

APPENDIX O

Architecture Statement

Amendment To Original Scheme

The original planning scheme proposed external blinds as a measure to mitigate overheating within the Former Police Station building. However, following a thorough reassessment during the technical design phase, it became clear that external blinds would not be suitable for the primary elevations of the building. This review was prompted by the significant impact that external blinds would have on both the aesthetic and architectural integrity of the building, particularly in the context of the Hillfield Conservation Area. A detailed analysis of the building's characteristics and its location within the conservation area revealed that alternative, less intrusive solutions must be explored.

Upon exploring various external blind products, it became evident that none would be appropriate for the primary façades of the Former Police Station. The installation of any external blinds on these elevations would require a unit positioned above the keystone, resulting in an overly large and visually intrusive element. This would obscure key architectural details, such as the red sandstone keystones and banding, which are integral to the building's historical and architectural significance. The addition of such an element would alter the building's character and undermine its visual harmony within the broader conservation area.

Additionally, options for blinds that could be fitted within the window frames were explored. However, given the windows are arched and defined by prominent keystones, any external blind with straight lines would conflict with these defining features. Such an installation would detract from the building's architectural integrity and disrupt its aesthetic balance, potentially compromising its historical value and contribution to the character of the conservation area.



As outlined in the Hillfield Conservation Area Statement, one of the primary objectives of the conservation area is to preserve and enhance the architectural features and historical value of the

area while maintaining the uniformity of the streetscape. The Statement stresses the importance of retaining original features and materials to prevent alterations that could negatively affect the area's character. External blinds—particularly those not part of the building's original design—would undermine these objectives and detract from the building's value as part of the heritage fabric of the conservation area.

Furthermore, the introduction of external blinds would not align with the townscape values set out in the Conservation Area Statement. Alterations to the building's façade in this manner would conflict with the aesthetic qualities and cohesion of the surrounding area. The preservation of original materials, proportions, and architectural details is essential in safeguarding the building's integrity and maintaining the character of the surrounding properties.

Consideration of the Modern Elevations

The consideration of the conservation area extends to all blocks within the development, including the modern elevations. As part of a unified development, it is essential that all elevations work together to create a cohesive architectural identity. The inclusion of external blinds on the modern elevations would be at odds with the uniformity of the overall design, potentially resulting in a disjointed visual experience, especially when viewed from various vantage points. Maintaining a consistent, uninterrupted façade is critical to preserving the integrity of the entire development, ensuring its cohesion as a harmonious whole.

While the modern elevations are designed with clean lines, open glazing, and a minimalistic approach to external features, introducing external blinds would disrupt the sleek, contemporary design language. Such an addition would create visual clutter and undermine the original design intent, introducing competing lines and proportions that conflict with the building's clean, minimalist aesthetic. The original planning scheme sought to balance the heritage building with modern elements, but the installation of external blinds on the modern elevations would detract from this balance and disrupt the overall design concept.

Alternative Solutions for Overheating Mitigation

External blinds were initially proposed to address overheating concerns, but upon further review, we determined that alternative solutions can effectively meet these needs without compromising the aesthetic or architectural integrity of the building. Internal blinds or other passive cooling strategies—such as improved insulation or shading devices integrated within the building—offer viable solutions that respect the building's historic character while addressing practical requirements.

Internal Venetian blinds, for example, have been identified as an effective solution for mitigating solar gain and managing overheating risks. Updated thermal modelling confirms that internal Venetian blinds with a heat reflectance of 62% provide sufficient protection against solar gain, meeting the overheating criteria set out in CIBSE TM59. These blinds offer residents greater control over their environment, allowing for personalized shading that improves comfort. Moreover, internal blinds avoid the potential risks associated with external blinds, such as maintenance challenges and aesthetic disruption, aligning with the project's sustainability goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed external blinds, while originally considered to address overheating, would have significant aesthetic, architectural, and practical drawbacks, particularly with respect to the primary elevations of the Former Police Station and the broader conservation area. The decision to

explore internal blinds and other passive cooling measures aligns with the objectives of preserving the historical and architectural integrity of the building, while also providing an effective solution for managing overheating. This approach will help ensure that the building remains a key contributor to the visual cohesion and character of the Hillfield Conservation Area, preserving its unique features for future generations.