

Application Number: 20/02664/FUL

Description: Installation of openable casement windows on upper floors to front and side elevations only.

At Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Central Milton Keynes, Milton Keynes, MK9 1BB

For Permitted Developments Investments No 13 Limited

Statutory Target: 17th December 2020

Extension of Time: No

Ward: Central Milton Keynes

Parish: Central Milton Keynes

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1.0 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that permission is granted subject to conditions set out in this report.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Site

2.1 The application site is known as Station House, located in MK Central, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes. The area of Station House that is the subject of this application includes part of the ground floor level located to the south-east of the Milton Keynes Central Railway Concourse and the entirety of the first, second, third and fourth floors. The site contains 10,570sqm of existing B1(a) office space which is currently undergoing a conversion to 200 residential units.

2.2 Plan:MK recognises the value of the new town through chapter 13 and appendix B, referring to the New Town Heritage Register.

2.3 The railway station buildings (1979-83, British Rail Architects' Department and MKDC) were constructed to the wider modernist style of the Development Corporation but also marked the last of a small, distinct group of sleek, mirrored glass

buildings which are often held to epitomise early CMK (and Milton Keynes) Architecture. This group includes the Shopping Building, Ashton and Norfolk Houses (1975-9, MKDC) and the Railway Buildings. Of this group, the latter two sites are near identical in their facade treatment (although subtle variations exist), creating uninterrupted, reflective surfaces.

- 2.4 The railway buildings are particularly important as a major entry and exit point to Milton Keynes, their distinctive, modernist style combined with vast scale around Station Square making it clear that the location can only be Milton Keynes. In this context the architecture of the building and simple detailing is paramount to their significance. Similarly, when viewed from the South West, either on foot locally or in passing through by car on the A5 or by train, the building is striking in its unbroken mirror façade, creating a distinctive and imposing landmark despite its relatively low height.
- 2.5 In the case of Station House and its flanking buildings, the Council has previously stated that, during the consideration of planning applications, that it considers it to be a non-designated heritage asset.

The Proposal

- 2.6 The application proposes to install openable casement windows to the front and side elevations of Station House. The application is a re-submission of 20/01754/FUL with the scheme revised to remove the rear elevation from the proposals.

Reason for referral to committee

- 2.7 The application has been referred to Development Control Panel in accordance with Part 2 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, as officers consider that the proposal is controversial, given the scale and nature of the development and the history and sensitivity of the site.

Scope of debate/decision

- 2.8 This application proposal is a full planning application and so all matters are to be considered.

3.0 RELEVANT POLICIES

National Policy

- 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) (NPPF)

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

In addition, the Planning Practice Guidance is also a material consideration:

(Noise Impacts) Paragraph 003. Reference ID: 30-003-20190722. Dated 22.07.2019

The Development Plan

3.2 Neighbourhood Plan

Central Milton Keynes Business Neighbourhood Plan (2015)

Policy CMKAP - G9 Active Frontage

3.3 Plan:MK (March 2019)

Policy DS3 - Employment Development Strategy

Policy NE6 - Environmental Pollution

Policy SC1 - Sustainable Construction

Policy D1 - Designing a High-Quality Place

Policy D2 - Creating a Positive Character

Policy D3 - Design of Buildings

Policy D5 - Amenity and Street Scene

Policy HE1 - Heritage and Development

3.4 Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance

New Residential Development Design Guide (April 2012)

3.5 Human Rights Act 1998

There may be implications under Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol regarding the right of respect for a person's private and family life and home, and to the peaceful enjoyment of possessions. However, these potential issues are in this case amply covered by consideration of the environmental impact of the application under the policies of the development plan and other relevant policy guidance.

3.6 Equality Act 2010

Due regard, where relevant, has been had to the Milton Keynes Council's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 Relevant Pre-application Advice

No formal pre-application advice has been received in relation to the development proposal.

4.2 Application Site

20/01754/FUL: Installation of openable casement windows on upper floors to all elevations. Refused 29.09.2020 for the following reasons:

1. The application as submitted is highly likely to result in a significant level of noise and vibration which would be detrimental to the amenity and health of the future occupiers of the application site, thereby contravening Policy D5 and Part G of Policy NE6 of Plan:MK (2019).
2. The application as submitted is considered to cause harm to the non-designated heritage asset of Station House and as such based on the information submitted there is considered to be no demonstrable public benefit which would outweigh such harm, thereby contravening Policy HE1 of Plan:MK (2019).

