

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Ward: Caversham

App No.: 201680

Address: 1a North Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JA

Proposal: Erection of 3 storey building comprising 4 flats (Class C3) (2x1 bed, 1x2 bed, 1x3 bed) and associated hard and soft landscaping, vehicular access and parking, following demolition of existing dwelling (amended description).

Applicant: Lucky Trading

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is located in central Caversham fronting North Street, a narrow cul-de-sac accessed from the busy thoroughfare of Prospect Street. The site is currently occupied by a modern single storey dwelling and a collection of dilapidated commercial outbuildings.
- 1.2 Please refer to Planning Register for site visit photographs.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Permission is sought for a 3 storey building containing four flats with vehicular access to the eastern end of the site in place of the existing house. Parking for 4 cars is proposed to the rear, together with a garden area and bin store.
- 2.2 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
 - 3661/220 Rev.B, Location and Block Plan, dated 31 August 2021
 - 3661/223 Rev.B, Site Plan, dated 31 August 2021
 - 3661/221 Rev.B, Ground Floor Plan, dated 31 August 2021
 - 3661/222 Rev.B, First & Second Floor Plan, dated 31 August 2021
 - 3661/224 Rev.B, Elevations Sheet 1
 - 3661/225 Rev.B, Elevations Sheet 2
- 2.3 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):
In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

172125/FUL - Redevelopment of 1a North Street and rear ground floor of 3 Prospect Street to provide 8 residential units. Upwards extension to existing flat on first floor of 3 Prospect Street to provide additional living accommodation. Withdrawn

191747/PRE - Pre-application advice for 1A North Street - Replace existing detached bungalow with a 3-storey detached building consisting of B1/D1 use at ground floor level with 4no. 1-bed units with additional study rooms to second floor units. 3 Prospect Street - Part demolition of existing single-storey restaurant replaced with single-storey B1 unit and 5 parking spaces. Remaining a 3 restaurant subject to Change of Use to A2 estate agency and A4 wine / coffee bar. Small first floor rear extension and conversion of existing 3 bed flat to 2 1 bed flats. Additional 2nd floor extension to form 2 x 1-bed flats. Observations sent

191748/PRE - 1A North Street - Replace existing detached bungalow with a 3-storey detached building consisting of 6no. 1-bed units. 3 Prospect Street - Part demolition of existing single-storey restaurant replaced with 6 parking spaces and amenity. Small first floor rear extension and conversion of existing 3 bed flat to 2 1 bed flats. Additional 2nd floor extension to form 2 x 1-bed flats. Observations sent.

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Ecologist

No objection subject to bat emergence survey.

RBC Transport

“The application site lies in the centre of Caversham and is in a highly sustainable location in terms of proximity to local services, transport links and easy access to the wider community. Chester Street public car park is also within walking distance of the site.

The development site is also located within an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Zone; Zone 01R. There are resident parking bays located on North Street which are located to the front of the application site.

The proposals consist of the erection of a 2-3 storey building consisting of 5 flats. The existing small bungalow on the site will be demolished. Access will be provided where the existing bungalow is located via an undercroft driveway and into an area of permeable cobble hardstanding and permeable block paving. The proposal provides 5 parking spaces.

In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 off road parking space per unit. The proposed plans include the provision of 5 off-street parking spaces which is acceptable. It should be noted that the future residents will not be entitled to a residents parking permit for the area. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

In terms of layout, a new dropped kerb will be located where the existing bungalow is sited. However, there is an existing resident parking bay located on the public highway which will need to be relocated in order to provide access into the development. The applicant is requested to submitted a revised plan proposing a new location for the resident parking bay which can be referred to the Council's Network for review. In addition, street furniture (e.g. sign posts, street lighting columns, telegraph pole) should be a minimum distance of 1.0m from a vehicle crossing (top of transition kerb) to reduce risk of damage from turning vehicles. Therefore, the position of the telegraph pole should be illustrated on the proposed site plan to ensure enough clearance is provided following the introduction of the new dropped kerb.

Note: where it is considered feasible/agreed by the Council to relocate/reposition street furniture/utility equipment so as not to impede a vehicle crossing, all costs associated with such work to be charged to vehicle crossing applicant and included in the cost estimate.

In terms of landscaping, no planting or landscaping should exceed a height of 0.6m above the carriageway level to ensure that drivers have unobstructed visibility exiting the site.

The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. The Councils Local Plan was adopted in November 2019 and this includes a requirement at Policy TR5 for each new house to be provided with an electric charging point. This would be conditioned if the development is approved.

Cycle storage has been proposed and is located at the rear of the site. The proposed location is acceptable.

