

COMMITTEE DATE: 16/08/2017

APPLICATION No. **17/00225/MJR** APPLICATION DATE: 03/02/2017

ED: **BUTETOWN**

APP: TYPE: Listed Building Consent

APPLICANT: ABA Holdings Ltd

LOCATION: CARDIFF BAY STATION, BUTE STREET, BUTETOWN

PROPOSAL: WORKS TO ALLOW FOR REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING BUILDING FOR OFFICE SPACE AND CONCIERGE, TO INCLUDE FOR REMOVAL OF EXISTING (NON ORIGINAL) CANOPY AND TO ACCEPT A LINK TO A NEW 4 STOREY BUILDING FOR RETAIL, LIVE-WORK AND OFFICE PURPOSES

RECOMMENDATION : That, subject to Cadw not wishing to call in the application for determination by the Welsh Ministers that LISTED BUILDING CONSENT be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. C02 Statutory Time Limit - Listed Building
2. The Development Approved is that indicated on the following Drawings
 - A108 D PROPOSED ELEVATIONS
 - A107 C PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS sheet 2
 - A106 C PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS sheet 1
 - A105 C PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt

3. The restoration works to the former station building shall be undertaken in accordance with a detailed specification and methodology of repair which shall first have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in Writing.
Reason: To ensure for a specification and methodology of repair appropriate to the special interest of the Listed Building.
4. All new internal and external works to the former station building shall be undertaken in accordance with a detailed specification and methodology of work, materials samples and finishing details which shall first have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in Writing.
Reason: To ensure for a specification and methodology of repair appropriate to the special interest of the Listed Building.
5. The interface of the new build link and the existing Listed Building shall accord with a scheme of architectural detail (including fixing and

dressing details) which shall first have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing.

Reason: To ensure for a satisfactory specification of works appropriate to the Listed Building.

1. DESCRIPTION OF WORKS REQUIRING LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

1.1 Listed Building Consent is sought for the refurbishment of the former Bute Street Station building and the provision of a link to connect to a 4 storey building to provide for a mixed use development. The former station would be refurbished for office use and a concierge.

1.2 Works to the exterior of the building essentially amount to repair. Works to the interior will use the remaining viable structure to support new works. walls and floors. Efforts will be made to retain as much existing fabric as possible but it is accepted that the building has been vacant for some 20 years and has been used for squatting and anti-social and illegal activities for periods of time in recent history and has also been subject to prolonged periods of water ingress and general dilapidation.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The former station building is located to the western side of the application site. The building is Listed as being of Architectural and Historic Interest and Graded II* as an exceptionally early surviving example of purpose built railway architecture in Wales. However there is little of historic interest retained in the interior of the building.

2.2 Bute Street station was originally built as offices for the Taff Vale Railway (TVR), and advised to have been first used in 1843. However the southern section is reportedly a later addition of Circa 1860's. Both the original building and extension have stuccoed (render relief) walls; share a hipped slate roof and deeply overhanging eaves and soffits and tall stuccoed chimneys.

2.3 The Eastern elevation is somewhat altered with a number of window openings infilled, and until recently has been obscured by a modern profile steel canopy (recently removed).

2.4 The North elevation has doubled pilaster strips at its ends, but door and window openings have been altered for access to an external metal fire escape (Proposed to be removed).

2.5 The southern bay shows signs of detachment from the elevation and the lintel requires work to its vertical support where it joins the main elevation.

2.6 Much of the flooring in the building has been removed as it had rotten due to water penetration from a leaking water supply pipe. However that floor was in itself not wholly original and supplemented with OSB / medium density fibreboard.