20/00504/FUL: Description: Alterations to elevations of Station House to install openable windows. Withdrawn 20.04.2020

19/01833/PANB1C: Conversion of part of the building from B1a Office to C3 (200 units). Refused 06.09.2019 (Granted on Appeal)

18/02731/PANB1C: Prior notification for the proposed change of use from class B1 to C3. Withdrawn 11.12.2018

07/00429/FUL: Installation of three double entrance doors to front elevation. Permitted 13.07.2007

06/01968/FUL: Renewal of planning consent 01/01218/FUL for a change of use from offices (use class B1) to flexible use within use classes A2, A3, A4 and A5. Permitted 25.01.2007

04/02083/FUL: Change of use from offices (use class B1) to flexible use for retail/financial and professional services/food and drink/business/non-residential institution (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, B1, D1). Permitted 22.12.2004

04/01438/FUL: Installation of eight double entrance doors in front elevation of flank areas of station house. Permitted 23.09.2004

5.0 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 Central Milton Keynes Town Council

Initial comments received

The Town Council objects to the proposal to incorporate opening windows. It is understood that this building was designed as air conditioned with non-opening windows due to noise considerations. The proposed change to now incorporate opening windows causes an unacceptable detrimental change to the building' fenestration.

Comments following re-consultation

No additional comments received.

5.2 Loughton and Great Holm Parish Council

No comments received.

5.3 Cllr Moriah Priestley – Central Milton Keynes Ward

No comments received.

5.4 Cllr Pauline Wallis – Central Milton Keynes Ward (Member of Development Control Committee)

No comments received.

5.5 Cllr Paul Alexander – Central Milton Keynes Ward

No comments received.

5.6 Cllr Amanda Marlow – Loughton and Shenley Ward

No comments received.

5.7 Cllr Dan Gilbert – Loughton and Shenley Ward

No comments received.

5.8 Cllr Zoe Nolan – Loughton and Shenley Ward

No comments received.

5.9 MKC Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Officer suggests requiring submission of the glazing manufacturer's specification prior to installation to demonstrate compliance with BS8233:2014 for internal noise. R_w values provided in the acoustic report are only 'indicative' as the exact specification for the windows hasn't been supplied. This should be followed up with post completion testing to include demonstration of $D_{nT,w}$

5.10 MKC Conservation Manager

This revised scheme removes the previously proposed opening windows on the rear elevation. As a result, there are no longer any elements detailed in the application which can be judged as causing harm to the non-designated heritage asset.

In the event of approval, a condition requiring detailed drawings of the windows to control their detailed design and limit the extent of openings should be added.

5.11 Health and Safety Executive

No comments received.

5.12 Network Rail

This building is leased by Network Rail as well as their being included station lease area. The applicant is to notify Network Rail Property Services (PropertyServicesLNW@networkrail.co.uk) to advise them of the works and receive any agreement (in addition to any planning application consent).

5.13 Neighbour/ Third Party Representations

No third-party representations have been received.

6.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

Principle of Development
Human Health
Residential Amenity
Design, Character & Heritage

7.0 **CONSIDERATIONS**

Principle of Development

7.1 In this instance the principle of development is considered to be acceptable under Policy D3 which states that alterations to existing buildings will be supported so long as the alterations relate well to the existing building, and do not detract from the character of the existing building and the surrounding area.

7.2 The principle of development is also considered acceptable under Part N of Policy SC1 which supports proposals which would result in considerable improvements to the energy efficiency, carbon emissions and/or general suitability, condition and longevity of existing buildings.

Human Health

7.3 In accordance with PPG Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 30-003-20190722 (Dated 22 07 2019), consideration should be made by the decision maker in relation to the acoustic environment by considering;

- whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur;
- whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; and
- whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.

7.4 In this instance the application site has a current B1 use, although consent has been granted at appeal for the change of use of the existing B1 accommodation to provide 200 residential units (19/01432/PANB1C), which is currently being implemented. It is noted that noise formed part of the Council's refusal reason of the prior notification application, although the Planning Inspector stated that, based on the noise impact assessment provided, there would not be an adverse impact in regards to noise. It is

noted that this was on the basis of the installation of a mechanical ventilation system being installed, and the windows remaining non-opening.

