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Introduction, Site Location and Description & Access

This design & access statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the Proposed Conversion of existing 3 storey end of terrace house to 1No 1bed self-contained flat at ground floor level, and 1no 3bed self-contained apartment to the upper floors.

The existing house is located to the North Eastern end of Combe Road, in Tilehurst. Opposite the junction of Hardwicke Road

Combe Road is an established residential area which has good links to public transport, shops, commercial establishments and restaurants and is within walking distance to the shopping facilities at the Tilehurst Triangle, The Dee road shops, Honey End Lane and the Meadway Precinct.

There are good bus links to Reading Town centre. With services 15/15a and the 33 routes.

The houses are in the main set in a terraced arrangement and of an infill panel construction with masonry main walls and tile cladding panels front and back with profiled concrete roof tiles.

There is a mix of two and three storey houses, of which the application property is the three storey end of terrace unit.

The pre-existing format of the build had an integral garage which had over the years been converted to habitable use, and the property has the benefit of a Certificate of Lawfulness to confirm that the use has been accepted as being that of Lawful.

A few houses have had rear extensions, including application site, which has the advantage of being utilised to meet space standards and thereby allowing the split into two units.

There have been several applications in the area where the relevant properties have sought to split their buildings to as many as three apartments, but to meet the Councils current policy and to ensure that some family units remain, it is intended to only seek the conversion to two self-contained units, with a three bedroom family unit over the top two floors.

The proposal to create two apartments, works well with the existing entrance being retained for common use, and an internal separation being possible, that would keep a private use at ground floor and then the stair access to the upper two floors as a single three bedroomed duplex dwelling.



Aerial view of the site and its setting



Block Plan



View from Combe Road Street showing access and existing arrangement.

Application property

Access

The existing arrangements for access work well, and require very little change.

The existing front door will remain as the main entrance for both new apartments allowing secure communal access, and then separation for access to the ground floor apartment and stairs to the upper floors.

As noted above the application property lies in an established residential area and has good links to shops and bus route to the town centre.

Cycle storage and refuse storage can be accommodated on the front hardstanding for three cycles and for the larger family size bins as provided upon request to Reading Borough Council.

New Proposals, Appearance and Scale

The key constraint is that of the relationship between the existing buildings, both in terms of location, height of building and aspect so that the new arrangement does not dominate and overpower the existing adjacent neighbours and those in its proximity.

The number of storeys has been in place from the outset, when the building was first built.

It is intended to utilise the shell as it exists, with the existing garage already accepted for use as a habitable space, and the recently extended ground floor at the rear adds to provide a good level of accommodation.

The access to the rear garden would remain from the new kitchen, and the side access for the upper floor apartment.

The apartment at ground floor with the recently implemented extension would comprise a floor area of 48.78m² which is more than the 37m² required as part of the national limit for such a use.

The duplex at 1st and 2nd floor would be a combination of 38.76m² per floor totalling 77.5m²

As part of the newly adopted requirements, the accommodation should provide for at least one family dwelling, and it is intended to meet this requirement

Principle of development

Any new development should meet current design standards and achieve reasonable distances from neighbours, and the proposals do not alter or make further impact to their neighbours.

The base requirements are that the existing dwelling when first built should have either 4No bedrooms, or have a gross external area in excess of 120m².

Whilst the existing dwelling is set over three floors, it can be argued that the bedrooms were only ever planned at the top floor, and would therefore only potentially accommodate 3No bedrooms.

The gross floor area is calculated at 43.5m² per floor, totalling 130.5m² over the three floors, and this would then meet at least one of the key requirements of the council's policy to allow conversion to multiple units.

The principal aims of the design are:-

To provide two self-contained apartments in accordance with the Council's policies that seek to maintain standards of residential accommodation while restricting impact upon public resources;

To provide and retain at least one family dwelling.

To provide good quality residential accommodation that is affordable in the borough and in keeping with the residential nature of the locally surrounding area;

To bring an existing site into improved economic use without undue detriment to its surroundings, thereby maintaining the quality of the area in a sustainable way and in the long-term public interest.

Areas and density

the application site as it exists has a site area of 145m², comprising a plot approximately 4.70m across and 30.5m deep

Gross internal areas proposed are:

basement floor 42.80m²

Ground floor 29.50 m²

First floor 29.50 m²

Loft floor 18.75 m²

Total floor area for upper apartment plot 77.80m²

Obligations/Infrastructure

In line with the government's current National Planning Policy Framework it is understood that developments such as the one described here, consisting of less than 10 new dwellings and overall less than 1000m² combined floorspace, are exempted from contributing towards pooled funds for the provision of affordable housing in the wider area. It is therefore understood that no such contributions should be sought by the local planning authority.

Similarly, As no additional floorspace will be created by the proposals it is understood that they will be exempted from CIL contributions.

Flood Risk

From data reviewed from the Environment agency, the site is not within flood zones 2 or 3 and therefore no special measures are required.

Biodiversity and Protected Species

The existing building is well maintained and there are no signs for the potential effect to protected species.
The proposals are very minimal and again would not impact any protected species.

Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement has considered the local context and character and used this assessment to inform the characteristics of the proposed development to which it provides an appropriate response in terms of its scale, layout, use, and appearance. In addition,.

The proposed development is consistent with policies at the national and local level in relation to matters of design and access and responds to the requirement for the creation of safe and secure environments.

The proposed development is in an accessible location, easily accessible for public transport and also from a range of local services and facilities.

We trust this application will attract officer support.

Submitted drawings to which reference should be made:

Block PlanCR-010 Rev - -
Location Plan CR-011 Rev –
Pre-Existing and As Built plans CR-012 Rev –
Pre- Existing AND As Built elevations CR-014 Rev –

