

PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF 1ST AND 2ND FLOORS of
STONE HOUSE 276 to 277 GREENWICH HIGH ROAD SE10 8NB
FROM CLASS E(a)(i) OFFICE to CLASS C3 RESIDENTIAL
IN ORDER TO CREATE 4 NEW FLATS

THE SITE

This application for prior approval supersedes the previous application for prior approval ref: **214418/PN2** that was approved on 4Feb22 as the tenant of the 2nd floor office in no.275 is not moving out until sep25.

This four storey building built in the 1930s comprises part of a disused bank that occupied part of the ground floor of no.275 (51.3m²), a common entrance lobby and a bookshop (24.45m²). The first floor was used as an office (107.1m²), the second floor was used as an office (107.1m²) and the third floor contains two no. 1 bedroom flats (total 90.68m²).

Note that the freeholder Stonefield Estates Ltd. owns all of nos. 275 and 277. This application only concerns part of no.275 and all of no.277. The disused bank also encompassed the whole of no.275 on the ground floor including a single storey rear addition of 72.9m².

The ground floor delineates what were shopfronts with moulded console brackets. The previous fenestration and stall risers have been removed and replaced with plain glazed shopfronts and fanlights and painted fascias. The common entrance to the upper offices and flats has a stucco surround, moulded canopy, wooden panelled doors and fascia over.

The front elevation of no.277 has painted stucco on the 1st and 2nd floors above the ground floor disused bank and existing bookshop. The 3rd floor has a mansard roof and dormer windows. The windows of the 1st and 2nd floors are grey pointed wooden sliding sashes. The 1st floor has a moulded stucco pediment in a central position. The 3rd floor dormer windows are white painted casement windows.

The mansard roof is clad with natural slates.

The rear of no.277 is built from Fletton brickwork. Critical steel windows with precast concrete lintels over and has a natural slate-clad mansard roof with dormer windows over.

The rear yard is surrounded by the high brick walls of the adjacent building of no.279, the 3.5m high brick wall of the bank single storey rear addition and a 2m high rear brick wall overlooking the railway cutting.

The town centre has a mix of ground floor retail units and office and residential uses on the upper floors. It welcomes residents, visitors and tourists containing the historic buildings of St.Aeger's Church, the Royal Naval College, the National Maritime Museum, the Cutty Sark ship and the Royal Observatory and amenities such as shops, restaurants, pubs, university, music college, markets, cinema, theatre, hotels, river and park. Essential shops, doctors surgeries, dentists, pharmacies, post office, banks are all within 5 minutes walk.

The public transport provision is excellent having a PTAL rating of 5.

The DLR and train stations are 5 minutes walk away. Greenwich High Road is a major bus route and the Thames Clipper service is 10 minutes walk away. There is ample visitors car parking on the other side of the road. There will be a secure covered cycle store for 6 cycles in the rear yard. Thus, the extra provision of 4 bays in nos. 275 and 277 does not require offstreet parking.

The site is in Flood Zone 1 so there is a low probability of flooding.

The Critical windows in the rear elevation are in a poor state of repair and will be replaced with narrow aluminium framed powder coated dark grey windows with the same configuration of windows i.e. casement, fanlight and fixed windows.

Note that the window replacements only affect the rear of the property and cannot be seen from the street.

The proposals do not affect any access issues. Note that bin storage for the flats is in the rear yard that is accessed from the commercial ground floor lobby and is a separate entrance. There are no impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended residential occupiers of the development. The neighbouring premises on Greenwich High Road front are not noise producing as Post Office, pharmacy, estate agent, betting shop, barbers shop and cafe only open during the day.

At the rear there is more residential use and a deep railway cutting. On the other side of the road is the cinema (triple glazed), a car park, hotel and a vacant restaurant.

Note that no.275 provided a NIA and the result stated there was negligible noise from neighbouring commercial properties and external noise was from the traffic along Greenwich High Road and was not a nuisance. Note also that for 275 and 277 all the existing windows on the street side are double glazed and the proposed replacement windows on the rear of the building will also be double glazed.

The provision of daylighting is in fact over provided and sunlight orientation is good.

The front of the building faces East and the rear West.

The replacement windows on the rear show the dimensions. Both existing and proposed windows to habitable rooms are more than 1/20th of the floor area.

PLANNING HISTORY

A full planning application was made on 9July21 ref. **212370F** but was withdrawn on the advice of Raheel Khan planning officer who stated:

This is due to the proposal being contrary to Core Strategy Policy EA(a) which only permits non-employment uses on vacant sites where at least 2 years marketing evidence is submitted to demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect of employment arising. The submitted documents refer to the first floor offices becoming vacant only recently in August and the 2-year marketing period has not been met for the second floor offices. As such, the proposal would be in direct conflict with the policy framework.

He recommended that I submit a prior approval application. It is noted that an application for prior approval was granted 14July21 for the change of use of 271-275 GREENWICH HIGH ROAD, GREENWICH, LONDON, SE10 3JG ref. **211860P** for the upper floors from B1 (Offices) to C3 (Residential) for 3 self-contained residential units.

PROPOSALS

The downturn of demand for office accommodation has been due to the pandemic and is likely to continue as more people are working from home permanently.

Also, there is the trend due to computerisation that people can work away from their place of work in offices etc. This reduces the need for commuting by public transport, commuting by car and less stress on parking provision. Greenwich Town Centre one way system is a continuous traffic jam during working hours. The other benefits are less air pollution and noise.

Coupled with this is an increase in demand of residential accommodation especially in Greenwich Town Centre. Thus, the proposed change of use of 2 floors of office use to residential should be encouraged.

The existing first floor offices have been vacant since the end of July21 and part of the

existing second floor offices have been vacant since the start of the pandemic 1March 2020.

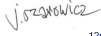
Note that part of the ground floor of 275 is the disused bank that has remained vacant since September 20 and Stonefield Estates own the freehold and the bank HSBC had a long lease with the latter and about 14 years remaining and HSBC owned the freehold of 271, but they

are in the process of selling their freehold interest, and their long leasehold interest to a developer.
The current leaseholders of the vacant 1st and part 2nd floor offices have 4 years left to run and don't want to renew their leases.

The ground floor bookshop will remain and has a lease of 4 years and is not affected by the proposed change of use.

Note that the proposals only concern the change of use of the 1st and 2nd floors, and the ground floor bookshop use will remain unchanged and in continued use as retail and part of the disused bank i.e. no.275 will be in use for probably retail or other allowable uses. The residential use Class C3 on the 3rd floor will remain as 2 no. 1 bedroom flats.

In conclusion these proposals will positively enhance the physical environment of the neighbourhood and Greenwich Town Centre and satisfy the requirements of Class MA of the GPDO.



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