

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Banksfoot North, 43A Church Road, Caversham. RG4 7AG
February 2023 v1

COOKHAM DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

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1 Introduction

Purpose of Document

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Cookham Design Partnership on behalf of Mr & Mrs Pagella, to support a Householders and Listed Building Consent Planning Applications to Reading Borough Council for a 2 storey rear extension with internal modifications and replacement linked garage to the existing Grade II Listed property. The current use of this site is residential, class C3 and this will remain unaltered in the new application.

This application is for changes to previously approved applications LPA Ref: 212027 and 212028. The main change to the proposals is the upgrade of an existing retaining structure with a new retaining wall to the rear of the garage. This is required to support recently identified unstable ground conditions.

This statement has been prepared to be compliant with the Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015, and the Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG) and illustrates the design principles and concepts that support the proposals and addresses the requirements set out in the NPPG 'Making an Application'.

It specifically, responds to the NPPG requirements 'What should be included in a DAS', and explains:

- The design principles and concepts;
- The steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development and how the design has taken them into account; and
- The Applicant's approach to access.

The proposals have been developed in accordance with the policies of Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, together with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revised July 2021.

This statement should be read alongside the following supporting documents which also accompanies this application:-

Heritage Statement;

Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment and Method Statement;

Bat Statement

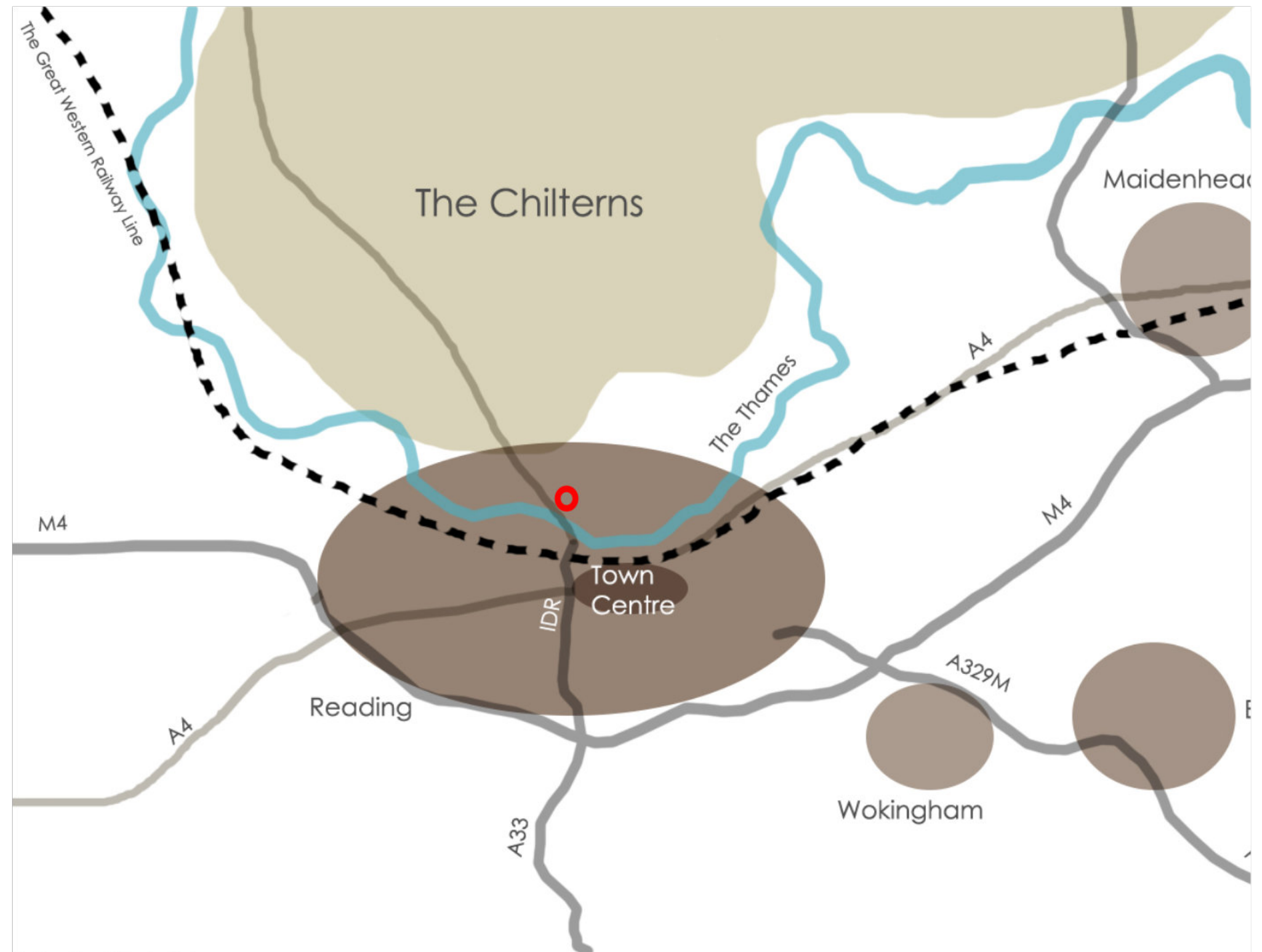
Site Location

The Site falls within the administration boundary of Reading Borough Council (RBC) and lies just north of Reading Town Centre, on the northern side of The Thames, within the Caversham ward.

Reading is a large historic market town on the Thames and Kennet rivers in southern England, around 40 miles due west of London. It is now a major commercial centre serving a large area of the Thames Valley.

The town is on the Great Western Main Line railway and the M4 motorway and in the last few years has become an important transport hub with the development of Cross Rail giving direct access through London and further links to the north with Birmingham, Swindon and Bristol. Heathrow Airport lies 20 miles to the east and is served both by rail and direct bus routes.

