the proposal.

Demolition work and consolidation of the air-conditioning plant at the rear of the building is required in order to create a neat and ordered solution which expresses the residential use and improves the view from the properties on Church Lane, the layout and organisation of this work must be set out in conjunction with understanding the requirements of servicing the commercial units at ground floor. This is opposed to the cluttered and visually harmful existing situation (see photos).



Existing Cluttered Rear Elevation of Conflicting Structures

It is integral that the scheme respects the architectural style of the building with regard to materiality and massing as well as respecting the privacy of the residential amenity at the rear of the houses on church lane.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to remove the existing gable dormer at the rear of George Street and replace it with a new gabled extension of the same proportions extended on the roof, closer to the main ridge of the building. A symmetrical gable extension on the other side of the rear elevation forms the bulk of the new massing to the rear, both gables are proposed incorporating standing seam zinc and cedar boarding materiality.



Proposed Rear Elevation

The larger of the two gables will provide access to two apartments and the new plant area is designed to conceal all plant units with a powder coated aluminium louvred screen and subsequently rationalise the rear elevation. All five other apartments are to be accessed through adapted existing window openings via the proposed rear access and internal corridor.

A white render (K-Rend or similar) materiality is proposed in place of the existing red brick to give the building a new fresh appearance, timber panelling is proposed to the larger gable to soften the aesthetics & increase the privacy to the adjacent properties on Church Lane when moving through the space. A significant amount of tall plantation is proposed on both terraces in order to provide sufficient screening to the rear of Church Lane especially on the higher terrace off apartment A.

Internally the apartments are to be positioned on three floors, a new mezzanine floor is proposed to take advantage of the vast space between the existing first and second floors, this will provide two-storey living to five of the seven apartments. Velux cabrio windows are proposed in the roof space to the rear (apartments F & G) these are in line with the advice given in the pre application enquiry received previous to this planning application submission.

The existing flat roof dormer extension on the front elevation is to be replaced with a larger flat roof dormer with a chamfered standing seam zinc materiality in order to provide the space for two-bedroom apartments on the upper floor. Elsewhere on the building all windows are to be replaced in order to further rejuvenate the building.



Proposed Apartment (Apartment G)



Proposed Front Elevation

CONCLUSION

The proposal's overall design has been carefully considered and the impact on the existing & surrounding buildings has been assessed. The building presents a great opportunity to create a new residential solution within the village of Whalley, the proposals aim is to protect, improve and revive a building that has been extremely important to the village for over a century and enhance the appearance of the conservation area whilst not detracting or causing harm to the immediate surroundings and residential amenity at the rear.



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