- 2.7 The Western elevation of the building is to the back of pavement on Bute Street. It is on this façade that the variation between the original building and its extension are most obvious in terms of the variance of window position and style. However the finishing of the building in a cream painted render finish has a unifying effect. The building has been subject to substantial render loss on this elevation.
- 2.8 The building has been vacant for many years, and has been subject to vandalism and occupation by squatters, the eastern façade has been subject to graffiti and tagging.
- 2.9 The roof of the building, despite previous repair is again holed, but subject to survey of internal rafters may otherwise be repairable, the eaves and soffits have however been subject to extensive rot and the buildings drainage system has not functioned properly for some time. Buddliah and other plant damage is evident and the permanence of remaining render is suspect over much of the building façade.
- 2.10 The building is also noted to have undergone repair in different materials, some loss of layered paint revealing Ashlar scribing to render in some areas but plain cementitious render elsewhere.
- 2.11 Windows have been protected by ply panelling for a long time, and although timber sash, are doubted to be original, especially at the rear (N) of the building.
- 2.12 Overall the building shell and flooring will require in depth survey to verify what may be able to be retained and fabric which will need to be replaced. This will also require an element of opening up to investigate concealed fabric.

3. **SITE HISTORY**

Application Number	03/01659/C
Application Type	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT
Proposal	REFURBISHMENT AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING BUILDING TO CREATE ADDITIONAL FLOOR SPACE INCORPORATING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING CANOPY AND NEW BASEMENT CONSTRUCTION. ROOF MATERIAL POLYMERIC MEMBRANE; LIGHT GREY. EXTERIOR WALL FACINGS MASONRY PANELS, SMOOTH RENDER PANELS, PLANAR GLAZING, CURTAIN WALLING; COLOURS TO BE CONFIRMED
	CALLED IN FOR DETERMINATION BY WELSH GOVERNMENT AND GRANTED 05/06/2008

Application Number	03/01660/C
Application Type	FULL PLANNING PERMISSION
Proposal	REFURBISHMENT AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING BUILDING TO CREATE ADDITIONAL FLOORSPACE INCORPORATING DEMOLITIONS OF EXISTING CANOPY AND NEW BASEMENT CONSTRUCTION. CHANGE OF USE TO A3 RESTAURANT AND ASSOCIATED CAFE/BAR
	GRANTED 15/09/2006

Application Number	17/00224/MJR
Application Type	FULL PLANNING PERMISSION
Proposal	REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING BUILDING (INCLUDING REMOVAL OF EXISTING CANOPY) AND LINKED FOUR STOREY EXTENSION FOR A MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING OFFICE (B1): 10 LIVE WORK UNITS (C3) CONCIERGE AND ANCILLARY WORKS
	UNDETERMINED

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Planning Policy Wales Edition 9, November 2016

Chapter 6 - Conserving the Historic Environment

WG Technical Advice Notes

TAN 24 - Historic Environment (2017)

Other Material Considerations

Cardiff Local Development Plan 2006-2026 (Adopted January 2016)

KP17: BUILT HERITAGE

EN9: CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Mount Stuart Square Conservation Area Appraisal

5. **INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES**

5.1 **Ecology**

The applicant has submitted a bat survey which did not confirm the presence of any bats.

6. **EXTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES**

6.1 The Amenity Bodies were consulted and the following observations received:

The Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA)

(in respect of the application as originally submitted, which was for a lower, squatter development with higher linking element)

Noted that this application included for the demolition of the canopy, the conversion of the station building and for a three storey new build in place of the demolished canopy.

The Association has no objection to the removal of the canopy but does not consider that the new build scheme proposed was either of an appropriate height or design; considering that it completely obscured and dominated the building from the east and therefore adversely affected the setting of the building.

The AIA also noted that there was no indication of whether any original features survived in the station building. and commented that if they did they should be preserved.

Also noting that the new partitions proposed appeared to be relatively light-weight and so should allow for reversion to the original layout in the future if desired.

6.2 The Victorian Society

The case has been considered by the Society's Southern Buildings Committee, and I write now to convey our response. We object to the application, which would cause a high degree of harm to the building and its setting, and because the quality of the application falls well short of what is required given the Station's II*-listing and the potential impact of the proposals.