Historically, Caversham was noted in the Domesday Book and remained a relatively small community mostly orientated around barge trading along the river and agriculture until the development of the railways in the 1850's which brought rapid economic growth to Reading and Caversham.



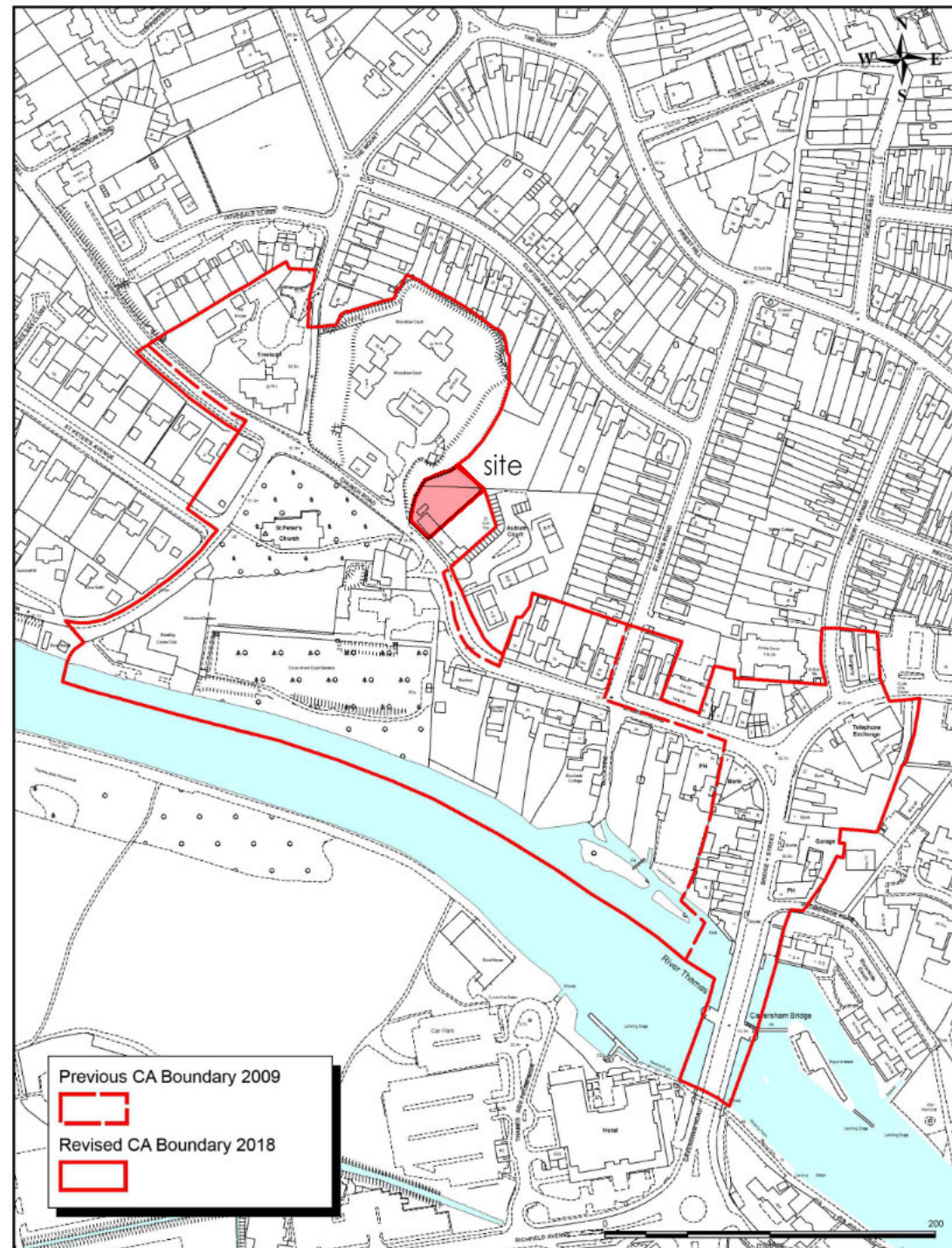
Site Location - Wider Context

2 Site Description

Local Context

The application Site is on Church Road to the west of Caversham village centre opposite the Grade II Listed screen wall to Caversham Court, a Grade II park and gardens and near to the Church of St Peter which is Grade II*. The property also sits within St Peters Conservation Area (SPCA), and the RBC appraisal states that there is an architectural and historical unity to this part of Church Road/St Peters Hill, which has a spacious village feel to it.

Edwardian and Victorian residential streets mainly occupy this area of Caversham with the local shops and conveyances nearby in the old village heart.



St Peters Conservation Areas

Site Context

Site Context

The 0.07 ha site is formed of a triangular shape with a frontage to Church Road, a main route west from the village centre of Caversham. The existing property, is a part single storey, part 2-storey colourwashed brick building with a detached single storey garage structure to the side. The building is linked with, and connected to the adjacent Grade II listed building (43 Church Road).

The Site is served by one vehicular access points off Church Road where there is an existing hardstand area for parking to the front of the garage.

The Site cuts into an existing steep bank to the rear and side, which has a number of mature trees overhanging the existing built form. Above the property sits retaining structures built around the trees creating recreational terraces.