Bin storage will be located to the rear of the site. Refuse and recycling bins will need to be transported to the front of the site on collection days for kerbside collection as per the other houses in the street.

In view of the above, please ask the applicant's agent to address the concerns regarding the introduction above before this application is determined.

Suggested Conditions

<u>C2</u>	CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)
<u>DC1</u>	VEHICLE PARKING (AS SPECIFIED)
<u>DC4</u>	VEHICULAR ACCESS (TO BE APPROVED)
<u>DC5</u>	CYCLE PARKING (AS SPECIFIED)
<u>DC8</u>	REFUSE AND RECYCLING (AS SPECIFIED)
<u>DC20</u>	PARKING PERMITS 1
<u>DC21</u>	PARKING PERMITS 2
<u>DC24</u>	EV CHARGING POINTS

Informatives

IF3	Highways
I13	Parking Permits
I29	Access construction"

Natural Environment (Trees)

"The application proposes erection of a 2.5 storeys building, containing 5 flats, with bicycle storage, bin storage and parking facilities in the rear, following demolition of an existing bungalow.

The proposal is creating residential housing and the site is part of the AQMA, therefore higher standards must be observed with regards to trees and vegetation.

It is commendable the application sets to establish any kind of soft landscaping on the frontage, given the space & shade constraints, even more so tree planting. However, we must safeguard the sustainability in time of these proposals, in case they are submitted just for show or compliance in order to get planning approval. To be completely honest, I rather agree to a significant, healthy, sustainable and easily manageable high hedge than a tree on the frontage. Furthermore, tree or high hedge, there is the matter of it being completely shaded from direct sunlight due to being located alongside the northern elevation.

I note the front elevation line is brought forward towards the street more so than either of the adjoining properties (DESACC picture 19, page 21). I trust you will comment on that from a planning perspective, but in order to secure sufficient space for any practical frontage planting the elevation line needs to be set back at least to where no. 1 and no. 3 are. Even the tree indicatively showcased in the Design and Access Statement - Picture 13 (page 16) would have a difficult time developing a crown at maturity - and in that case the front elevation is aligned with the protracted one at no. 1. However, drawing '3661-221 Ground Floor' shows the proposed building is set to sit further outside of that line - albeit just slightly.

If the building line can't be set back (which should be considered), a frontage tree should be omitted and more suitable (to space to façade situation) solutions must be explored.

With regards to the rear area landscaping, although the plans are agreeable in principle, some details must be amended. The plans state 'Styraciflua' for one of the trees, which is not enough to show the species it refers to. We assume it refers to *Liquidambar styraciflua*, and this is how it should be referred to in the amended plans. A non-specified variety of the 'Betula utilis' is the other proposed tree. The most frequent planted variety of *B. utilis* is the var. *jacquemontii*, known as the Himalayan birch. I do not agree with this choice as it is not a native British tree and it does not bring any biodiversity value with it, therefore I suggest it be replaced with one of the two native ones: *B. pendula* or *B. pubescens*. Regardless of the birch species planted, the applicant should be aware that a landscape condition would seek tree pit details to demonstrate suitable soil volume (approx. 12m³), as the tree is very close to both the bin storage and the driveway.

If the applicant considers setting back the front elevation, then I await the new plans to provide comments to how suitable the amendments are for frontage landscaping. In this case, adjustments to rear area landscaping details should be submitted as well.

Otherwise, if you intend to approve the application as it is, a landscaping condition L2 will be required to secure proper landscaping on the frontage given the available space and shade conditions, to settle the specifics of the rear area species, and landscaping details overall"

“Environmental Protection concerns:

- Noise impact on development*
- Air Quality*
- Construction and Demolition phase*
- Bin storage - rats*

Noise impact on development

A noise assessment should be submitted in support of applications for new residential proposed in noisy areas.

The noise assessment will be assessed against the recommendations for internal noise levels within dwellings and external noise levels within gardens / balconies in accordance with BS 8233:2014 and WHO guidelines for Community Noise. The report should identify any mitigation measures that are necessary to ensure that the recommended standard is met.

The noise assessment data should also include noise events (L_{AMax}) and the design should aim to prevent noise levels from noise events exceeding 45dB within bedrooms at night, as this is linked with sleep disturbance.

Internal noise criteria (taken from BS8233:2014)

<i>Room</i>	<i>Design criteria</i>	<i>Upper limit</i>
<i>Bedrooms (23:00 to 07:00)</i>	<i><30dB LAeq,8hour</i>	
<i>Living rooms (07:00 - 23:00)</i>	<i><35dB LAeq,16hour</i>	
<i>Gardens & Balconies</i>	<i><50dB LAeq,T</i>	<i><55dB LAeq,T</i>

As a noise assessment has not been submitted and the proposed development is by a busy road / railway line / in the town centre, I recommend a condition is attached to any consent requiring a noise assessment to be submitted prior to commencement of development and any approved mitigation measures implemented prior to occupation to show that recommended noise levels in the table above can be met.

