

13th October 2022
Ref: 430
DAS - Rev 1

No.4 Downshire Square - Design & Access Statement

This Design and Assessment has been prepared to support a householder planning application within a Conservation area, at the property No.4 Downshire Square.

The proposed application description:

The demolition of the single storey side extension, relocation of the dwelling rear door, creation of a new vehicular access and parking area to the north part of the wite, with vehicular turntable, existing vehicular access blocked up, replacement low brick wall and piers with metal railings and central front gate to house, including external and landscaping works.

This concise statement covers the main context, design, and access considerations that the application has considered to inform the design.

Location & Setting

No4 Downshire Square, is located on the west side of Downshire Square, Reading. The location is west of the town centre and about a 10 minute walk to the infrastructure, commercial and employment opportunities of Reading town centre.

This area of Downshire Square is within the Downshire Square Conservation Area. The Downshire Square Conservation Area appraisal describes the Conservation Area as a tightly-drawn, essentially Victorian/Edwardian suburb, containing a wide variety of house types with a spacious character.

Downshire square is a residential area, with schools, parks and local shops nearby. The residential properties are separated with verdant tree lined street. The surrounding residential buildings date from the Victorian era to the 1980's.

The Site

The site is broadly square, with the existing single storey building in an east-west axis. The ground on the site is roughly level.

The site is accessed by vehicles and pedestrians, from Downshire Square, where there are two dropped kerb section to the south and pedestrian to the north. The entrances feed the parking area, which is to the side of the house. The front of the site is separated from the pavement with a hedge behind a low brick wall. The only other trees/shrubs are on the eastern boundary of the site away from any development.

Behind the parking area is a garage and access to the back garden. This garden is laid to lawn and includes shrubs at the back of the site. The boundaries are defined by timber fencing. To the front boundary there are raised beds, and a few trees.

The Proposal

The proposal demolishes a single storey side extension, which is original to the house, but of a different style to the hipped roof design of the main house. A new wall will infill and be rendered to match the existing property. The existing eaves and gutter will match the existing.

The new access will introduce a drop kerb and infill the existing dropped kerb therefore not removing important on-site parking. The new access is where the existing pedestrian access is, and will also require a lamppost to be relocated.

The new parking area to the rear, follows a common parking strategy in the Downshire road area and the existing parking arrangement on the site, but just on the northern, rather than southern part of the site.

The house has 2 parking spaces to support the 2 bedrooms and has on plot turning thanks to a vehicular turntable.

Bins and cycle provision is unaffected and not part of this application.

A new front wall, with railing over will be positioned to the front of the site. The design of these railing is the same as earlier planning proposals and planning and conservation officer did not object to this style of design. The new boundary treatment also retains the important heritage railings.

The southern part of the site is fenced off, and will be subject to future development proposals, outside of this application.

The proposal includes landscape enhancements for the property to improve the setting also lessen the impact of the parking on nearby residents.