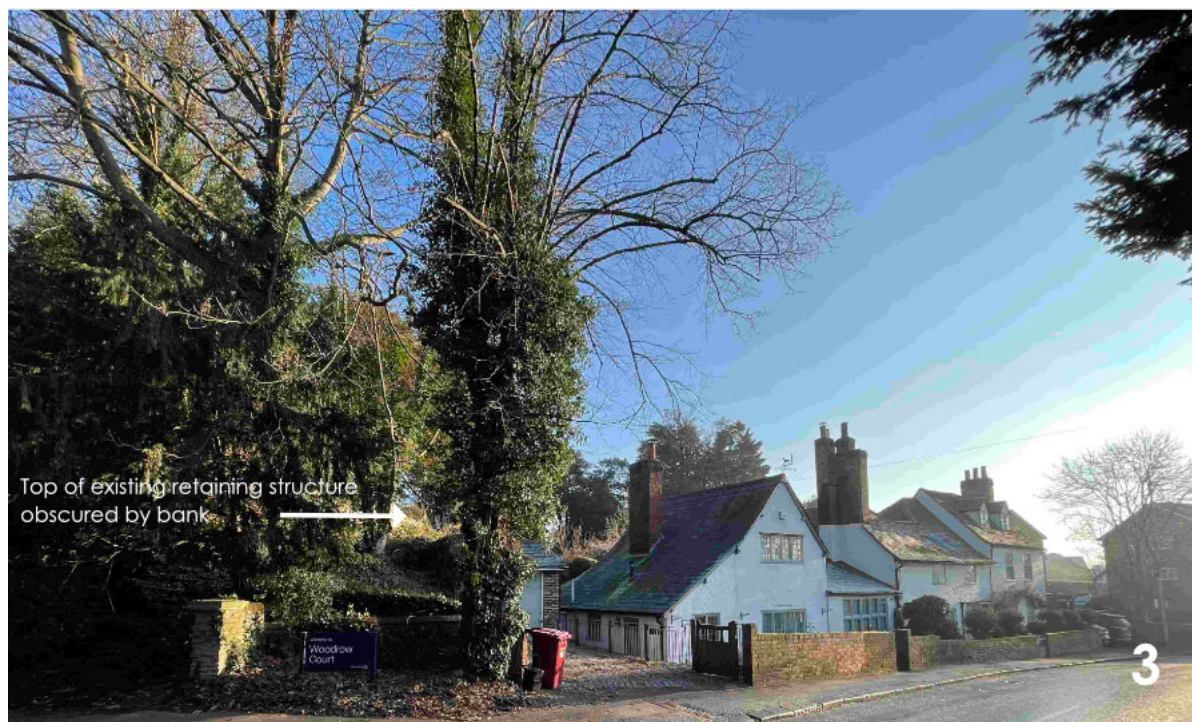
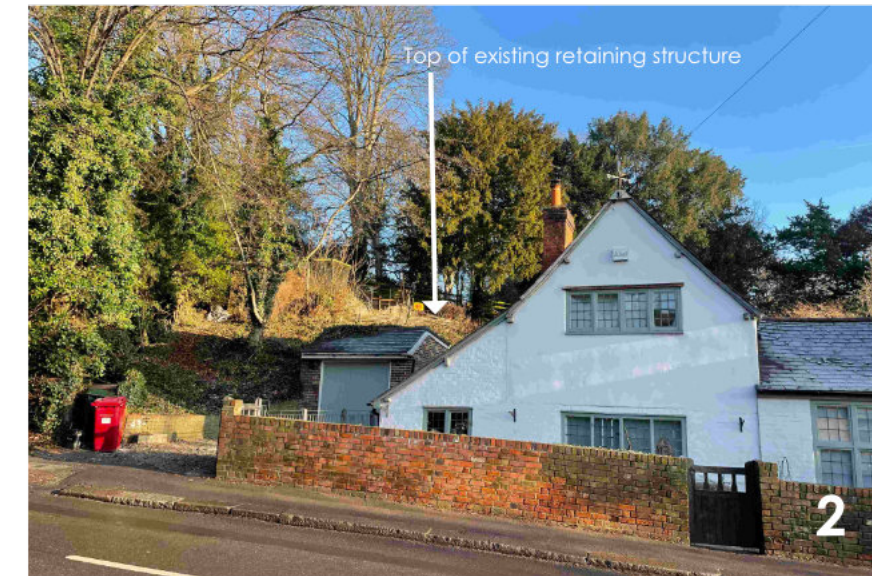
The history and appearance of Banksfoot North is examined in significant detail in the accompanying Heritage Assessment and reference should be made to this document for further detailed information.



Site Location - Aerial Photo



Site Photographs



3 Design Development

Previous Planning Approvals

The Site has had a few previously approved planning and Listed Building applications. These consist of various applications to the historic repair or replacement of the historic building fabric.

The most recent application was for :-
'Proposed 2 storey rear extension, single storey link, replacement garage, fenestration alterations to listed building, conservation roof lights and internal amendments.' LPA Ref 212027 and 212028.

The applications followed a positive pre-application made in May 2020 and the applications made some minor changes to the proposed link design to ensure that it reflected the advice from the planning officer. It was concluded that the proposed physical alterations would protect both the special architectural and historic interest of Banksfoot North and the character and appearance of the wider conservation area. Furthermore, the design of the extension safeguarded the amenity of neighbours. Approval was granted in May 2022.

The Applicant wishes to make some changes to the above approved applications which revolve around the upgrade of an existing retaining structure with a new retaining wall to the rear of the garage. This is required to support recently identified unstable ground conditions.

A Statement of Fact has been prepared by the appointed civil and structural engineers,

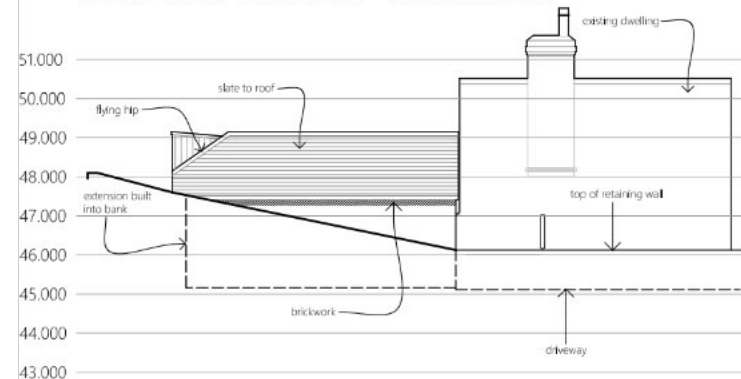
Centrespace Design; and has been submitted with this application providing detailed design considerations for this required approach to the new build. It is proposed that the finish of the new retaining wall will match the existing with waney timber cladding and will blend into the existing hillside.