The noise assessment will need to identify the external noise levels impacting on the proposed site.

Noise mitigation is likely to focus on the weak point in the structure; glazing. Given that the acoustic integrity would be compromised should the windows be opened, ventilation details must also be provided, where mitigation relies on closed windows. Ventilation measures should be selected which do not allow unacceptable noise ingress and should provide sufficient ventilation to avoid the need to open windows in hot weather, however non-openable windows are not considered an acceptable solution due to the impact on living standards.

I recommend the following condition.

➤ N9 NOISE ASSESSMENT & MITIGATION RESIDENTIAL (TO BE SUBMITTED)

No development shall commence on site until a detailed scheme, informed by an assessment of the current noise environment, for protecting the dwellings from the external noise environment of the area has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme itself shall be designed, specified and constructed so that the sound insulation performance of the structure and the layout of the dwellings are such that the indoor ambient noise levels do not exceed the values detailed in Table 4 of BS 8233:2014 and the and that the individual noise events do not exceed 45 dB LA,max,F more than 10 times a night. Where opening windows will lead to an internal noise level increase of 5 dBA or greater above BS 8233:2014 recommended internal levels, the scheme shall include provision of alternative mechanical ventilation with minimum performance equivalent to a mechanical heat recovery (MVHR) system with cool air bypass as an alternative means of cooling and ventilation. Noise from the system should not result in BS8233 internal levels being exceeded.

Thereafter, the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved scheme which shall be completed before any part of the accommodation hereby approved is occupied, unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise agrees in writing.

REASON: *These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to safeguard the amenity of occupants in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.*

Air Quality - Increased exposure

The proposed development is located within an air quality management area that we have identified with monitoring as being a pollution hot-spot (likely to breach the EU limit value for NO₂) and introduces new exposure / receptors. An assessment and/or mitigation measures should be provided as part of the application.

Where the assessment shows that residents will be exposed to harmful levels of pollutants (in excess of national objective levels) the applicant will need to produce a mitigation plan. The mitigation plan must quantify the impact on emissions the proposed mitigation will have, in order to show that future occupants will be protected from the effects of poor air quality.

One method of protecting future occupants is by setting a development back from the source of pollution. Where the development involves converting an existing building and allowing a buffer zone is not an option it may be that other mitigation can be applied. In the first instance this would be to implement measures to reduce the level at the facade of the property by creating a barrier

between the property and the carriageway, such as close boarded fencing or planting vegetation.

If this is not possible then locating habitable rooms away from the source of pollution or the use of mechanical ventilation with the inlet on the clean side of the property may be acceptable. This list of potential measures is by no means an exhaustive list.

Mitigation against increased exposure:

- *Mechanical ventilation - inlets from the 'clean' side of the development, long term maintenance needs to be addressed*
- *Buffer zones - consider increasing distance of the building façade from very busy roads*
- *Habitable rooms - consider placing stairwells, corridors and bathrooms on the façade fronting pollution source*
- *Mixed use - locate any sensitive uses on higher floors, allowing commercial use on lower elevations*
- *Balconies - consider avoiding use in areas of exceedance, especially on ground and first floor level*
- *Non-opening front windows - this should only be considered in certain circumstances, needs to be balanced against loss of freedom for future occupants*
- *Green Infrastructure - Installation of green walls, rooves, or planters.*

Reading Borough Council's Air Quality Policy EN15 requires that developments have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality through design, mitigation and where required planning obligations to be used to help improve local air quality.

*Until an [assessment and / or mitigation plan] has been submitted and approved by the Environmental Protection Team it is impossible to determine whether the proposed development is appropriate for the proposed location, therefore until the above has been received I would recommend **refusal** on air quality grounds or the following condition.*

➤ **N13 AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION (TO BE SUBMITTED)**

No development shall commence on site until a detailed Air Quality Assessment to determine whether mitigation is required to protect the residents from the effects of poor air quality is submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. Where this Air Quality Assessment identifies that future residents will be exposed to poor air quality, an air quality mitigation scheme shall accompany this assessment demonstrating sufficient mitigation to protect the occupants. The scheme shall be implemented as approved prior to occupation of any part of the development and retained as approved at all times thereafter.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to protect the health of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy EN15 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Construction and demolition phases

We have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses).

Fires during construction and demolition can impact on air quality and cause harm to residential amenity. Burning of waste on site could be considered to be harmful to the aims of environmental sustainability.

