

## History

This proposed development is related to the old Bakery situated on St John`s Street & connected to 102 Queens Road.

It is proposed to retain the bakery facade and construct 5 x 1 bed, 1 x 2 bed apartments and a 2 bed terrace house on the existing site.



The property comprises of ground and first floors to the south of Queens Road. The building was used as a bakery but at present it is an empty and used as storage.

The site is located in an area of commercial and residential character with a significant amount of residential properties within St Johns Street and Queens Road. Mainly of 2 bed terrace houses along St Johns Street along some purpose built flats in Queens Road.

To the north of the site where Queens Road lies, there are a number of commercial units as well as a public house the Lyndhurst Arms, Dr Bob Khanna Facial Aesthetics, Todays local and Mobalpa Kitchens which contain apartments on the upper floors.

The Forbury retail park is within 10 minute walking distance and Reading Town Centre not too far away and within bus journey, walking or cycling distance .



The designated conservation area is shown in the above map. The application site is in the Eldon Square conservation area. The bakery is hatched green colour in the following map shown within conservation area.

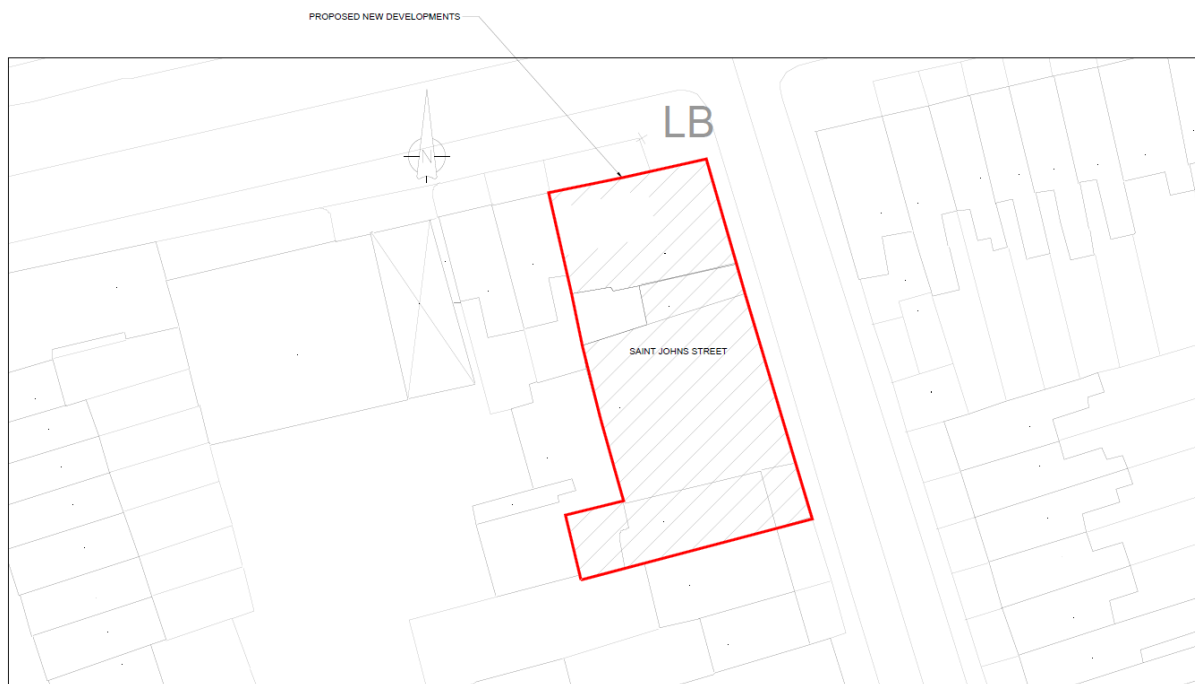
The application site is highly accessible to public transport with bus stops along Queens Road., and proximity to train station.

There is also a cycle route along queen's road towards town centre..

## Planning History

The most relevant planning history for the site is set out in the table below and relates to a granted planning permission which proposed to .....

| Reference Number | Description of Development                                                                             | Decision              |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>030037</u>    | Change of use from bakers shop and 8 rooms dwelling to shop, 2 x 1-bed flats and 1 x 2-bed maisonette. | Application Permitted |
| <u>041060</u>    | Part demolition and subdivision to create 4 flats with retention of shop.                              | Application Permitted |



## 2.1 The site & its surroundings



The site currently incorporates a dilapidated bakery, due to passage of time and lack of use it is considered that, the current building is not safe or viable to retain.

The roof is in part Asbestos cement, part polycarbonate completely degraded, partly exposed to elements and part corrugated metal. Wooden floors / Joists are rotted and similarly the rafters are beyond repairs. Walls have got structural cracks and part of the internal floors and ceiling has collapsed.



The site is surrounded by an assortment of residential buildings whose type and quality varies, with pre-war terrace houses on St John Street, which are traditional terraced houses used mainly by the Huntley and Palmers biscuit factory workers. Within Queens Road there are modern apartments in a linear form along the Road, in one side of the Road whilst considerable original building remain on the opposite side of the Road

The site slopes gently from north to south.

The various Victorian Terraced properties on St John's Street, have both loft and basement floors.

The site is in a predominantly residential location within the Reading town and close to all Local amenities & Public Services.

#### **4.0 Relevant Planning Policy**

The development of the site is proposed in the context of national, regional and local housing and design objectives as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) as well as the Core Strategy Adopted January 2008 with alteration adopted January 2015.

#### **Core Strategy January 2015**

Policy CS1 The refurbishment of the Bakery will take into account site layouts use of energy, water minerals materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

Policy CS2 Waste Minimisation, Development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction use and life of buildings and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate space to facilitate waste storage reuse recycling and composting.

