

CHANGE OF USE FROM A STORAGE DISTRIBUTION (B8) UNIT TO A ONE BEDROOM RESIDENTIAL DWELLING (C3)

1A STANLEY GROVE, READING, RG1 7NS

ON BEHALF OF PHILIP PORTCH

CONTENTS:

1. Introduction
2. Site Location and Description
3. Planning History
4. Proposed Amendments
5. Policy Assessment
6. Conclusion

INTRODUCTION:

This statement is produced to support a planning application for a change of use of the existing premises from B8 storage to C3 residential. This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council, including why the proposal is considered to overcome the previous reason for refusal.

In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents:

- 1:1250 Site Location Plan
- 1:500 Block Plan
- Existing floor plan
- Proposed floor plan

The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application site is located to the rear of 2 George Street and has been in situ for more than 20 years. The building is presently used for storage and is accessed via Stanley Grove through an alleyway which runs along the back of the gardens of 2-14 George Street. The building is in need of uplift and at present provides no contribution to the character of the area or the needs of local people in terms of housing supply.

PLANNING HISTORY

190144 – Refused 25 March 2019

Notification for Prior Approval for a Change Of Use from Storage or Distribution Buildings (Class B8) and any land within its curtilage to 1 bed residential

dwellinghouse (C3) Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class P

181510 – Refused 5 December 2018

Change of use of commercial building (B8 storage use) to a 1-bed residential cottage (C3 use)

171454 – Withdrawn 09 October 2017

Certificate of lawful use for existing residential use of property

071272– Refused 14 September 2007

Change of use from storage building to residential unit

070296 – Refused 08 June 2007

Change of use from storage building to residential unit

060931– Approved 08 March 2007

Proposed 4no skylights (retrospective)

910196– Approved 03 March 1992

Change of use from storage and ancillary offices to light industrial with ancillary offices

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The previous reason for refusal is set out as follows:

“The proposed residential use would not be provided with a satisfactory level of outlook, with the bedroom and living areas looking directly out onto adjoining properties. The proposed conversion, by reason of its location and positioning of windows and habitable rooms in relation to adjoining properties would create an unacceptable lack of privacy, and overlooking opportunities for current/future occupiers. For these reasons the proposed will have a significantly detrimental impact on the living environment of any new occupants by failing to provide a suitable level of amenity required by a class C3 dwelling.”

The amendments no longer propose habitable windows facing directly onto the rear gardens of 2-14 George Street. Instead both the bedroom and living rooms will benefit from external windows and doors leading onto a private outdoor terrace area. This arrangement results in sufficient privacy for the future occupants of the building and a maintained level of privacy for the existing occupants of George Street.

Whilst the inclusion of this private amenity area and removal of overlooking windows is considered to overcome this reason for refusal, it is noted this refusal was based on expired local plan policies. The below policy assessment is therefore made against the Local Plan 2019.

POLICY ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

Local Plan policy H8 relates to residential conversions. The policy allows for residential conversions subject to impact on the character of the area, impact on existing residential amenity, adequate floorspace in provided and the development does not result in the loss of a single-family housing.

The building is an existing structure and the proposal no longer includes windows which impact the existing level of privacy enjoyed by George Street occupants. There are therefore no adverse impacts on existing residential amenity resulting from the development.

The proposal respects the existing character of the area and the exposed rafters above the private open space will be planted improving the visual interest of the building. The introduction of rooflights will also not detract from the existing character.

Internal floor and headroom space will be provided in accordance with the Residential Conversions SPD and the submitted proposal provides appropriate bin and cycle storage.

In accordance with the Residential Conversion SPD, compliance with the relevant checklist requirements are set out below:

Checklist 1	The proposed external alterations include the rooflights, front door, obscure glazed window and planted exposed rafters, which are considered to be sympathetic to the existing building and wider character of the area.	CC7, H8
Checklist 3	The conversion results in the delivery of a one bedroom flat which is considered to contribute to a mixed and sustainable community.	H8
Checklist 4	The proposal provides a private terrace with access to essential daylight and ventilation.	H10
Checklist 5	The residential amenity of existing neighbours is considered to be safeguarded in terms of; privacy and overlooking, access to sunlight and daylight, visual dominance and overbearing effects, noise and disturbance and crime and safety. This has been achieved by removing overlooking windows, not extending the height or scale of the building, insulating the building and providing adequate lighting for access into the building.	CC8, H8
Checklist 8	The building will be insulated to building regulation standards and will be an improvement on the existing provision in terms of sound pollution.	CC8, H8

Checklist 10	The proposal results in both the bedroom and living rooms having external windows and doors leading onto the terrace.	CC8, H8
Checklist 13	The proposal is located in the central core area with good access to public transport and as such the non-provision of parking is accepted by highways officers.	TR3, H8
Checklist 16	Cycle storage will be provided within the structure of the building, secured behind the front door.	TR5, H8
Checklist 17	Refuse storage will be provided within the structure of the building, secured behind the front door.	H10

Highway Implications

As before, the proposal is unable to provide additional parking spaces for the site. No concerns were raised previously by the Highways officer on these grounds as the site is located within the central core area with good access to public transport. The officer requested details of bin and cycle storage to be provided by condition. Whilst acknowledged in the officers report this issue would not be a reason to refuse the application the applicant takes the safety and security of the proposal seriously and has incorporated suitable storage for both within the site.

Occupant Amenity Space

As indicated the proposal provides a private terrace area for the future occupants which allows the entire property to benefit from a good provision of daylight and ventilation throughout. The terrace has a dual access which allows the occupants to gain access to the outdoor space from both the bedroom and living room.

As the proposal now provides an outdoor private amenity area, the overall internal floor space is reduced. This is considered acceptable on balance and did not form part of the previous reason for refusal.

Affordable Housing

As it is understood, the proposed conversion does not result in additional floor space and is therefore not required to provide a contribution to affordable housing, in accordance with Local Plan policy H3

Community Infrastructure Levy

As the proposal is less than 100 sqm the development is not CIL liable.

CONCLUSION

There is no policy within the new local plan which restricts the loss of B8 storage in this location, as such the viability of the existing use does not form part of the justification of this change of use.

The proposal is considered to overcome the reason for the refusal and remains compliant with Local Plan 2019 policies. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted, subject to any conditions officers deem necessary.