Recommended conditions

➤ C2 CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)

No development shall commence on site, including any works of demolition, until a site specific Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall provide for

- a) Required measures to control the emission of dust, dirt and other airborne pollutants during demolition and construction; [EP REQUIREMENT]
- b) Provisions to be made for the control of noise coming from the site during demolition and construction; [EP REQUIREMENT]
- c) Full details of pest control measures following any demolition required. Where necessary, capping of drains/sewers and baiting arrangements. [EP REQUIREMENT]

The measures within the approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of protecting the amenity of local land uses or neighbouring residents, the character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

➤ C1 HOURS OF CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION

No construction, demolition or associated deliveries shall take place outside the hours of [0800hrs to 1800hrs] Mondays to Fridays, and [0800hrs to 1300hrs] on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In order to protect occupiers of nearby properties from unreasonable disturbance from works connected with implementing

this permission in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

➤ **C4 NO BONFIRES**

No materials or green waste produced as a result of the clearance of the site, demolition works or construction works associated with the development hereby approved shall be burnt on site.

REASON: *In the interests of air quality, the amenity of neighbours, and to promote more sustainable approaches to waste management in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.*

Bin storage - rats

There is a widespread problem in Reading with rats as the rats are being encouraged by poor waste storage which provides them with a food source. Where developments involve shared bin storage areas e.g. flats and hotels there is a greater risk of rats being able to access the waste due to holes being chewed in the base of the large wheelie bins or due to occupants or passers not putting waste inside bins, or bins being overfilled. It is therefore important for the bin store to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste. I recommend the following condition.

➤ **Condition - Details of bin stores**

No [dwelling/development] hereby permitted shall be first occupied until details of refuse and recycling bin stores have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing the bin store(s). The approved bin storage, including pest and vermin control measures, shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of any permitted [dwelling/development] and shall not be used for any purpose other than bin storage at all times thereafter.

Reason: *To ensure that adequate provision is made for the storage and collection of refuse in accordance with Policy CS2 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015) and Policy DM12 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015)."*

4.1 Public Consultation

5 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JB
Flat 4 Assini House, 1 North Street, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8JA
33 North Street, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8JA
1 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8JB
5a Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JA
13 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading
15 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JB
Prospect St Dental Practice, 19 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JB
6 South Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8HY
2 South Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8HY

Representations received as follows:

- Caversham and District Residents' Association:

No specific comments on this proposal but wish their comments on adjoining site at 3 Prospect St, the subject of (withdrawn) application 201857 to be considered.

- 1 North St - concerns raised over noise transfer through party wall and disruption from construction activity and traffic.
- North St resident: Support the regeneration of this site which is currently an eyesore. Request strict hours for construction.
- 33 North Street - not met Policy H5 requirement to off-set carbon emissions through on-site generation.
 - Lack of consideration for turning for existing residents in narrow street.
 - Lack of parking space
 - Too many dwellings for the street.
- 41 North Street - concerned about anti-social behaviour/rough sleeping in the secluded inner courtyard/bin/seating area - ungated.
 - Mock Georgian main door surround is out of character with Victorian Street
 - Loss of one on-street parking bay.
 - Front of building protrudes beyond all others on street.

- 2 South Street, Caversham

"We are writing in response to the request for planning approval submitted for 1A North Street, Caversham, RG4 8JA to express our concerns over the application. We strongly object to this proposal and are of the view that the proposed development will have a serious impact on our standard of living on the following grounds:

1) NON-COMPLIANCE WITH TREE POLICY

Within the planning application form, the applicant has failed to highlight that there are a number of trees which are situated on land directly adjacent to the proposed development site. These can be seen in the Design and Access Statement and the location plans submitted. They have therefore also subsequently neglected to provide a full tree survey.

This directly contravenes the council's Trees, Hedges and Woodlands policy (EN14) stating that "Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance" and "New development shall make provision for tree retention".

We are concerned that these trees may be adversely affected both during construction of the proposed development given how highly sensitive tree roots are to environmental conditions as well as after construction, given the plans for a waste store and car park to be situated alongside.

In addition, if the trees were later to be removed or die as a result of the development, this would contravene the council's policy of safeguarding amenities (CC8) since the trees currently provide a degree of privacy and overlooking from North Street.

2) LOSS OF PRIVACY AND OVERLOOKING

The proposed site of development is at such an angle, height and proximity that the primary amenity area of our garden along with our rear ground floor study and first floor bedroom would be severely overlooked from the top rooms of the new development, resulting in a serious invasion of our privacy. There are 12 windows and two rooflights proposed on the rear elevation to provide “a good level of surveillance over the parking and storage areas” which sit directly adjacent to the properties on South Street. If those windows allow good surveillance over the parking then it seems clear that the same can be said for the properties on South Street that the development backs onto.