- 7.5 This application seeks to replace some of the windows with openable casement windows. It is considered that given the location of the site in relation to the Railway Station/Lines and Station Square there is a level of background noise as a result of the uses. Policy NE6 of Plan:MK is therefore applicable which states that a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment will be required for proposals with the potential to cause disturbance to people or the natural environment.
- 7.6 A new noise assessment report has been submitted with the application, which also includes some data from the previous assessment. The previous planning application for the casement windows (20/01754/FUL) was refused on the basis that the building would not be able to achieve BS8233:2014 levels (Background Noise Levels Standard) with openable windows.
- 7.7 Within this revised planning application, the applicants have confirmed that there will be a mechanical ventilation system installed in the upper floors of Station House to ensure that there are no unacceptable noise levels within the building for future occupiers. The applicant therefore still seeks to install the approved mechanical ventilation system, but their rationale for proposing openable windows is to provide a choice to future occupiers of the site as to whether they wish to open the windows, or rely on the mechanical ventilation system.
- 7.8 It is noted that with the windows open there is a likelihood that suitable internal noise levels would not always be achievable. However, with the presence of a mechanical ventilation system, subject to a suitable window specification being secured, it is considered that there would remain adequate ventilation internally with the windows closed so as to mitigate against adverse noise levels. The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted and has not raised an objection to the proposed development based on the new information submitted. However, it has been recommended that a condition be appended to the decision requiring details of the glazing manufacturers specification prior to installation to demonstrate compliance with BS8233:2014 for internal noise. It is also recommended that post-completion testing to demonstrate compliance should also be undertaken. These recommendations have duly been secured via condition. With these conditions attached it is considered that the development is acceptable in this regard and in accordance with Policy NE6 of Plan:MK.

Residential Amenity

- 7.9 Policy D5 of Plan:MK seeks to ensure that the amenity of future occupiers of the site are not harmed as a result of development proposals. Previously, given that the noise assessment submitted formed part of the original prior notification approved at appeal, the content did not adequately justify that there would be no detrimental impact upon future occupiers in relation to noise. The assessment was based on the existing sealed glazing as opposed to openable casement windows.
- 7.10 It was therefore considered that the development would have likely had an unacceptable impact upon residential amenity. However, based on the revised plans

and noise assessment as submitted, the revised information is considered to adequately address the previous concerns. As such, with the conditions secured as outlined above, inclusive of the mechanical ventilation system which provides occupiers the choice as to whether to open the windows or keep them closed to achieve suitable background noise levels, the development would not result in a detrimental impact upon residential amenity and is therefore in accordance with Policy D5 of Plan:MK.

Design, Character and Heritage

- 7.11 Design Policies D1 to D3 seek to ensure that development proposals incorporate high quality design and reflect the surrounding locality in terms of built form and character. As previously indicated within this report, Station House is deemed to be a non-designated heritage asset given the distinct character and new town heritage inherent within its layout and design. Policy HE1 seeks to protect and where possible enhance heritage assets. It is noted that the building also lies within the setting of the former Bus Station, a Grade II Listed Building, in addition to Phoenix House and Elder House, both of which are considered to be non-designated heritage assets.
- 7.12 It is considered that the railway buildings are particularly important as a major entry and exit point to Milton Keynes. Their distinctive, modernist style combined with vast scale around Station Square making it clear that the location can only be Milton Keynes. In this context the architecture of the building and simple detailing is paramount to their significance. Similarly, when viewed from the south west, either on foot locally or in passing through by car on the A5 or by train, the building is striking in its unbroken mirror façade, creating a distinctive and imposing landmark despite its relatively low height.
- 7.13 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) requires the Local Planning Authority to have “special regard” to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. When considering the impact in relation to the Bus Station given the listed status it is considered that the proposed windows will not result in a detrimental impact upon the setting of the Bus Station. The setting of the Listed Building would be preserved, as agreed by the Conservation Officer, and the proposal does not therefore require offsetting with public benefit, in accordance with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) and Policy HE1 of Plan:MK.
- 7.14 The Conservation Officer has also indicated that the installation of openable casement windows would not cause harm to the setting of either Elder House or Phoenix House given that both buildings already contain feature opening windows, which in the Conservation Officer’s view contribute to their significance within Station Square.
- 7.15 With regards to Station House itself, the previous planning application was refused on the basis that the installation of the casement windows to all elevations, particularly to the rear, adjacent to the railway line, would have caused undue harm to the non-designated heritage asset. This is in part due to the level of harm caused to the prominent uninterrupted mirrored elevation, which would ultimately be lost as

a result of the installation of casement windows. This elevation is held in high regard and was, as the Conservation Officer notes, attributed to 'the purest of all the Milton Keynes mirror glass buildings due to it being uninterrupted by clear glass or opening windows, its mirror effect is therefore more complete and pronounced'.

- 7.16 Overall, it is considered that with this particular application, which removes the rear elevation of Station House from the proposals which has the uninterrupted mirrored glass elevation of particular heritage value. The level of harm caused as a result of including openable windows to the front and side would not be significant given the presence of other openable windows within other prominent elevations within Station Square. Notwithstanding this, even if the harm identified is not considered to be significant, Policy HE1(F) is engaged which states:

Proposals that result in harm to the significance of non-designated heritage assets will be resisted unless the need for, and benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm, taking into account the asset's significance and importance, and only once all feasible solutions to avoid and mitigate that harm have been fully implemented.

