

Planning Design & Access Statement relating to the refurbishment & basement/ground floor & loft extension to flats A-B & C at 4 Mason Street Reading RG1 7PD

Date. 06-12-22

Project Ref 9107-22

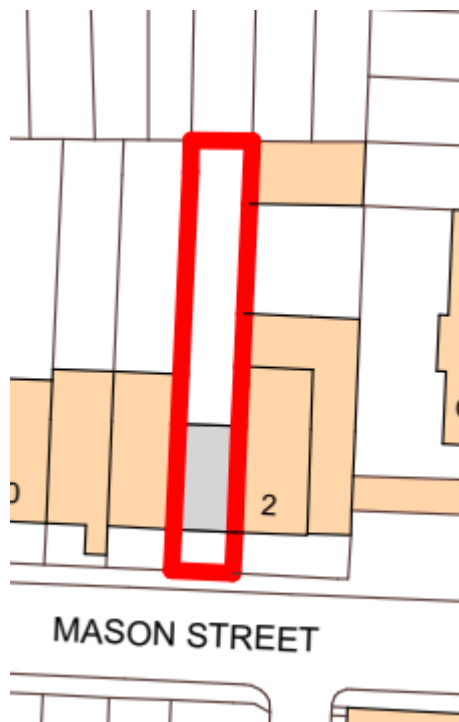
1.0.0. The Site

The site is located within the established residential area of Reading on the outskirts of Reading Town Centre with all local amenities & transport links close by.

The site area is 133sqm

The plot consists a mid-terrace house over three floors at present & is surrounded by rear extensions both sides at the rear.

The flats have been in existence since 2011.



The site



Rear of no 2



Rear of no 6

2.0.0. Development proposals

The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).

4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:

3.0.0. Use & Amount

The proposal is to completely refurbish the 3 flats &

- Provide a rear extension in line with the rear extension of no 2 Mason street, this will more or less double the habitable area of Flat 1 to 59sqm & allow good use of the private rear garden. A small study is proposed incorporating a flat roof light which will allow home working.
- Provide a ground floor rear extension to Flat 2 which will respect the 45° light angle of no 4 & be below the rear window located on the first floor of no 2.

This will increase the floor area to 28sqm which is still under the national standards but provides an additional 7sqm over the original.

- To provide a loft conversion above Flat 3 & incorporate this area to provide a bedroom which will give a total new area of 38.9sqm.

We now have 2no flats which more than complies with the national standards for 1 bed flats, which is a big improvement on the existing situation.

3.1.0. Layout, scale & massing

The existing layouts are quite poor with poor natural light & layouts as shown, flat 1 & 2 are more bedsits than one bedroom flats.

The scale & massing of the rear additions over two floors is appropriate having regards to the extensions to No 2 & 6 Mason St.

The loft conversion incorporates 2no small pitched roof dormers on the rear to an appropriate scale & 1no roof light on the front slope.

4.0.0. Landscaping

There is little scope for soft landscaping due to the limited amount of frontage.

Bin storage is shown on the frontage.

There is no room for cycle storage on the frontage.

5.0.0. Appearance

The existing building is in poor condition & with the benefit of the proposed rear extension, it will be completely refurbished to provide low cost accommodation in reading.

The roof will be replaced with natural slate with appropriate insulation.

The external joinery will be replaced with white UPVC within the existing openings.

6.0.0. Access & parking

There is no off street parking associated with this property.

Access is via the basement steps to Flat 1 & steps up to the front door which gives access to Flats 2 & 3.

7.0.0. Policy assessment

Current national policy comprises mainly of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in 2021. The following paragraphs from the NPPF are considered to be relevant:

Paragraph 7 states that *"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development."*

Paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development as: economic, environmental and social. **Paragraph 10** clarifies: *"So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development"*.

Paragraph 38 requires that *"Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way" and "at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible"*.

Paragraph 60 confirms the Government's objective to boost the supply of housing.

Paragraph 119 comments that planning should make effective use of land in meeting the need for homes & other uses whilst *safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions". safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions"*.

Paragraph 126 identifies that *"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities", whilst Paragraph 134 states that "In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding...and/or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."*

The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that "well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use" (para 109).

The extensions comply with H9 : House extensions & ancillary accommodation of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan Nov 19, as it respects the surrounding properties & the design is appropriate for the area.

8.0.0. Design Scale & Character

The design is in keeping with the character of the area in both its visual impact on the street scene, the scale is not out of keeping but sits nicely within the existing environment in scale & character and consequently fully accords with all adopted local policies

9.0.0. Sustainability

New development will make provision for the effective use and protection of natural resources, where applicable, future proof homes, and contribute to carbon reduction. The NPPF supports the transition of development to a low carbon future. The national Code for Sustainable Homes has now been abolished; however it is proposed that the development would conform to Part L of the Building Regulations which as of 2020 requires a 40% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2013 standards. This is equivalent to Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through:

- A. The limitation of the amount of inherent material, structure and embodied energy through the employment of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating;
- B. Installation of solar panels within the roof;
- C. Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where practicable;
- D. Maximizing the use of natural light through well-placed large and floor-ceiling windows;
- E. Reduced internal water consumption of 110 litres per person per day through the incorporation of water efficient sanitary fittings, including low flow toilets and water efficient taps for wash basins;
- F. Refuse, recycling and composting facilities to be provided to work with the Council's existing waste and recycling collection service;
- G. Secure cycle provision to encourage sustainable modes of transport;
- H. 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings;
- I. 'A' rated double glazed windows with natural cross ventilation provision;
- J. Water butts fitted to the rainwater down pipes for watering the garden;
- K. Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable;
- L. Permeable driveway/parking spaces to avoid increase in surface water runoff; and
- M. Designed to accommodate future changes such as air cooling system, under floor heating, or further solar panels.

The internal faces of the external walls will be lined with insulation & drylined to reduce the U Value. Gas central heating will be installed to each flat.

This will allow an EPC rating of C which is shortly to be a requirement for renting these units. At present I would imagine they are classed EPC rating of D or E.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect.

Conclusion

This application before you greatly improves the living accommodation of the 3no flats & together with the upgrading of the external envelope will provide long term sustainable dwellings.

Chris Keen MRICS MCABE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'C. Keen', is visible within a rectangular box.