We believe that the proposed development is therefore a direct contravention of policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity. The design of the proposed development does not afford adequate privacy for the occupants of the building or of adjacent residential properties, particularly with regard to their right to the quiet enjoyment of garden amenities.

We would urge you to consider the responsibilities of the council under the Human Rights Act in particular Protocol 1, Article 1 which states that a person has the right to peaceful enjoyment of all their possessions which includes the home and other land. We believe that the proposed development would have a dominating impact on us and our right to the quiet enjoyment of our property. Article 8 of the Human Rights Act states that a person has the substantive right to respect for their private and family life.

3) OVERSHADOWING AND LOSS OF LIGHT

The proposed development is on land at a higher altitude than the houses on South Street, and that coupled with the scale and height of the proposed structure, would mean it would be overbearing, and substantially overshadow our property.

Our property is also not correctly drawn in the plans - with the rear of our property missing entirely from the site plan - and the proposed position of the development is within 20 meters which is in direct contravention to article CC8: Safeguarding Amenity which states that “a back-to-back distance of 20 metres between dwellings is usually appropriate”. These factors will significantly reduce the levels of light entering our property.

4) INADEQUATE PREVENTION OF FLOODING AND PROVISION OF DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Section 4.5 (Other Material Considerations) within the Design and Access Statement states that “the site is not located within Flood Zone 2 or 3” however this is incorrect.

This particular area is within Flood Zone 3, and as outlined in the council’s local plan EN18 and as part of the National Planning Policy Framework, this application must be supported by a flood risk assessment as well as adequate demonstration that flood risks have been considered and managed.

As stated by the council, “a significant area of land within Reading is at risk of flooding, and this is expected to worsen with the effects of climate change. Even away from the flood plain, inappropriate drainage schemes

can exacerbate local flooding problems and increase the amount of water entering watercourses.”

5) IMPACT ON INFRASTRUCTURE

We believe the proposed development to be in contravention of CC9: Securing Infrastructure. The council has already recognised the traffic issues within Caversham, and to add an additional five residential dwellings onto an already congested road which leads directly onto the town’s busiest street (Prospect Street) will only aggravate the problem. An additional five cars will also cause more pollution and be damaging to air quality and public health. Local GP surgeries are already at capacity, and an additional five dwellings would put further pressure on these services. We feel that the impact on the existing infrastructure is therefore an important consideration.

6) NOISE/LIGHT/EMISSION POLLUTION & IMPACT

The application states that there is a “significant distance between the rear elevations of properties on South Street and therefore there are no concerns with the impact of the proposal on these dwellings” however the plan includes five car parking spaces and waste stores to the rear of the property which is adjacent to the properties on South Street. The negative impacts of these are bad smells from the waste, potential artificial light invasion due to the car park requiring adequate lighting along with noise and environmental pollution (emissions) from the cars leaving and entering the car park. This contravenes council policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity on the grounds of noise and disturbance, artificial lighting, fumes and smell. This would create unacceptable living conditions for neighbouring properties and negatively impact health as a direct result of increased emissions.

We are further concerned that the proposed development has not made any provisions at all for the separation on recycling and general waste in the planning application which will exacerbate the smell and contravene policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage.

7) DETRIMENTAL IMPACT UPON RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES

We believe that the proposed development is a direct contravention of policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm which states the following:

All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.

It does not respect local context and street pattern or, in particular, the scale and proportions of surrounding buildings, and would be entirely out of the character of the area, to the detriment of the local environment. The properties along North Street are characterised by medium sized terraced plots with two storey buildings from the Victorian era. The proposed dwelling is a three-storey block of flats, with proportions that are larger than the neighbouring terraced properties. In addition, the layout is entirely different with a car port included which is out of keeping with the other properties in the road.

In conclusion, we also ask that, in the case that the application is approved, the council consider enforcing strict hours of operation to avoid inconveniencing neighbours with noise disruption and traffic or access issues caused by construction vehicles and deliveries. The proposed development site is located on a very narrow, dead end road which leads onto the busiest road in Caversham so any major disruption is likely to have adverse effects. This is also especially relevant in a time when many are having to work from home during the ongoing pandemic so any restrictions the council could enforce to make the duration of the works more bearable would be greatly appreciated.”

28 North Street

“The revisions of the plans to remove the undercroft driveway and 2 storeys above this is poor. This removes the continuous nature of the development and breaks the completion of the terrace frontage along the whole length of North Street that the original proposed development would have achieved. The removal of this lower roof level also breaks the gradual stepping of roof lines across the existing buildings. The loss of this space also results in underdevelopment of a central site that can easily accommodate the original proposal. In an area of town with limited development opportunity this would be a waste.”