- 7.17 The building was granted prior approval under 19/01833/PANB1C for the conversion of relevant parts of the building from B1a Office to C3 (dwellings). The new units now form part of the Council's 5 year housing supply. Approval of the application would ensure that scheme is delivered and the building is occupied and maintained thereafter, without delay. This benefit is considered to outweigh the limited amount of harm identified. To some degree the harm can be mitigated against through the use of a condition to ensure that the ventilation system remains in place for occupants to use, and therefore limiting the extent that windows will be open at any one time.
- 7.18 The Conservation Officer now also considers that the removal of the objection removes the main cause for objection within the previous application. It is therefore considered that on balance, the level of harm caused would not significant and the benefits of the scheme outweigh the minor harm caused thereby according with Policy HE1 of Plan:MK (2019).

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 In conclusion, it is considered that the revised application as proposed addresses the previous reasons for refusal. Subject to the detailed design of the windows and final acoustic testing to be secured by condition, it is considered that the development is, on balance, acceptable.

9.0 CONDITIONS

1. The approved development shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings/details:

Site Location Plan. Drawing: XC105 - SBA-S-XX-DR- A-00001. Dated 26.07.2020. Received on 22nd October 2020

Proposed Window Details. Drawing: XC105 - SBA-XX-XX-DR- A-05004. Dated 08.10.2020. Received on 22nd October 2020

Existing and Proposed Bay Study. Drawing: XC105 - SBA-S-XX-DR- A-05003. Dated 08.10.2020. Received on 22nd October 2020

Proposed Elevations. Drawing: XC105 - SBA-S-XX-DR- A-05001. Dated 08.10.2020. Received on 22nd October 2020

Noise Assessment. Reference: 20/0201/R1. Dated 9th November 2020. Received on 18th November 2020

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to secure sustainable development under the objectives of the Development Plan.

2. The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent the accumulation of planning permissions; to enable the Local Planning Authority to review the suitability of the development in the light of altered circumstances; and to comply with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, detailed sectional drawings and glazing specifications shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall ensure a minimum level of opening and include large scale drawings of the existing and proposed windows to demonstrate the extent of opening as well as detailed elevation and frame sections (horizontal and vertical). Samples of the frame in the proposed colour and finish along with a sample of the proposed glass including film and/or tint shall also accompany the detailed drawings and glazing specifications. The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and specifications and the windows thereafter retained and maintained as such.

Reason: To ensure that the development has an acceptable visual appearance and is in compliance with Policy HE1 of Plan:MK (2019).