The Bute Road Station is one of the oldest and most significant railway structures in Wales. It is one the Society has long been concerned about and only last year was included on our list of the ten most endangered buildings in England and Wales. It should go without saying that we are strongly supportive of the principle of delivering a sensitive scheme of restoration and reuse. However, the present proposal is seriously flawed and fails to represent the sympathetic and high quality scheme a building of such high significance demands.

The application proposes a three-storey extension and the conversion of the building to a mix of office, retail and live-work units. The principle of this mix of uses is not objectionable, although its conversion to a museum - the possibility of which has been widely publicised over the last six months - would surely be more fitting.

We object to the proposed extension on a number of grounds. Firstly, it is too tall, extending above the eaves of the listed building, thereby lending it – particularly with its flat-roof form – an imposing and damaging prominence and bulk. We object also to its architectural treatment, which is aesthetically jarring, disappointingly banal and fails to convey any sense of responsiveness or sensitivity to the listed building and its setting. What is proposed is little more than a relatively mundane commercial block crudely tacked on to one of Wales's most important historic railway structures.

In purely technical terms the application is unacceptably poor. The submitted Planning Statement supposedly includes a Heritage Statement: in reality it includes nothing that might seriously qualify as such. Ultimately it fails to provide anywhere near sufficient information by which to assess the impact of

the scheme on the special interest of the building. Very few photographs are included, and none of the interiors; no explanation or justification is provided for the proposed infilling of every single window and door in the Station's eastern elevation (so much for the applicant's aspiration of respecting and maintaining visibility of this aspect; the "*glazed link*" here is in fact a large retail unit, the Station's disfigured eastern wall essentially becoming a party wall between the two); there is no mention of the extension's materials, other than to describe them as "*high quality*"; no information is provided on the detailing and quality of the proposed treatment of the interiors. Without a far greater level of detail we, and indeed the Council, are unable to properly assess this application. Such is the paucity of the submitted documentation that it should simply not have been validated. In light of the significance of the Bute Road Railway Station the quality of this application – both architecturally and in terms of the information it provides – falls well short of what is required and would entail serious harm to the fabric and setting of a Grade II*-listed building. We therefore recommend that it is refused consent.

6.3 **The Ancient Monuments Society**

The Ancient Monuments Society (AMS) objects to this application. We have seen the Victorian Society's representations and agree with them that the proposals would cause unacceptable harm to the listed building and its setting.

Significance of the listed building

Bute Road Railway Station is listed Grade II*. The building was previously the headquarters of the Taff Vale Railway Company. It is thought to have been designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel and was completed in 1843, with an extension added in 1860.

Impact of the three-storey extension

We share the Victorian Society's concerns about the proposed new extension to the station. We accept that the ambition for the project is to provide a "contemporary take rather than a pastiche of the traditional form." This is an acceptable approach. What is proposed, however, is a rather generic building which looks rather incongruous and out of place in this location. If the design concept is to let the listing building 'breathe', then seeking to achieve this through an evocation of utilitarian railway architecture might be a more successful approach.

We also agree that a conversion to use as a museum, which was the focus of previous proposals, would be a more fitting option for the building.

We would be happy to be consulted again, should further information be made available.

7. **REPRESENTATIONS**

- 7.1 The application was advertised in accordance with statutory procedures. The only representation received related to the use of the building not being for community purposes, the disruption of construction, and contractor behaviour,

and impact on parking. There were no representations received which related to the Listed Structure.