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- EN10: Access to Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN18: Flooding and Drainage
- H1: Provision of Housing
- H2: Density and Mix
- H3: Affordable Housing
- H5: Standards for New Housing
- H7: Protecting the Existing Housing Stock
- H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

5.3 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Parking Standards and Design

Affordable Housing SPD

Sustainable Design SPD

6. APPRAISAL

Principle of development

The site is previously developed and whilst the proposals would result in the loss of the existing bungalow, it would be replaced with four dwellings in accordance with Policy H7. It is considered that the proposals make efficient use of the site within the design constraints that exist in accordance with Policy H2.

Design considerations and effect on character

The proposals have been reduced in scale with the removal of a wing oversailing a vehicle entrance to the east side of the site. The building has been set back further from the road, in line with neighbouring buildings and the roof form has been amended to present pitched roofs to elevations viewable from public areas and to hide the crown roof. The removal of the tunnel entrance is considered to be an improvement, reducing the visual dominance of the building and an otherwise contrived design feature.

The proposed building, in its revised form is considered to offer a reasonable transition between the bulk of 1 North Street and the lesser scale of 3 North Street and the terrace that continues from that point eastwards. The increased scale at this end of the street is reflective of the more densely developed, mixed use character of the district centre to the west.

Architecturally the appearance would be reasonably well integrated with the surroundings. It would be difficult to make a 3 storey building such as this match in terms of appearance. The design is fairly nondescript but, due to the acceptable scale, would not appear obtrusive, or harmful to the appearance of the street.

The proposals are considered to comply with Policies H2 and CC7.

Impact on residential amenity

The rear façade of the revised proposals would be separated 19 metres from closest point of the rear of houses in South Street to the south. However this is to the very closest part of the single storey rear outshoot of number 2. The main part of the rear facades of dwellings are in excess of the 20 metres referred to in Policy CC8. It is noted that 1 North Street is located directly north of 2 South St and has a similar scale with residential windows facing. It is noted that Policy CC8 allows for circumstances on individual sites to allow the distance to be reduced. In this instance it is noted that the main rear windows would have a greater separating distance, the site is within a densely developed urban context and existing development (number 1 North St) is arranged with a similar relationship to that proposed. As such it is considered that the proposals would offer a standard of privacy to neighbours which is appropriate to and characteristic of the existing context.

The proposed building would be larger than the prevailing scale on North Street although a similar scale to that of 1 North Street and three storey buildings close-by on Prospect Street. It is considered that the scale would not be so great as to have a harmful overbearing effect on neighbouring properties. Similarly the scale and position relative to neighbouring properties is not considered likely to result in harmful loss of light. Buildings to the south would be sufficiently distant and their position to the north would avoid loss of sunlight. There are no buildings fronting directly across the street to the north. The rear of buildings fronting Prospect street face the site at an angle and are considered to be sufficiently distant to avoid harmful impacts on daylighting.

The flats themselves would meet internal space standards and would offer a reasonable standard of outlook and daylighting for occupiers. There are concerns that the ground floor rear backs straight onto the shared car park area however this is not considered sufficiently harmful to warrant refusal in this instance.

Conditions are recommended to secure suitable noise insulation for the flats themselves and for the adjoining building at 1 North Street.

A small shared garden area is proposed to the south west corner of the site. This is considered reasonable within the relatively high density built environment and is characteristic of the area.

The proposals are considered to comply with Policies H2, H5, H10 and CC8 on this basis.

Transport

The proposals are considered to provide suitable, parking and turning and access arrangements to serve the development, noting the accessibility of the location by public transport and proximity to district centre services.

The objectors' concerns regarding the lack of turning on street are noted but it is not considered reasonable to require a development of this relatively small scale to remedy design deficiencies elsewhere. There is no evidence to suggest that the development would worsen the existing situation. The new access would require removal of part of an existing demarcated parking bay (the existing site access fronts onto double yellow lines). The removal of the bungalow would remove demand for spaces and the development makes suitable provision for new parking requirements. Ultimately the arrangement of on-street parking would be a matter for the Highway Authority.

The proposals are considered to comply with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR4.

Landscaping/ecology

The proposals have been revised and set back from the street allowing space for a small tree to the frontage. Three trees are also indicated to the rear. It is considered that this is suitable and commensurate with the scale and nature of the proposals. A condition securing full details of landscaping is proposed.

Trees exist on neighbouring land to the south of the site. The root systems could be affected by development and a condition securing a suitable Arboricultural Method Statement is recommended.