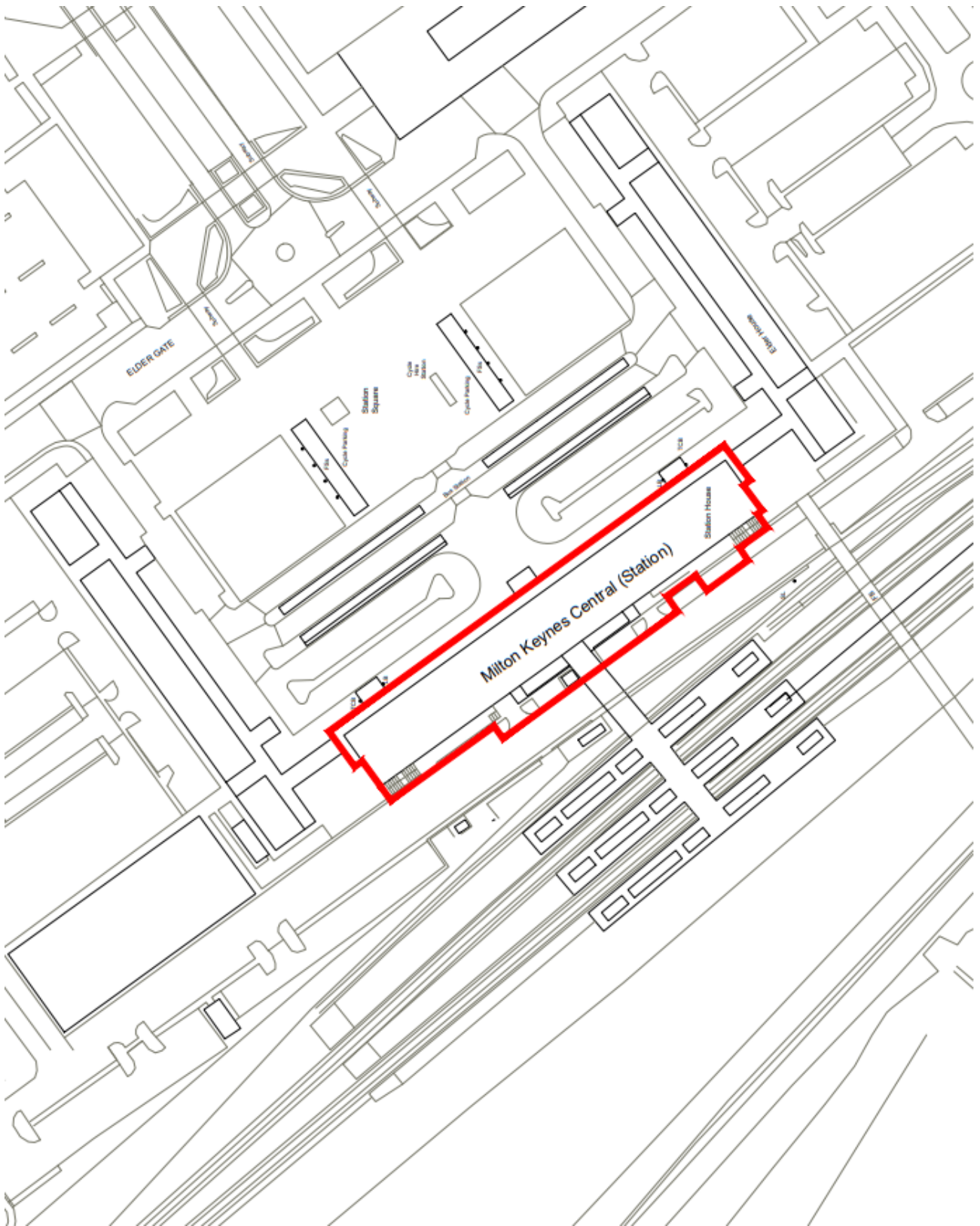
4. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a confirmation statement shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which confirms that the windows as fitted will achieve suitable internal noise levels in accordance with BS 8233:2014 levels (Background Noise Levels Standard). The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not result in an unacceptable impact upon the amenity of future residents by virtue of unacceptable noise and disturbance in accordance with Policies NE6 and D5 of Plan:MK (2019).

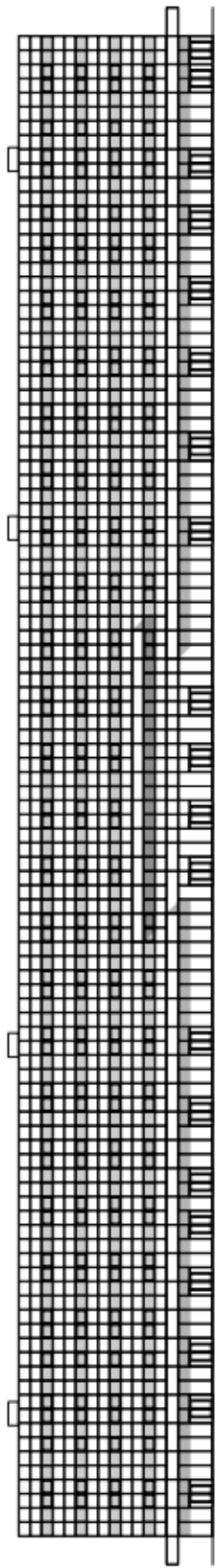
5. Prior to the installation of the casement windows as approved, details of the mechanical ventilation system shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The mechanical ventilation system shall be implemented in full prior to the removal of the existing glazing and shall be maintained in working order thereafter once installed.

Reason: To ensure that future occupiers have sufficient amenity and will not be prejudiced as a result of adverse noise in accordance with Policies D5 and NE6 of Plan:MK (2019).