The application also includes some minor fenestration modification to the rear of the 2 storey extension.

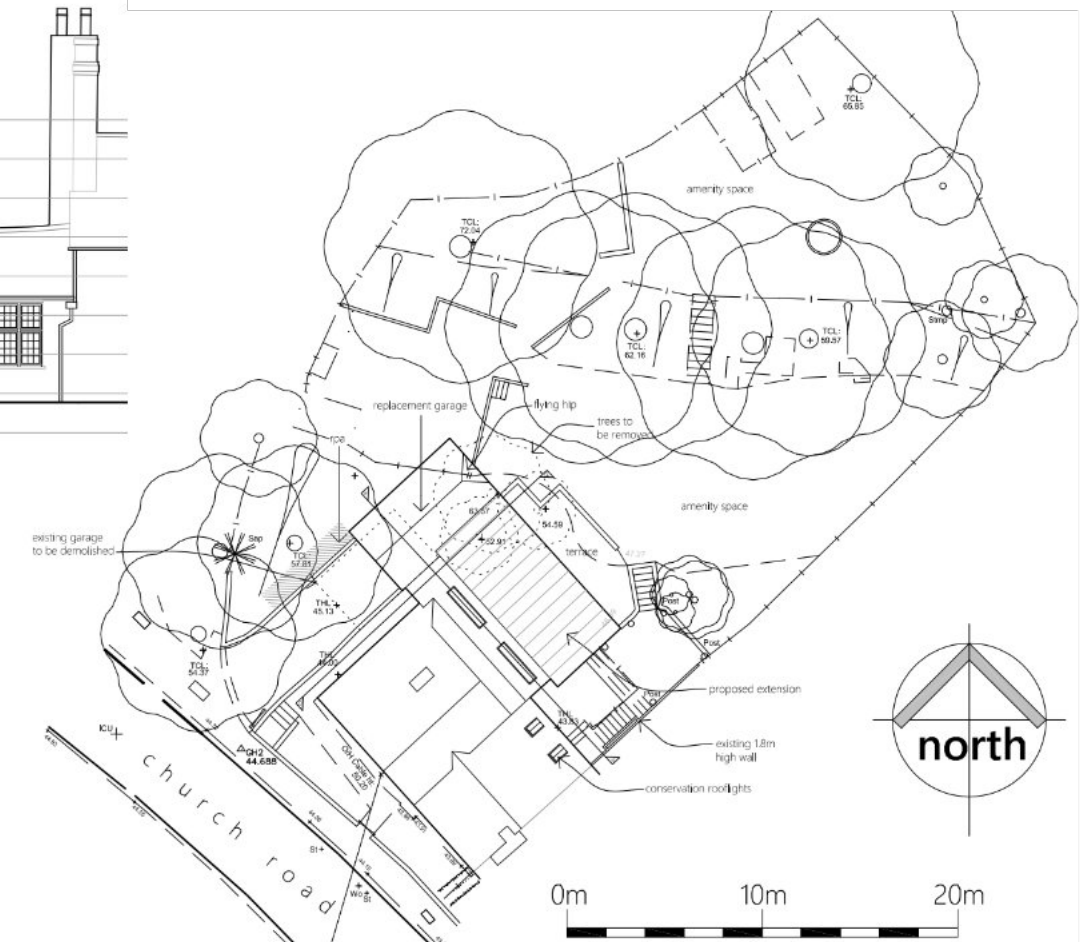
The design parameters and development of the previous scheme has been adhered to with the revised application to ensure continuity of the design approach and safeguarding of the heritage and neighbour impact as defined in the previous Design, access and Planning Statement, December 2021 prepared by Jeff Lowe, Chartered Town Planner. References should be made to this document in these planning considerations.



south west elevation - street scene



north west elevation/section



LPA Ref 212027 and 212028 Proposed Elevations & Site Plan for Previous Planning Approvals

4 Design Proposals

Use and Amount

The current use of the site is for a dwelling house planning classification C3. The planning proposals will not be changing this classification.

