

Design and access statement

For

Conversion of ground floor flat, Use Class C3 to commercial, Use Class E(a)

At

40 Church Street, Caversham Reading, RG4 8AU

Introduction

This design and access statement is written in support of the following proposal: -

Conversion of ground floor flat, Use Class C3 to commercial, Use Class E(a)

Site location and description

The application site comprises of a terraced building of two storeys in the centre of Caversham. The existing building has been extended by way of a rear extension at ground and first floors. The ground floor has a commercial use which opens directly onto the pavement at church street. The rear of the ground floor comprises of a yard with access from Chester Street car park and a self-contained flat unit which is now substantially complete. The flat unit is not occupied. The first floor comprises of 2 self-contained flat units. Again, these are not yet in occupation.

The surrounding area is characterised by similar uses with a mix of building types. The general land use pattern is composed of commercial uses with some residential use at the upper floors. The site is in a highly sustainable location in terms of proximity to local services, transport links and easy access to the wider community. The application site is not within a Conservation Area, it contains no listed building and is situated within Flood Zone 1 and so has a low probability of flooding.



The site in relation to wider context



View along Church Street illustrating its commercial nature at ground floor



View along Church Street illustrating its commercial nature at ground floor



View along Church Street illustrating its commercial nature at ground floor

Use

The site is situated within a designated shopping area as identified by the photos above. Prior to the C3 use at ground floor the existing use was a florist and the ground floor fully catered for the sale of goods and was oriented at visiting members of the public. There can be no dispute that the commercial use of the site at ground floor is in keeping with the general land use pattern of the area. In addition, the use of the ground floor as commercial will continue to contribute to the vitality and viability of Centre

Amount

The existing ground floor flat has a floor area of 64.5m². The existing commercial floor area 72m². The total proposed commercial floor space after the change of use will be 136.5m². The size of the commercial premises as proposed is in keeping with other commercial uses in the immediate vicinity. The proposal would still adequately provide refuse and recycling facilities for all uses, together with adequate provision of cycle parking on the site.

Layout, scale and appearance

The current ground floor layout comprises of a commercial unit fronting Church Street with a residential unit to the rear. The change of use would result in the ground floor comprising fully of a commercial unit. The commercial unit would not give rise to any adverse impacts in terms of residential amenity. The commercial unit is separated from the residential use by a fire and sound proofed floor. In addition, the proposal does not involve provision of any artificial external lighting, mechanical extraction systems nor would it generate any fumes. The arrangement of the site, i.e., commercial with residential above is considered in keeping with the local area and is symptomatic of town centre locations.

There are minimal external changes proposed and thus the change of use would not adversely impact neighbouring amenity in terms of light, privacy, overshadowing or appearing as overbearing. In addition, the change of use would it have any visual impact on the surrounding area.

Access

There would be no change in the sites access arrangements.

Report by

Rahul Taheem BSc (Hons), Grad Dip Arch, MA Arch
ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANT

For and on behalf of
RAHUL TAHEEM LTD
39 Wakemans Hill Avenue, London, NW9 0TA
T: 07980883228
E: rahulkaheem@hotmail.co.uk



RAHUL TAHEEM LTD, Registered in England and Wales. Company registration number 12238895.
Director Rahul Taheem BSc (Hons), Grad Dip Arch, MA Arch.
Registered address 39 Wakemans Hill Avenue, London, NW9 0TA. VAT Reg number: 383065589