8. **ANALYSIS**

Overview

- 8.1 The application proposes the conversion of the building to office use and a concierge. The proposals effectively relate to a programme of repair and renewal of the remaining structure. The submitted drawings suggest that the existing staircase will be retained along with the principal plan form of the building. Further subdivision of the spaces is proposed in lightweight studwork with the idea that the space can be flexible and easily altered to meet changing business needs.
- 8.2 The former station will be linked to a new build mixed use development of ten residential apartments, and an A1 Shop and A3 food and drink use contained within a new four storey building.
- 8.3 The reuse and adaptation of the former railway station has always been contentious. In the last twenty years, the cost of restoration of the existing building has never been viable in itself; and past designs to extend the building have not sat comfortably with those who wished to preserve the building as an entity.
- 8.4 The principal issue is to what extent it is reasonable to enable the restoration of the declining Listed Building, and in what manner of design it is appropriate to do so.
- 8.5 Planning Permission was granted in 2006, along with Listed Building Consent (further to Welsh Government Call In) for a restaurant use with 'glass box' addition in 2008; however this proposal was subject to a market collapse, and a general slowing of development uptake in the area, and ultimately became too great a risk commercially for the applicant to progress. The parent building has thereafter declined, with only minimal works undertaken to preserve it.
- 8.6 The current proposal as amended has been through an extensive and extended dialogue with officers and is now presented in the form of a four storey building, taller than originally submitted, but concluded to be better proportioned and respectful of the integrity of the former station than any options seen before. The aesthetic of the proposed building is intentionally in distinct contrast to the architectural language of the existing building, but lends from its overall proportion, and proportion of its subdivision to establish the width, height and subdivision of the new structure. The new building is also connected to the listed structure by means of a much smaller subservient glazed link, which is considered appropriate.

The comments of the amenity bodies are noted, however not concurred with.

- 8.7 The proposed building will be four storeys in height with a flat roof. A framed composition mirroring the width of the existing building and lending from the height of the bay window banding, eaves, and lower chimney stack heights of the existing station to inform the proportion of the facades. The two structures being provided with a maximum separation between the old and new with a 2.5m planar glazed link set just below the bay parapet height of the station building. At the request of the planning officer the new building has also been foreshortened to both north and south to ensure that it does not over extend as a backdrop to the former station, and will not dominate the existing structure when viewed obliquely from east and west. Given the height of the existing building and available carriageway width of Bute Street the new building would not be seen against the face of the station from that direction, nor similarly the station building from Lloyd George Avenue. This will ensure that there is no competition between the two forms and that neither will dominate the other.
- 8.8 In respect of setting, the objection of the Association for Industrial Archaeology (in respect of an earlier version of the proposal) is noted, however the principle of retaining a setting to the Eastern side of the building would in effect preclude any substantive development to the east of the building, or any form of enabling development which has previously been accepted.
- 8.9 At more detailed level, the eastern elevation of the building has been heavily modified for a very long time with most window openings having been blocked or boarded up, and although discernible by the remaining cill projections has until recent times also been concealed by a profile steel canopy. As this is the case both the principle and merit of maintaining an eastern view of the building are not considered sustainable, especially as no reference remains to the former context of the building as a trackside railway office/station now all rail tracks have been removed.
- 8.10 It is concluded that this proposal will allow for the refurbishment of the listed building in a respectful manner and that the benefit of restoring three elevations of the building, roof and planform of the structure outweigh the loss of a street view of the building from the east.
- 8.11 In terms of physical adaptation, the scheme also provides for a obviously subservient contrasting link between the old and new build elements of the scheme which is both set back from the southern façade and also of a modest height to allow an appreciation of the station as an independent and legible structure by maintaining the upper floor of the station as visually and physically separated from the new build.

9. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 9.1 It is concluded that the that the conversion of the station for office type purposes is an appropriate use of the building, and in fact a return to its original purpose. The proposed extension may not be to everybody's taste however it will enable the restoration of the Listed Building and ensure for its longevity for the immediate future, The proposals effect minimal alteration of the building fabric and retention of the buildings special interest, and the degree of

intervention into the structure to accommodate the glazed link will be modest, and no more intrusive than the former canopy detailing.

- 9.2 Overall the scheme is considered sensitive to the restoration of long term vacant listed building at risk and the Granting of Listed Building Consent is recommended.