
FREETHS

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Dear Sir/Madam

1 STATION ROAD/22 FRIAR STREET, READING, RG1 1LG
INSTALLATION OF ADDITIONAL WINDOWS INTO REAR ELEVATION AND ERECTION OF
NEW DORMER WINDOW TO FRONT ROOF SLOPE

We have been instructed to make the following planning application on behalf of our client, TE Station Road Ltd in relation to a property known as 1 Station Road/22 Friar Street ("the Site"), for the installation of additional windows in the rear elevation of the existing building and erection of new dormer window in the front roof slope (facing Station Road).

This submission is supported by the documentation below:

The application comprises the following documentation:

- Application Form;
- Site Location Plan (drawing reference GA.1200);
- Existing Basement, Ground, 1st, 2nd & 3rd Floor Plans (drawing reference PL.1300, PL.1301 and PL.1302);
- Proposed Basement, Ground, 1st, 2nd & 3rd Floor Plans (drawing reference PL.1320, PL.1321, PL.1322);
- Existing Elevations (drawing reference PL. 1510);
- Proposed Elevations (drawing reference PL. 1520) and
- The application fee of £407 by way of BACS payment through The Planning Portal.

We also request that the contents of this Supporting Letter are taken into account in the consideration of this application.

The Site

As shown on the accompanying Site Location Plan (drawing reference GA. 1200) the site is 1 Station Road/22 Friar Street and is located in the centre of Reading. It is situated less than 200m south of

Reading Train Station and is on the corner of Station Road where it meets the junction with Friar Street and Queen Victoria Street.

The surrounding area is mixed in character, with drinking establishments, banks, coffee shops, betting shops, hotels and other professional services all within close proximity to the site. There is a vast array of bus routes all within a very short walk of the site, serving routes throughout Reading and beyond.

The Proposal

This application seeks to gain planning permission to insert 6 no. additional in the rear elevation of the Site and a new front dormer facing on to Station Road that would match the existing.

This proposal should be read in connection with the Prior Approval application that we have currently submitted for consideration under application reference no. 191446. This application should not be connected to the other proposal we have submitted for the same application site, which has been submitted at the same time as this application, which is for a rear extension at 2nd and 3rd floor levels.

The proposed windows to the rear would match the existing windows, although would be modernised from the existing specification. The proposed dormer that would face Station Road, would match the existing dormer windows that are currently in this roof slope and those facing Friar Street.

The ground floor will remain in A1 use and there will be no other external alterations to the building.

Planning Considerations

The Proposed Development raises the following in-principle issues:

- Principle of development;
- Impact on the surrounding area;
- Impact on neighbouring occupiers; and
- Impact on future occupiers.

Assessment

Principle of development

The Local Development Plan consists of the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies and Proposals Map; in the area where the application site is located, the Reading Central Area Action Plan is also applicable.

The Site is subject to the following designations:

- Air Quality Management Area;
- Area of Archaeological Potential;
- Central Core;
- Station River Major Opportunity Area;
- Office Core;

- Primary Shopping Area;
- Reading Central Area; and
- Existing Active Frontage.

Having reviewed the relevant policies for the aforementioned policy designations, it is clear that there would be no policy designation at the Site that would not allow the proposal to be approved in principle.

The Core Strategy sets out the housing provision for Reading and also commits the Central Area to 40% of the housing provision as set out in Policy CS14. Furthermore, it is clear from Policy CS15 that there is a desire to direct high quality housing with higher densities to Town Centre locations given its high accessibility. As our proposal will allow for a higher quality of housing through the additional windows, we consider that in principle the proposal accords with policies CS14, CS15 and also CS7 as this requires high quality design which we believe the proposal provides.

The Reading Central Area Action Plan ("RCAAP") highlights that "new development will exhibit an excellent, safe and sustainable quality of design", whilst the majority of the proposal will not be seen it does encourage sustainable quality of design through creating more attractive internal spaces with windows allowing for more natural light. The RCAAP also intends to retain an active frontage for this area of Central Reading, which is something we are keen to retain, and as such the ground floor of the application site will not be touched and as such will remain as A1 use.

Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document safeguards amenity and cares for the provision of windows to habitable rooms, which this proposal allows for. Therefore, in principle, the additional windows will be acceptable.

Therefore, the principle of this kind of development, improving existing flats in the Central Area of Reading, whilst retaining the Ground Floor retail active frontage, is in principle, acceptable and as such if it accords with all other material planning considerations should be approved.

The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are three overarching objectives which are needed to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental. Which are assessed below:

Economic: the proposal will ensure more efficient use of the site and will contribute to the Council's housing supply with higher quality accommodation than that is proposed in the Prior Approval application.

Social: the proposal will create jobs during the construction phase and offer residents choice and competition in terms of new housing being available, particularly in a highly accessible location reducing the reliance on the private car.

Environmental: the proposal for the new dormer window is well-designed and assimilates well with the existing dormer windows, through a sympathetic addition. Furthermore, the proposal will add in new higher efficiency windows, allow for greater insulation in the building for the proposed flats.

Therefore, we believe our proposal can be demonstrated to be sustainable development and accords with the up-to-date development plan as is demonstrated within this supporting letter, the application should be approved without delay in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Impact on the surrounding area

The only element of the proposal that would be seen from public vantage points, would be the dormer window facing Station Road. As this element of the proposal will be constructed to exactly match the existing, it is difficult to see how the proposal would harm the street scene or surrounding area. The new dormer would sit well within the roof of the existing building and would not be an incongruous addition to the street scene.

The windows to the rear will not be seen from Station Road or Friar Street, and will only be seen in limited views from the rear service yard. Therefore, it is not considered that the additional windows to the rear would have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area.

Therefore the proposal complies with Core Strategy Policy CS7.

Impact on neighbouring occupiers

Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document safeguards amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed dormer that faces Station Road would overlook the existing street, with a reasonable separation distance of approximately 20m to the building on the opposite side of Station Road. Currently this is occupied by office space, however if in the future (which we believe to be the case) the proposed window would be separated enough to not harm any future neighbouring occupiers. Furthermore, given the dense urban area, a degree of mutual overlooking is to be expected to an extent.

The windows to the rear will not overlook any neighbouring residential properties, and would only partially impact upon the hotel, but again the separation distances to the hotel windows and the lack of direct overlooking would not harm the amenities of the transient population of the hotel.

Impact on future occupiers

This proposal is for additional windows to flats that will be approved through the above mentioned Prior Approval application (ref. no. 191446) to allow for more natural lighting than what will be approved through the Prior Approval application, and therefore providing far higher quality accommodation.

The result of this application would be that the flats will then have natural light and ventilation, to rooms that through the prior approval application would not have any.

Therefore, as this application will be improving the proposed situation in the Prior Approval application, and all resultant flats will be accord with the relevant standards, we therefore believe that the proposal would have a positive impact on the future occupiers.

Summary

In summary, it is clear from the above evidence and supporting plans, that the proposal is acceptable, and is sustainable development. The proposal will not have an impact on the neighbouring occupiers nor will it have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area.

The amenity of the future occupiers would be enhanced through natural light and ventilation improving upon what is proposed in the Prior Approval application that this application should be read alongside.

Therefore, we expect the proposal will be found to be acceptable and request the Local Planning Authority approve this development.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

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Daniel Hyde
Please respond by e-mail where possible