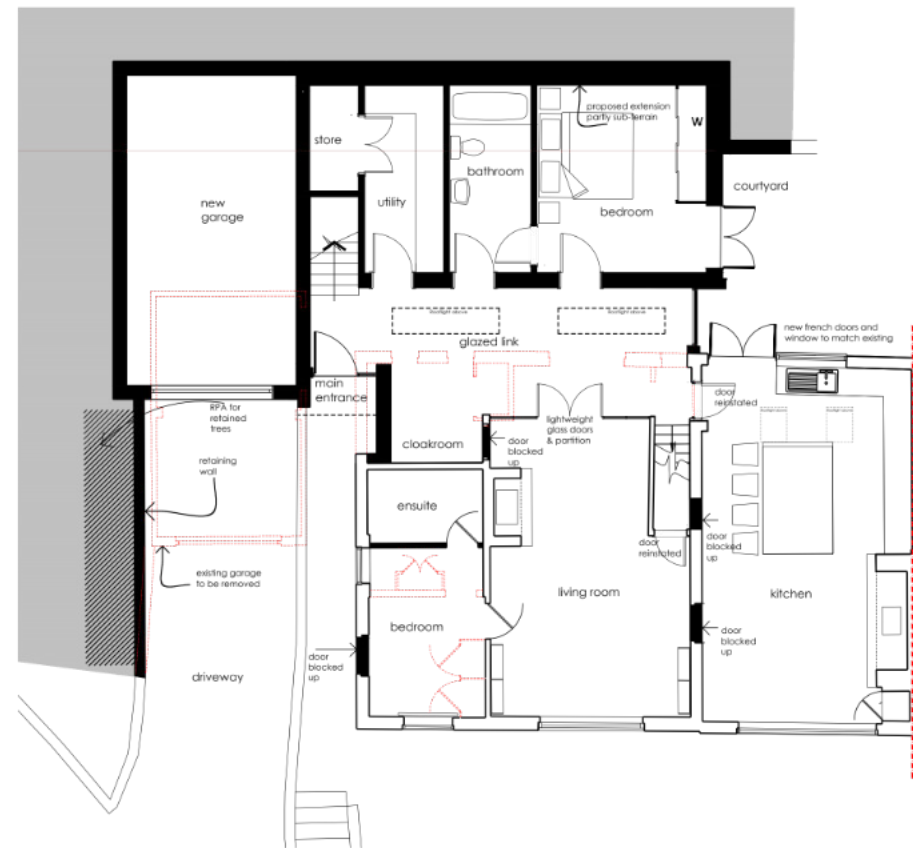
The application proposes a 2-storey rear extension to provide an extra 2 bedrooms and a bathroom. The existing garage is to be rebuilt and linked to the extension. The existing 1920's extension is to be removed and a new single storey link will connect the original historical building with the new extension.

The resulting areas are as follows:-

Existing dwelling	113m ²
Existing garage to be removed	16m ²
1920's extension removed	8m ²
Proposed extension	85m ²
New garage	24m ²

Development creates net increase:-

Habitable space	78m ²
Non-habitable (garage)	8m ²



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan

Illustrational views of existing and proposed from Church Road

Layout

The proposal layout remains unchanged from the previous approved application and consists of the demolition of the existing detached garage, followed by the construction of a two-storey rear extension, replacement garage, attached to the main dwelling by a single storey linking structure.

The proposed extensions would be partially visible from the roadside, but remain subservient to the original dwelling. Furthermore, the change to the garage roof pitch would be an improvement from its original appearance.

The design, due to its location, would not introduce large blank facades to public areas, nor would it result in an overbearing impact to adjoining properties. It would also respect the character of the original house, giving a clear separation between historic and new elements to allow visual identification of between these elements.

The link extension has been designed such that its roof and structure are less visible, constructed with lightweight materials and designed in such a way that it is clearly viewed as part of the new building.

It is not considered that the proposal would result in a significant loss of private amenity space for the existing dwelling and would be acceptable in this regard.



Proposed Site Plan

Scale

The proposed height, form, scale, and bulk within the street scene of the proposals remains similar to the previous approved scheme with the exception of the inclusion of the retaining structure upgrade to the rear of the garage. The proposals remains subservient to the existing building and to the built form of surrounding development. The retaining wall sits into the hillside below part of the retained existing retaining structure and would be absorbed into the hillside background.

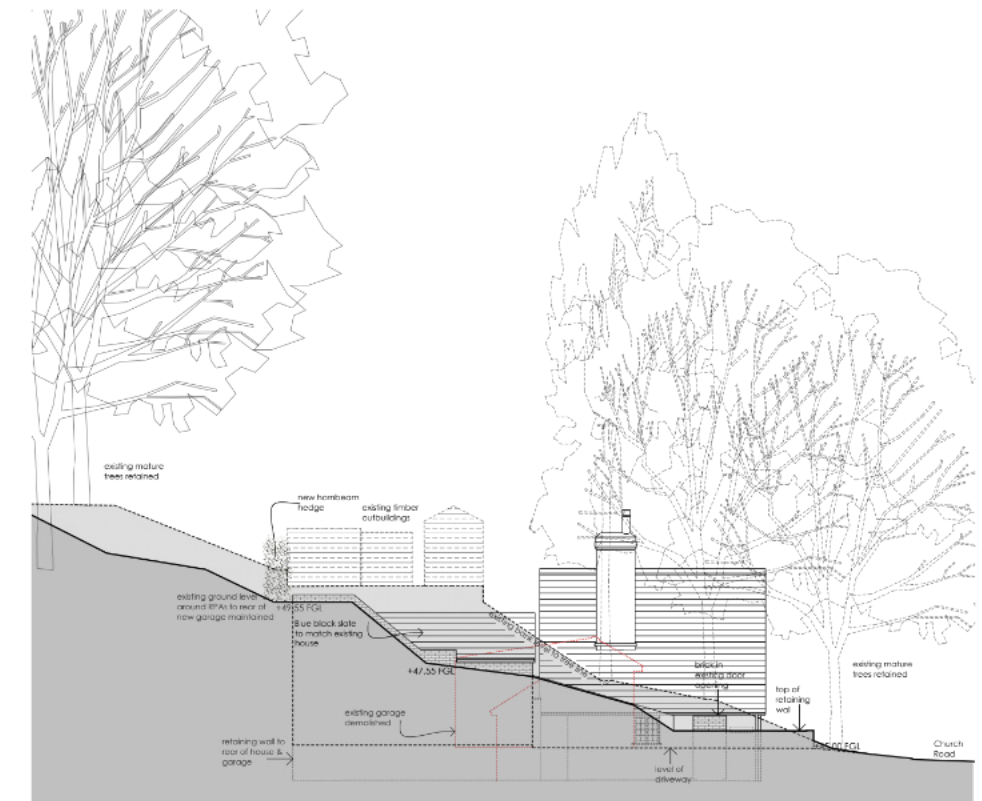
The form of the low height extension in a contemporary design, which has strong "green credentials" would sit comfortably adjacent to the listed building. Public views would be largely obscured by the existing building mass and steep rising slope of the land to the rear,

The proposals would not overlook the neighbour nor their amenity spaces and would not cause any over bearing issues.