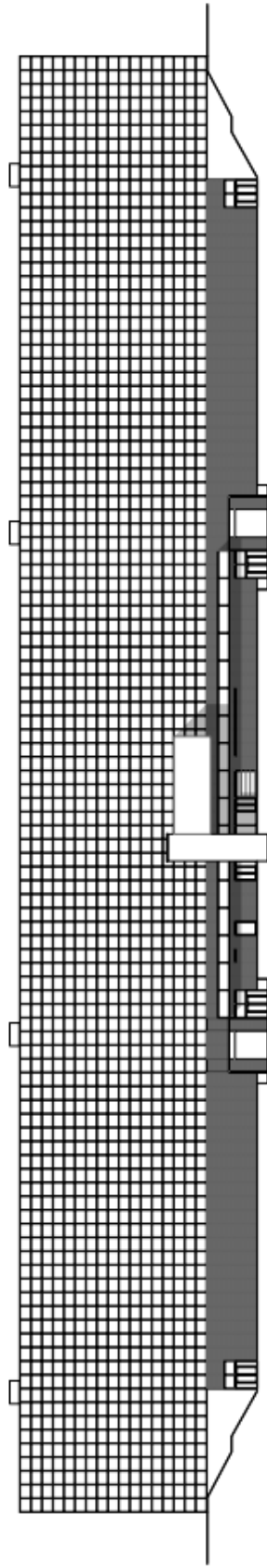
LOCATION PLAN



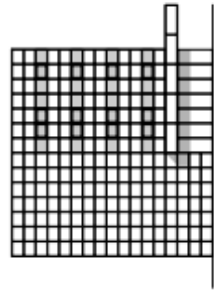
ELEVATIONS AND SECTIONS



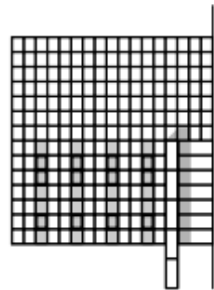
ELEVATION A - PROPOSED



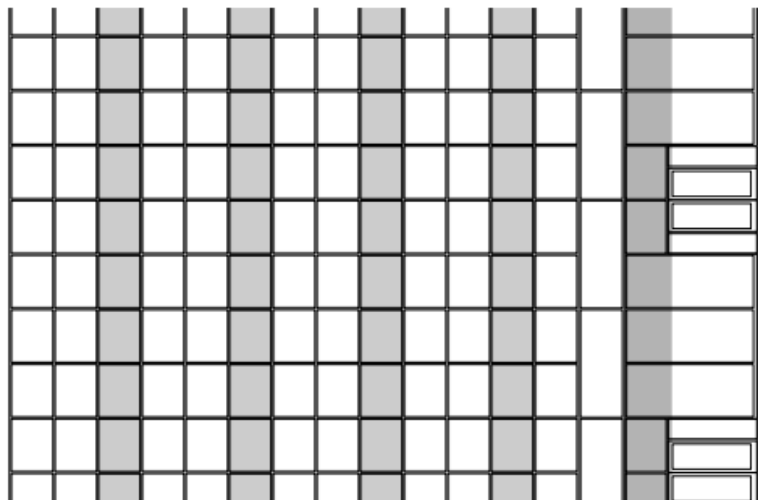
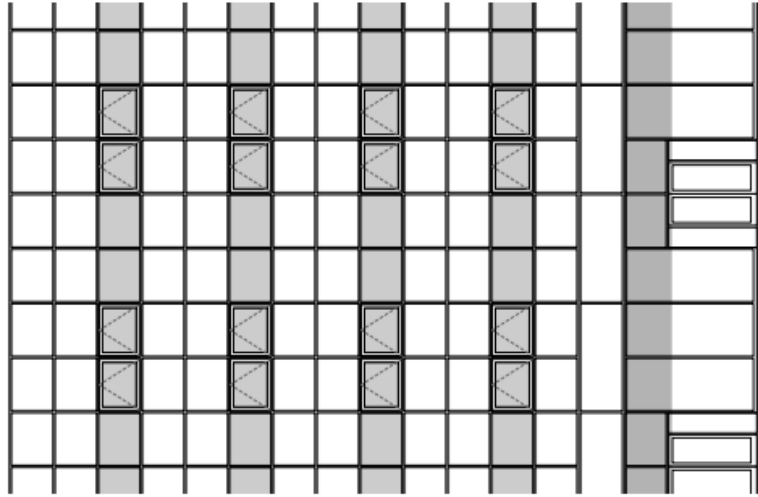
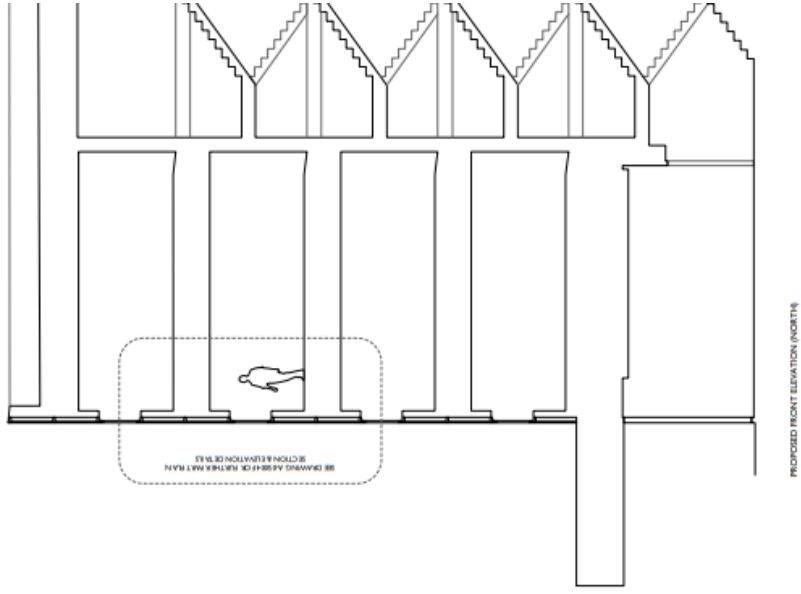
ELEVATION B - PROPOSED



