



8 Blenheim Road, Reading

Introduction

Context

Originally built as a single-family home, the property has been subdivided into two flats.

This Design and Access Statement is for the retrospective conversion of existing C3 House to 2 apartments, 1 x one bedroom ground floor apartment and 1 x 2 bedroom first and second floor apartment.

The building is not listed and does not lie in a Conservation Area.



Planning History

App no 21776

Decision Date 08.12.21

Rear extension measuring 6.0m in depth, with a maximum height of 2.9m, and 2.9m in height to eaves level. Notification of the construction of an extension under class A Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

App no 212060

Decision Date 26.01.22

Rear extension measuring 6.0m in depth, with a maximum height of 2.9m, and 2.9m in height to eaves level. Notification of the construction of an extension under class A Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

App no 211772

Decision Date 02.02.22

Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed rear dormer

App no 212066

Decision Date 09.02.22

Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed single storey rear extension

The Existing House

The original property had previously had two independent persons residing at the property but had fallen into disrepair with outdated utilities and facilities. This can be seen in the images below (further images can be submitted). The property was infested with rats and completely overgrown with vegetations, to the point that was very difficult to go through the back garden.





The Proposed 2 Flats

The Proposal

Following the extension to the ground floor and dormer to loft extension the property was converted two apartments, dividing the ground floor and first floor into 2 units (2 of them lawful) into apartments, in the process. internally the property is remodelled and refurbished throughout suitable for apartment use meeting space standards.

Externally there are changes at the rear of the property at the ground and second floor level. Changes are done at the front elevation with roof Velux's. The front garden is used for bin storage, bicycle storage and access. like other properties on this road

The rear garden has been cleared up of over grown weed and vegetation, remodelled keeping existing trees, with amenity space for the ground floor apartment.

Planning Policies

H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Residential development will make appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading

on sites of 10 or more dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings will be in the form of affordable housing.

on sites of 5 – 9 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 20% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough; and

on sites of 1 – 4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough.

For sites of 10 or more dwellings, provision should be made on site in the first instance with a financial contribution being negotiated to make up the full requirement as appropriate.

In all cases where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach will be taken, and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.

In determining residential applications, the Council will assess the site size, suitability and type of units to be delivered in relation to the current evidence of identified needs. The Council will seek an appropriate tenure mix of affordable housing to include social rented, affordable rent, intermediate rent and shared ownership affordable units. The affordable units provided should be integrated into the development.

Our client will contribute towards affordable housing.

H14: SUBURBAN RENEWAL AND REGENERATION

There is scope for some of Reading's suburban residential areas to undergo renewal and regeneration that would achieve the following aims:

Improve the local built environment;

Improve and modernise the housing stock; and Deliver additional homes.

Where development would fulfil the above aims, it would generally be supported, subject to other policies in this plan and provided that:

Any loss of undeveloped land would be outweighed by a qualitative improvement in open and green space and by the benefits of development to the community as a whole;

Buildings and features that make a positive contribution to the area's character are retained;

There would be adequate community facilities to serve the resulting community; and

There would not be an unacceptable impact on the highway network as a result of loss of parking areas or garages.

The property has had major improvement both internally and externally. The original property was not habitable

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy

Framework (NPPF). Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan (including, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or the policies which are most important to determining the application are out of date at the time of making the decision then permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

Massive improvement has been made to the energy efficiency of the building, in fact the new improved apartments have achieved 'B' rated EPC certification.

Standard of accommodation

As a large terrace home, the accommodation comfortably exceeds the minimum standards for 2 apartments as set out at the national level by the 'Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards', and at the Local Level.

It should also be noted that this application is for a conversion scheme where the existing built form of the property including staircases and supporting walls has remained in tact.

The proposal meets the Council's minimum sizes for bedrooms as shown on the proposed plan: the 2 double bedrooms are larger than the minimum, and bedroom (the smallest, a single) is 8.8sqm again exceeding the minimum of 8sqm set out by government guideline standards for room sizes. The proposed accommodation is in accordance with policy and adopted standards.

Design – external changes

The alterations to the house externally are one ground floor rear extensions with larger windows and doors installed.

There is an improvement made in the quality of the accommodations as the property was in desperate need of refurbishment more over the thermal efficiency and energy rating within the house has been improved.

Access

No changes to the existing access arrangements to the application site are carried out. Rear access from the property to the rear garden is kept as original building.

Conclusion

The retrospective conversion of the existing house to 2 flats (2 of them lawful) at 8 Blenheim Road into 2 apartments accord with Core Strategy Policy CC1, H3, and H14 and *the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard*.

The two flats meet the required spaces to be used for the purpose. The original house was beyond suitability for habitations

A good standard of accommodation and internal residential amenity has be achieved in accordance with the Government's and the Council's prescribed space standards.