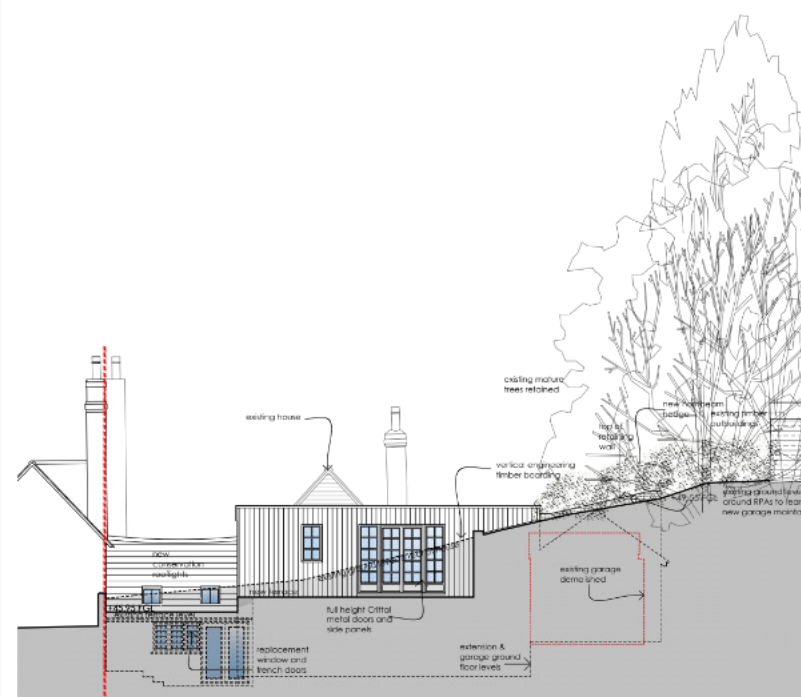
It is therefore considered that the design and scale of the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the street scene nor the adjacent neighbouring properties.



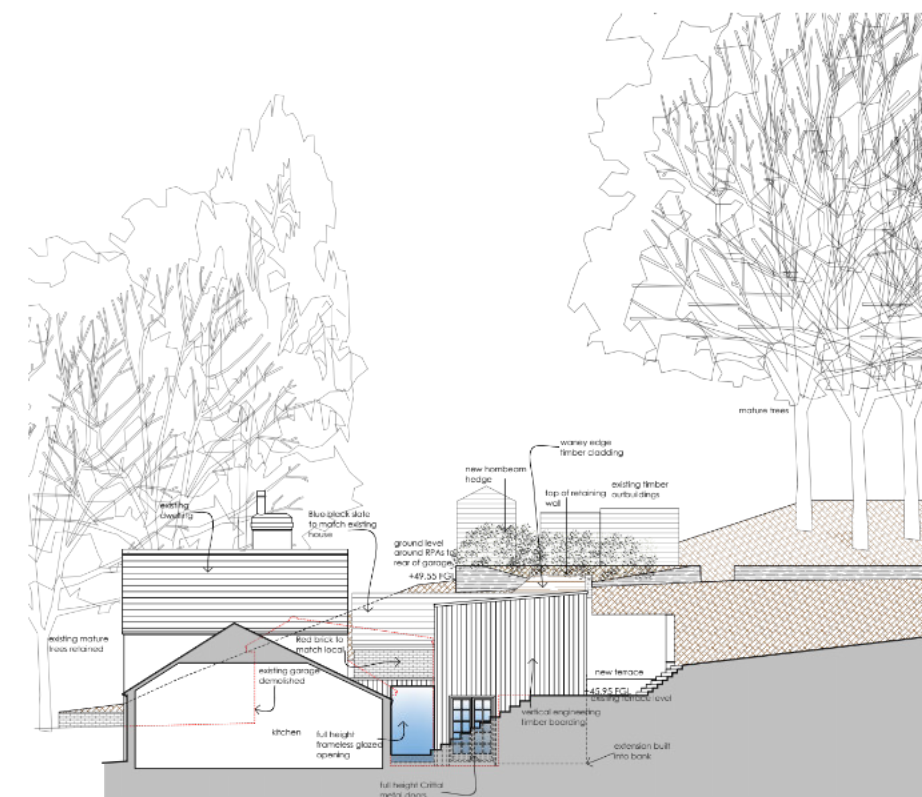
Proposed Church Road Elevation



Proposed North West Elevation



Proposed Rear North East Elevation



Proposed South East Section Elevation



Appearance

Even though the design of extensions and works to Listed Buildings need very careful consideration, this does not mean that extensions have to copy their older neighbours in detail nor materials. A sharp contrast can provide a harmonious composition and emphasise the quality of the historic elements and fabric. The approach to the appearance of the extension in the previous planning approved scheme followed this concept with a contemporary design which did not “blur” the history or appearance of the building through pastiche but provided a careful and harmonious contrast using subtle massing and natural materials. This application has kept the same design and materials.

The materials have been carefully selected to reinforce local distinctiveness and include engineered timber boarding, a modern interpretation of traditional weather boarding. The replacement garage is to be rebuilt using the local red clay brick to match the existing front garden wall and the Listed Caversham Court screen wall on the opposite side of Church Road. The retaining wall to the rear will be clad in live edge rough cut waney horizontal timber planking which will weather into the hillside as part of the natural slope. The roof is finished with zinc sheets reminiscent of natural slate and weathered thatch tones. As such the extension is visually and physically integrated with the character, appearance and the topography of the site. The improvements to the visual appearance and integration of the new garage and extension enhances the historical asset setting of Banksfoot North. The dwelling retains its original features and there is no loss of historic fabric.