With these conditions the proposals are considered to comply with Policies CC7 and EN14.

Sustainable Development

Policy CC2 states that:

“All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM ‘Very Good’ standard as a minimum;

□ *All non-residential development or conversions to residential should incorporate water conservation measures so that predicted per capita consumption does not exceed the appropriate levels set out in the applicable BREEAM standard. Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.”*

A condition is recommended to secure these requirements.

Policy CC3 seeks measures to adapt to climate change. The proposals are relatively limited in terms of the scope for re-orientation to maximise solar gain, however the proposals incorporate tree planting and soft landscaped areas. A condition is recommended to secure details and implementation of SuDS drainage to reduce flood risk. This is considered to be sufficient in this instance.

The proposals are considered to be acceptable in respect of Policies CC2 and CC3 on this basis.

Affordable Housing

For the 4 dwelling proposal Policy H3 requires a contribution to allow the equivalent of 10% Affordable Housing to be provided off site. The applicant has submitted three independent valuations to allow the contribution to be calculated. In accordance with the Affordable Housing SPD. This results in a requirement for £49,958.00 [forty nine thousand nine hundred and fifty eight pounds] towards the provision of Affordable Housing within the Borough of Reading. Payable prior to first occupation of the development and index-linked from the date of the permission. The applicant has agreed to meet the policy requirement, in accordance with Policy H3 and a S106 agreement will be required to secure this.

Equalities Impact

When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

7. CONCLUSION

This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, supplementary planning documents, national planning policy and other relevant material considerations.

It is considered that the proposal, in its revised form would not harm the character of the area or its appearance, would provide for a suitable level of residential amenity for future occupiers and would not harm that of neighbouring dwellings. The access and parking arrangements are satisfactory. The environmental effects would be suitably mitigated and an appropriate level of Affordable Housing would be secured. The application is recommended for approval on this basis, subject to the completion of the s106 agreement and subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS & REASONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

3661/220 Rev.B, Location and Block Plan, dated 31 August 2021

3661/223 Rev.B, Site Plan, dated 31 August 2021

3661/221 Rev.B, Ground Floor Plan, dated 31 August 2021

3661/222 Rev.B, First & Second Floor Plan, dated 31 August 2021

3661/224 Rev.B, Elevations Sheet 1

3661/225 Rev.B, Elevations Sheet 2

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. No development shall commence beyond foundation level until a schedule of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details approved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

4. (PC) The development hereby approved shall not be commenced, including any works of demolition, until a site specific Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall provide for:

a) Space on site where vehicles of site operatives and visitors can be parked with details of how site operatives and visitors will be required to make use of the parking area provided;

b) Location on site for storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;

c) The erection and maintenance (including removal of any graffiti or fly posters) of security hoarding around the site;

- d) Identification of any footpath closures or road closures needed during construction;
- e) Required wheel washing facilities on site;
- f) A scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction works.
- g) Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes;
- h) Required measures to control the emission of dust, dirt and other airborne pollutants during demolition and construction;
- i) Provisions to be made for the control of noise coming from the site during demolition and construction;
- j) Full details of pest control measures following any demolition required. Where necessary, capping of drains/sewers and baiting arrangements.

The measures within the approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of protecting the amenity of local land uses or neighbouring residents, the character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. The dwellings hereby permitted shall not be occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

6. The development hereby approved shall not be commenced (except demolition) until full details of the vehicle access serving the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The vehicle access shall thereafter be constructed in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation.

REASON: In the interests of road safety in accordance with Policy TR1 and TR3 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

7. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be first occupied until the bicycle parking facility for that dwelling has been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The facility shall be kept available for bicycle parking at all times thereafter.

REASON: To encourage travel by sustainable alternatives to driving a motorcar in accordance with Policy TR1 and TR5 of the Reading local Plan 2019.

8. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, the refuse and recycling storage facility shall be implemented fully in accordance with those details shown on the approved plans and thereafter retained for use by occupiers of the development at all times.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that bins can be easily accessed when required in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

9. No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until the Local Planning Authority has been notified in writing of the full postal address of the

dwellings. The notification shall be sent to the Local Planning Authority quoting the application reference specified on this Notice.

REASON: In order that the Council can update its records to ensure that parking permits are not automatically issued to the occupiers of the new dwellings, and thus ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

10. Prior to any agreement being entered into for a new occupation of, or transfer of any interest in, the residential unit(s) hereby approved, the prospective occupier/transferee shall be informed that there is no automatic entitlement to a car parking permit for any existing residential parking permit schemes and future schemes on adjacent and surrounding streets. All material used for advertising or marketing the residential unit(s) for letting or sale shall make it clear to prospective tenants and occupiers that they will not be automatically entitled to a parking permit, but any application for a parking permit will be considered on its merits.