SECTION B - PROPOSED



SECTION C - PROPOSED



A1.0 FULL CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

A1.1 Central Milton Keynes Town Council

Initial comments received

The Town Council objects to the proposal to incorporate opening windows.

We understand that this building was designed as air conditioned with non-opening windows due to noise considerations.

The proposed change to now incorporate opening windows causes an unacceptable detrimental change to the building' fenestration.

Comments following re-consultation

No additional comments received.

A1.2 Loughton and Great Holm Parish Council

No comments received.

A1.3 Cllr Moriah Priestley – Central Milton Keynes Ward

No comments received.

A1.4 Cllr Pauline Wallis - Central Milton Keynes Ward (Member of Development Control Committee)

No comments received.

A1.5 Cllr Paul Alexander – Central Milton Keynes Ward

No comments received.

A1.6 Cllr Amanda Marlow – Loughton and Shenley Ward

No comments received.

A1.7 Cllr Dan Gilbert – Loughton and Shenley Ward

No comments received.

A1.8 Cllr Zoe Nolan – Loughton and Shenley Ward

No comments received.

A1.9 MKC Environmental Health

I'd suggest requiring submission of the glazing manufacturers specification prior to installation to demonstrate compliance with BS8233:2014 for internal noise.

R_w values provided in the acoustic report are only 'indicative' as the exact specification for the windows hasn't been supplied.

This should be followed up with post completion testing to include demonstration of $D_{nT,w}$

A1.10 MKC Conservation Manager

Milton Keynes new town is recognised as possessing heritage significance as set out in the adopted *MK New Town Heritage Register: Statement of Significance*. Amongst the reasons as to why it is significant, the document states:

- *As the largest, most ambitious and most economically successful British New Town.*
- *For its illustration of an important moment of transition in the history of British architecture and town planning, from utopian modernism to a more nuanced engagement with place-making, site context and existing buildings, and environmentally- and community-focussed design.*
- *For the role of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation as a political entity, with one of the leading public sector architects' departments of the era.*
- *For the contribution of nationally significant figures in architecture and planning.*
- *For the architectural set-piece of Central Milton Keynes, which includes some outstanding buildings, most notably the Shopping Building, and has a distinctive character due to its low-rise skyline and tree-lined boulevards.*
- *For design innovation in the modernist and high-tech manner as exemplified by early projects by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation, including housing for rent, industrial buildings, the Shopping Building and commercial projects.*
- *For a strong identity which is recognised nationally (and internationally) and valued locally.*

Plan:MK recognises the value of the new town through chapter 13 and appendix B, referring to the New Town Heritage Register.

The wider value of the new town has been also recognised at national level by government and its advisor, Historic England. The Shopping Building (1973-9, MKDC), former Bus Station (1975-8, MKDC), houses at Coffridge Close (1973-1976), Octo sculpture (1982, Wendy Taylor) have been designated as listed buildings at grade II. Other MK new town buildings have been nominated but have not met the incredibly high bar set for post war listings been listed, this includes Station House.

The railway station buildings (1979-83, British Rail Architects' Department and MKDC) were constructed to the wider modernist style of the Development Corporation but also marked the last of a small, distinct group of sleek, mirrored glass

buildings which are often held to epitomise early CMK (and Milton Keynes) Architecture. This group includes the Shopping Building, Ashton and Norfolk Houses (1975-9, MKDC) and the Railway Buildings. Of this group, the latter two sites are near identical in their facade treatment (although subtle variations exist), creating uninterrupted, reflective surfaces.

The railway buildings are particularly important as a major entry and exit point to Milton Keynes, their distinctive, modernist style combined with vast scale around Station Square making it clear that the location can only be Milton Keynes. In this context the architecture of the building and simple detailing is paramount to their significance. Similarly, when viewed from the South West, either on foot locally or in passing through by car on the A5 or by train, the building is striking in its unbroken mirror façade, creating a distinctive and imposing landmark despite its relatively low height.