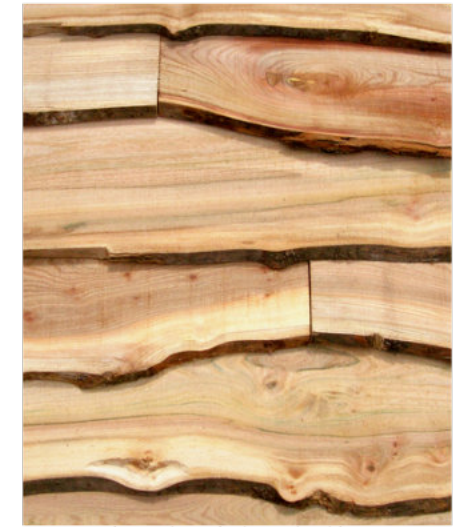
It is therefore considered that the appearance of the proposals would not have an adverse impact on the significance of the Listed building. For further information on the impact analysis of the proposals on the Listed building refer to the Heritage Assessment, which accompanies this application,



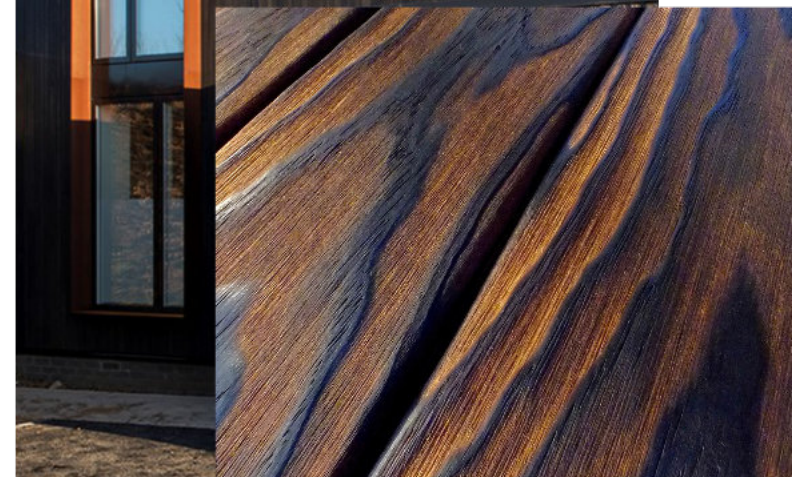
Bangor Blue Welsh Slate



Standing Seam Zinc with hidden gutter



Waney Live Edge Timber Planking



Vertical Engineering Timber Cladding



Crittall Metal Doors and Windows



Local Red Clay Brick

Landscape

The proposals are accompanied by a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA); and an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS). These reports demonstrate that the proposed development respects the Root Protection Areas (RPA's), thereby ensuring that existing trees are retained.

New hard landscaping will take on the form of terraces with retaining walls integrating into the existing terraces all clad in tiled finishes to blend into the landscape. The edges of the terraces shall be softened with new shrubs and trailing plants.

A new native hornbeam hedge shall be planted above the retaining wall to aid in ground stability and to provide a natural barrier against falling from height. The hornbeam is a hardy drought resistant hardwood.

This careful design of the proposals will protect the existing garden character with minimum alterations to the front of the site and streetscene.

Wildlife

A Bat survey accompanies this application which confirms that no evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the emergence survey carried out on site.

The number and timing of registrations recorded, as well as observations made by surveyors, suggest that bats are roosting locally and are foraging and commuting from the wooded belt to the neighbouring sites to the south.

Some foraging activity was also recorded in the garden of the property.

The proposed hornbeam hedge above the retaining structures will improve the ecological habitat to the Site. The hedge will keep its leaves all year round, providing shelter, roosting, nesting and foraging opportunities for birds and small mammals. Hornbeam is the food plant for caterpillars of a number of moth species, including the nut tree tussock. Finches and tits and small mammals eat the seeds in autumn.

Sustainability

The proposed dwelling will, through compliance with the latest Building Regulation requirements, have strong "green credentials", namely:-

- A fabric first approach of high quality, highly insulated building shell having low air permeability
- Good air quality via mechanical ventilation heat recovery
- Good day lighting, improving the quality of life and reducing the need for energy to light the home
- Low energy light fittings
- Internal and external storage for non-recyclable and recyclable household waste

Impact Appraisal

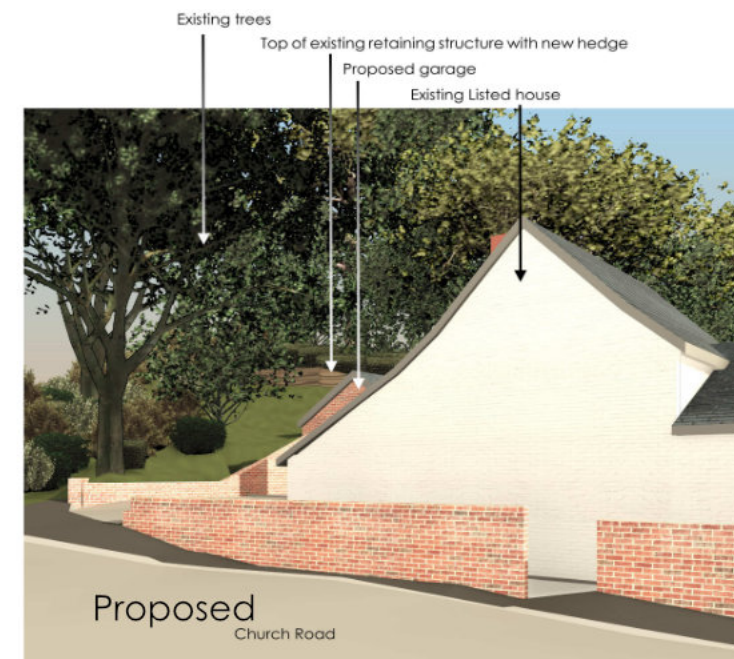
The approach in the design to resolve the existing retained unstable ground levels around the proposed garage whilst respecting the mature trees root protection areas has been one of preserving the relationship of the existing house with the garden and maintaining the importance of the listed asset in it's setting. This has been done by following fundamental architectural principles of scale, height massing and alignment; and the use of appropriate materials.