Policy CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development- the scale and density of development within the borough will be related to its level of accessibility by walking cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities. Sites will be assessed in terms of their level of accessibility to a defined district or local centre with a good range of facilities by pedestrian routes and to a bus stop served by a strategic bus service.

Policy CS5 Inclusive Access, All buildings should be located sited and designed to provide suitable access to into and within its facilities for all potential users including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily.

Policy CS7 Design and Public Realm-all development must be of high design quality that maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form including-

- Layout: urban structure and urban grain
- Landscape
- Density and mix
- Scale height and massing and
- Architectural detail and materials

Policy CS15 Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix

The appropriate density and mix of residential development within the Borough will be informed by

- An assessment of the characteristics including the mix uses of the area in which it is located;
- Its current and future level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport as defined in Policy CS4
- The need to achieve high quality design in accordance with Policy CS7 and
- The need to minimise environmental impacts including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

Policy CS18 Residential Conversions –proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on site car parking and the treatment of bin storages.

Policy CS22 Transport Assessments planning permission will not be granted unless development proposals make appropriate provision for works and contributions to ensure an adequate level of accessibility and safety by all modes of transport from all parts of a development particularly by public transport walking cycling .

## The Scale

The scale of the buildings is in keeping with the adjacent properties and sits within the Street scene .Front Façade will remain mainly unchanged.



The existing building occupies the North West side of the site along St John Street, with the rest of the Site on Queens Road.

The main frontage of the site is on St John Street and consists of the Terrace housing, beginning at the boundary wall of the bakery to the South west of the site,

The entrance to the building is on St John Street with a single door in the middle of the building, for apartments. From pre-planning discussions with local authority, it was agreed to keep the front façade of the former bakery unchanged where possible. It is proposed to create a three storey residential development on the main part of the building, with a proposed house joining the adjacent terrace property.

There are two sets of double doors on the building that were previously used as entrance doors for the delivery of flour to the bakery, for this proposal they will be replaced with timber laminated doors and will be insulated and blocked up with thermalite block work wall behind the doors to create the residential spaces within the development.

The proposed scheme would not result in the loss of any residential floor space and would make a more efficient use of the building to boost housing supply within the Reading Borough as it is demonstrated in the planning policies.

## **Design**

### **Use:**

The proposal is to construct a mix of apartments within the dis- used bakery and a 2 storey house upon the rest of the site which is appropriate to the mix of property types within the residential area, sympathising with the surrounding Architectural Character of the area.

### **Amount:**

The bakery is to contain 5 x1 beds and 1x 2 bed apartments within the three storey section. With a two bed house within the two story element, joining the adjacent terrace property.

### **Layout:**

The proposals are accompanied by a comprehensive set of existing and proposed drawings which outline the proposed conversion.

The existing ground floor double doors and windows along St Johns Street will be retained, with doors and windows replaced with modern double glazed timber windows. And existing doors replaced with conservative timber doors.

The living area of the ground floor apartments looks over the rear garden & is private, similar to existing properties within St Johns Street.

There is landscaping to the front of the two storey house element contained within the present bin storage area to the south. The existing access is at the front of Queens Road, where access to the Queens Road flats is.

Access to the proposed apartments will come from the front of St John Street by a single access door with a staircase to get to the first and second floor.

There is no parking within the front of St Johns Street bakery but an additional two spaces will be provided.

The scheme would provide an additional 7 no unit's all of which have been designed to meet the space standards set out by Government guide lines to ensure the new residential units offer a good standard of accommodation to future occupiers.

The existing building does not have access to private outdoor amenity space. However the proposal will have rear amenity space for the ground floor apartments. The site is within walking distance of publically accessible facilities such as Eldon Square which is 5 minutes from the proposed development.

The scheme does not include any major external alterations to the existing building and therefore would preserve the character and appearance of the Eldon square Conservation Area.

It is considered therefore that the scheme represents an entirely appropriate form of development in this area, which wholly respects the residential use of neighbouring buildings whilst providing a good standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

With granting planning permission an existing brown field site will be coming into housing use, as encouraged by local and national government.

### **Accessibility Parking and Servicing**

Alternatives to car use set out by Reading Borough Council will ensure that there are better alternatives to car use by making it easier and more attractive to walk, cycle and use public transport ,by managing traffic congestion and the supply of car parking.

The site is located within close proximity to a variety of public transport options and has high public transport accessibility with excellent links.

The proposed dwellings would not create extra demand for parking

Waste and recycling storage would be provided within the kitchens and the proposed bin storage will be to the side of the bakery between the bakery and office unit .

By allowing the planning permission, it will add additional two off road parking spaces by the need for access to the current un-used loading bays being removed.

### **Access**

Access to the site and the residential units within the building will have a new access point along St Johns Street as the existing entrance points will be retained in form but not function.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion it is considered that the application scheme fully accords with the latest national planning policy objectives with the NPPF, as well as those at a local level which support the delivery of housing and the proposed development will make efficient and positive use of an underutilised site within the borough.

The form of the proposal respects the building and its setting as well as the built form of the adjoining properties, and take its cues and references from the traditional vernacular of the area. The proposals include the renovation of the existing building; with the old bakery converted to accommodate apartments. The rest of the site is to contain a terrace house. Amenity area is created to rear of the development, with the relevant landscaping.

The proposed residential properties will provide a good standard of residential accommodation for future occupiers in close proximity to good public transport facilities, local services as well as jobs in Reading town centre.

Based upon the planning assessment justification case presented in support of the scheme, the applicant is seeking support for the conversion of this underutilised site to provide six apartments and a house. With the approval of this planning application and completion massive improvements are achieved for the street scene as desired by local residents.

## **Contributions**

The applicant is willing to enter into a 106 legal agreement & pay the Council's reasonable Fees.