REASON: In order that the prospective occupiers are made aware of the fact that while they can submit an application they will not be automatically entitled to an on-street car parking permit. In the interests of the proper management of parking, and to ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

11. All vehicle parking spaces shall be provided in full accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation and thereafter kept free of obstruction and retained in accordance with the approved details and shall remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times thereafter.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

12. The development hereby approved shall not be commenced (except demolition) until a detailed scheme, informed by an assessment of the current noise environment, for protecting the dwellings from the external noise environment of the area has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme itself shall be designed, specified and constructed so that the sound insulation performance of the structure and the layout of the dwellings are such that the indoor ambient noise levels do not exceed the values detailed in Table 4 of BS 8233:2014 and the individual noise events do not exceed 45 dB LA,max,F more than 10 times a night. Where opening windows will lead to an internal noise level increase of 5 dBA or greater above BS 8233:2014 recommended internal levels, the scheme shall include provision of alternative mechanical ventilation with minimum performance equivalent to a mechanical heat recovery (MVHR) system with cool air bypass as an alternative means of cooling and ventilation. Noise from the system should not result in BS8233 internal levels being exceeded.

Thereafter, the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved scheme which shall be completed before any part of the accommodation hereby approved is occupied.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to safeguard the amenity of occupants in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

13. The development hereby approved shall not be commenced (except demolition) until a detailed noise insulation scheme for protecting occupiers of the adjoining building at 1 North Street from airborne and structure borne noise arising from the approved development has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved scheme which shall be completed before any part of the accommodation hereby approved is occupied, unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise agrees in writing.

REASON: In order to safeguard the amenity of occupants in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

14. The development hereby approved shall not be commenced (except demolition) until a detailed Air Quality Assessment to determine whether mitigation is required to protect the residents from the effects of poor air quality has been submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. Where this Air Quality Assessment identifies that future residents will be exposed to poor air quality, an air quality mitigation scheme shall accompany this assessment demonstrating sufficient mitigation to protect the occupants. The scheme shall be implemented as approved prior to occupation of any part of the development and retained as approved at all times thereafter.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to protect the health of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy EN15 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

15. No construction, demolition or associated deliveries shall take place outside the hours of 0800hrs to 1800hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 0800hrs to 1300hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In order to protect occupiers of nearby properties from unreasonable disturbance from works connected with implementing this permission in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

16. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be first occupied until details of refuse and recycling bin stores have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing the bin store(s). The approved bin storage, including pest and vermin control measures, shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of any permitted dwelling and shall not be used for any purpose other than bin storage at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that adequate provision is made for the storage and collection of refuse in accordance with Policy CS2 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015) and Policy DM12 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015).

17. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no change of use to a Class C4 house in multiple occupation shall take place without the further grant of planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

REASON. To ensure appropriate standards of amenity for future occupiers in respect of the size of dwellings and the impacts on adjoining occupiers in accordance with Policies H5, H8 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

18. No dwelling hereby approved shall be first occupied until the landscaped amenity garden area located at the south west corner of the site has been provided in accordance with the approved drawings. The amenity garden area shall be retained and maintained as approved and shall remain accessible for amenity purposes to all occupiers of the development at all times thereafter.

REASON. To ensure provision of appropriate outdoor amenity space to serve the development in accordance with Policy H10.

19. No dwelling hereby approved shall be first occupied until all existing buildings and structures have been permanently removed from the site.

REASON. The existing buildings and structures are incompatible with the design and amenity of the proposed development. In accordance with Policies CC7 and CC8.

20. (PC) The development hereby approved shall not be commenced (including demolition or preparatory works) until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice for trees neighbouring the site to the south has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

Reason: In order to ensure that appropriate protection is given to trees of amenity value within and adjacent to the site in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

21. The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until written verification has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority demonstrating that the dwellings hereby permitted have achieved a minimum of a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate as defined in The Building Regulations for England Approved Document L1a: Conservation of Fuel and Power in New Dwellings (2013 edition), and built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3). Such evidence shall be in the form of an 'As Built' Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP), produced by an accredited energy assessor.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards in accordance with Policy CC2 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

22. The development hereby approved shall not be commenced (except demolition) until a Sustainable Drainage Strategy and associated detailed design, management and maintenance plan for surface water drainage for

the site using SuDS methods has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to include a timetable for its implementation and details of annual maintenance. The Sustainable Drainage Strategy shall be carried out in accordance with the approved strategy and timetable and maintained as approved at all times thereafter. REASON: To reduce the risk of flooding within the site or elsewhere in accordance with Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Case Officer: Steve Vigar