The retaining wall has been kept to an absolute minimum, subservient to existing retaining structures, with the depth of structural elements hidden below ground levels.

The covering material to be used will be natural waney edged timber planking which will weather and blend into the hillside, existing retaining structures and landscape behind.

A hornbeam hedge shall be planted to the rear for ground stability and safety.

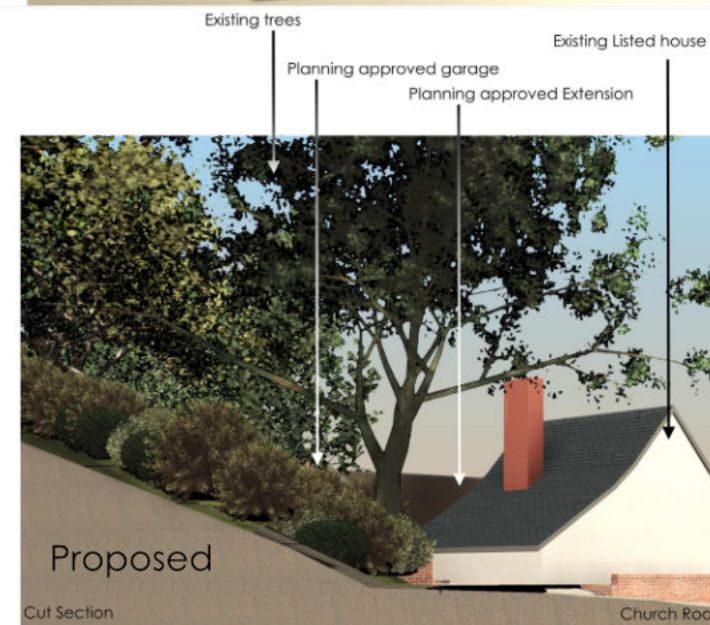
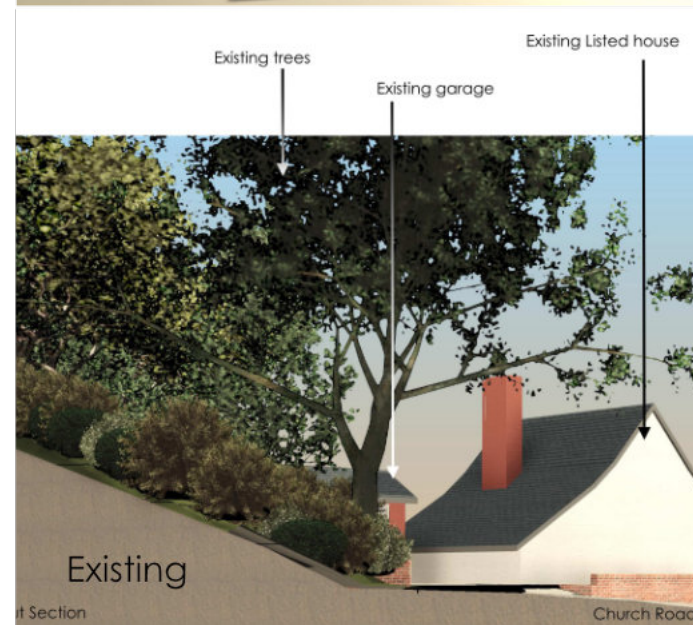
When considering element of impact of the above on the existing property and surroundings, it is concluded that the changes to the proposals would preserve the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and protect the special architectural and historic interest of this listed building.



View 1



View 2



View 3



5 Access

Site Access

The site is situated on Church Road which is an important arterial road heading north west from Caversham Centre. Currently the Site is accessed off Church Road with a driveway in front of the existing garage.

The existing vehicular access configuration will remain unchanged with the driveway a little longer with the new garage location.

Public Transport

The Site is very well serviced by convenient and frequent public transport and is considered as a very sustainable location.

Reading Bus serves a bus stop at Blossom Road nearby where bus routes 82 run a service every 30 minutes from Reading Town Centre to Kidmore End and neighbouring areas passing Reading Train Station which serves GWR and the Elizabeth Line; and runs trains between London Paddington and the south west.

Inclusive Design

The aim for inclusive design is to remove barriers which create undue effort, separation, or special treatment, and enable everyone to participate equally in mainstream activities independently with choice and dignity. Although the principles of inclusive design have emerged from the disability movement, inclusive design is relevant to all members of society, such as older people. From the outset the design of the development has included the fundamental principles of inclusive design. The design approach has been as follows:

- Level access is provided throughout the ground floor internally and externally where possible
- Maintain bedroom and bathrooms at ground floor
- Provide suitable external ground finishes to not cause a trip hazard

Deliveries, Refuse and Cycle Storage

The existing delivery arrangement and location will remain as existing likewise for the refuse and cycle storage.

Construction Method Statement

As a relatively small scale development, with generous space for storage of materials etc, site works would be relatively limited and generally be carried out between 07.30 and 17.00 weekdays.

With good site management, considerate contractors and sociable working hours there should only be a very limited impact upon the amenity of neighbours during the construction period.