Whilst the New Town Heritage Register is yet to consider the first group of nominated assets (circa 240 have been nominated), each site requires assessment to see whether it meets the NPPF definition of a heritage asset, set out in annex 2:

Heritage asset: *A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).*

In the case of Station House and its flanking buildings, the LPA has previously stated that, during the consideration of planning applications, that it considers it to be a non-designated heritage asset. The NPPF definition states that it ‘includes’ buildings on Local Lists, making it clear that buildings not on such lists can also be identified as being non-designated heritage assets.

In determining whether the building has ‘a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage significance’, the building is set in the wider context of the *Statement of Significance* and the heritage significance of MK. Within this, the building is a major project by MKDC and one which was executed with an emphasis on the external architecture of the building. Indeed, although the DCMS and Historic England concluded that the building was not innovative enough for its time to enable it to be nationally designated, the report stated that:

The contribution that Station House makes to the grid-pattern layout of Milton Keynes, and its role as the gateway to the town both physically and stylistically, affords the building strong local interest’

Such ‘strong local interest’ meets the NPPF definition of a heritage asset.

The building sits within the setting of the former Bus Station, grade II. A contribution to the setting and, in turn, the significance of the Bus Station is made by the complementary station buildings, originally forming a major transport hub for the town. This contribution lies mainly in the proximity, inter-visibility of the three buildings

around the square as a group and complimentary and cohesive architectural approach.

Development Detail

Setting of The Listed Building (former Bus Station)

The proposed windows will not cause harm to the setting and, in turn, the significance of the Bus Station, since it will not affect the aspects that contribute to its setting as set out above.

Setting of Non-designated Heritage Assets (Phoenix and Elder Houses).

Similarly, the setting of the two non-designated heritage assets will not be harmed, particularly given that they already feature opening windows on the elevations that form part of the group views that contribute to their setting and significance.

Non-designated Heritage Asset (Station House)

The principle of openable windows is not entirely alien to the MK mirror glass buildings. In addition to both flanking buildings having openable windows, the earlier Ashton House and Norfolk House also have them (as above, these are very similar in design and were also by MKDC). At Ashton and Norfolk Houses the windows are top hinged and are restricted in the amount to which they open, however there is no doubt that when a number of these are open the architectural effect of the building is impacted to a degree, particularly in oblique views which are readily available given its orientation along Silbury Boulevard and the fact that the boulevard falls away creating views along the building.

On its front elevation (NE, facing Station Square) Station House has a band of clear glazing every third row of windows, with the remainder being mirrored glass which dominates the composition. Oblique views along this façade are restricted by the positioning of Phoenix and Elder Houses, in fact they are only available when stood immediately in front or to the side of the building, or almost underneath the elevation. It is primarily viewed in a more formal way across Station Square. In addition, due to its orientation, the façade does not receive as much direct sunlight as the rear. Due to these factors and in the context of the precedent at Ashton House and Norfolk House's openable windows, if properly detailed, the proposed windows to the front and side elevations will not cause harm to the non-designated heritage asset.

The rear of the building however is different. It is entirely mirror glass, i.e. without clear banding, and the resulting architectural effect is striking in its simplicity, particularly the uniform elevation of the sky that present across the entire elevation. The impact of the building on this side is considerably enhanced over that of the front due to appearing to be sat up on a platform, which is due to the railway line and A5 being in a wide cutting, but also the lack of protruding flanking buildings. This is readily appreciable to those crossing the footbridges in particular where Station House dominates and a full range of views at all angles are visible to an elevation that catches the sunlight for the majority of the day. Travelling along the A5 and even by train the effect is still experienced, indeed, presenting a revised scheme in 1979,

MKDC architect Stuart Mosscrop set out a building offering 'clear views of its clean rectangular profile from the west and south' and cladding that would be 'sleek, self-cleaning and significant at 100 mph' (Bendixson and Platt op cit, 133-136).

The south east elevation of Station House perhaps represents the purest of all the Milton Keynes mirror glass buildings due to it being uninterrupted by clear glass or opening windows, its mirror effect is therefore more complete and pronounced. The topography and range of modes of transport make it an unlikely landmark but fitting introduction to CMK from the south and west.

This revised scheme has removed the previously proposed opening windows on the rear elevation. As a result there are no longer any elements detailed in the application which can be judged as causing harm to the non-designated heritage assessment.

A1.11 Health and Safety Executive

No comments received.

A1.12 Network Rail

This building is leased by Network Rail as well as their being included station lease area.

The applicant is to notify Network Rail Property Services (PropertyServicesLNW@networkrail.co.uk) to advise them of the works and receive any agreement (in addition to any planning application consent).

A1.13 Neighbour/ Third Party Representations

No third-party representations have been received.