

**APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISISON AND
LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE ERECTION
OF TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION TO FORM
ADDITIONAL LIVING AREA AND BEDROOM**

26-28 SOUTHAMPTON STREET, READING, RG1 2QL

ON BEHALF OF HURST GROVE ESTATES LTD

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

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PLANNING | **DESIGN** | **ENVIRONMENT** | **ECONOMICS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of an application for full planning permission and listed building consent for the erection of a two storey rear extension at 26-28 Southampton Street to create an additional bedroom and living area. The site is currently subject to applications for planning permission and listed building consent for an office to residential change of use at this same address to form 2no. one bedroom and 1no. two bedroom units and associated works (application references 181908 and 181909), and this latest application should be considered in the context of this application.
- 1.2 The property is a Grade II Listed Building, and was fully altered and refurbished in the early 1980s at the same time as the neighbouring property to the west of St Giles Court was built. The work involved the demolition of various extensions and structures to the rear of the application property and alterations to the rear doors and fenestration.
- 1.3 This statement will provide the necessary information to enable assessment of the application and determination by officers at the Council alongside other information submitted. This statement is set out in the following structure:
- Planning history of the site
 - Site description
 - Overview of proposed development
 - Planning policy context and assessment against relevant policies
 - Concluding remarks
- 1.4 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the following plans and reports:
- Location Plan
 - Existing and Proposed Block Plan
 - Proposed Site Plan

- Existing Plans and Elevations
- Proposed Plans and Elevations
- Existing and Proposed 3D Images
- CIL additional information form
- Heritage Impact Assessment (The Historic Environment Consultancy, 18/10/19)
- Bat Scoping Report (The Ecology Co-Op, 11/6/19)

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 87/TP/340 – Alterations and refurbishment for continued office use. Permitted
- 2.2 120352 – Change of use of premises to either office (B1) or chiropractor's surgery (D1) was approved in May 2012.
- 2.3 160318 – Use of suite 1 as either office (B1) or Chiropractor's Surgery (D1) was approved in May 2016.
- 2.4 181909 – change of use from a B1a to residential in the form of 2 x 1-bed and 1 x 2-bed, and associated works. The application was validated in November 2018. Consultee comments have been received from Highways, Thames Water, the Canal and River Trust and Natural Environment, with no objections raised. This application is accompanied by application 181908 for listed building consent.
- 2.5 It is noted that an application has recently been submitted in respect of the adjoining site to the south for the erection of a new residential building (reference 190417). This application has not yet been determined and it is our understanding from discussions with the Planning Case Officer that it is likely that the application will be withdrawn.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site is approximately 0.03 ha in area, and compromises of a part two-part office building referred to as '26-28 Southampton Street.' The buildings were two former cottages, both Grade II listed buildings. No. 28 is an early 20th Century structure built to appear as a 17th Century cottage, while No. 26 dates from the early 19th Century.
- 3.2 The site fronts directly onto Southampton Street (A327) to the East, with vehicular access to the rear car park provided by Mundesley Street. Soft landscaping features are also present to the front and towards the western boundary of the site, including a low hedge, grass and trees.
- 3.3 Beyond the site boundaries, to the south west lies St Giles Court a part three part two storey series of residential blocks, containing self-contained flats which have been recently converted from B1a offices. Directly to the south there is a vacant piece of land incorporating advertising signs, which is the land recently subject to application 190417. Beyond the vacant plot lies the Former Red Lion public house, which was a recent approval for a four-storey flatted scheme (172328). To the north is the Oracle Shopping Centre, and the River Kennet canal
- 3.4 The site lies with Reading's 'Town Centre,' as defined on the proposals map in the Adopted Local Plan. The Oracle Shopping Centre is less than a 3-minute walk from the site. Reading Train Station is less than 15 minutes' walk from the site, with a frequent service to London Paddington. The adjacent A329 feeds into the A33 (arterial road) provides accessible vehicular access to Reading Town Centre and Caversham to the north and the M4 to the south.

4. OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The application proposes an extension to a site that was previous subject to an application for the change the use of the building from office to residential. The change of use was to form a one bedroom flat (Flat 1), a two bedroom flat (Flat 2) and a one bedroom house (House 1). The extension would provide an additional bedroom and living area to the house, forming a two bedroom dwelling.
- 4.2 The extension would project 6m to the rear of the existing building with a width of 4.5m and a maximum height of 6.5m. An outdoor amenity area for House 1 would be maintained to the rear of the extension, with a communal outdoor area for both Flats 1 and 2 provided to the rear of the building. A separate amenity area for Flat 2 would be provided at the front, adjacent to the entrance for that flat.
- 4.3 Vehicular access to the site will remain as existing and three parking spaces to are proposed to the rear, accessed from Mundesley Street. Secure cycle storage would be provided for each unit. Bin storage for the house would be provided to the side of the extension, with communal bin storage for the flats provided adjacent to the communal area.

5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND ASSESSMENT AGAINST RELEVANT POLICIES

5.1 The development plan for Reading Borough Council comprises of:

- Core Strategy (2008)
- Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009)
- Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)

5.2 Several material considerations should also be taken into account when determining planning applications in Reading:

- The NPPF (2019)
- The Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan
- Any Supplementary Planning Guidance

Principle of Development

5.3 The site is located within the settlement boundary and as such accords with Core Strategy Policy CS6 (Settlement Boundary). However as the site is located within the Reading Central Area and as such the Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) is relevant to the proposal. Policy RC5 (Design in the Centre) provides guidance to identify the need to integrate built form and layout with the surrounding urban grain and identify means to engage and enhance the public realm.

5.4 Policy RC6 (Definition of the centre) identifies an urban hierarchy within which development is directed. Retail development is directed to the Primary Shopping Area, and major office development to the Office Core. RC6 states '*Other main town centre uses will take place in the Central Core, as defined on the Proposals Map.*' The site is located outside of the Primary Shopping Area, the Office Core and the Central Core.

5.5 The application proposes the extension of residential property located within the settlement boundary which would be appropriate development in this location and not contrary to any of the relevant policies within the Reading Centre Area Action Plan. As such the principle of the development is considered acceptable subject to

consideration of detailed design issues which will be commented on in following sections.

Design and Character

- 5.6 Core Strategy Policy CS7 states that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.
- 5.7 The extension would be located to the rear of the existing building and as such would not be a prominent feature in the streetscene. It would therefore not have a significant impact on the character of the area. In terms of its design, the extension would follow the pitched roof design of No.28 Southampton Street which reduces its overall scale and mass. The materials to be used would match those used on the existing building. As such the proposed extension would be in keeping with the design and appearance of the existing buildings.
- 5.8 The maximum height of the extension would be 0.8m lower than the building it would extend off and 2.3m lower than the highest building on site at No.26. The extension would therefore appear subordinate to the existing building.
- 5.9 The rear of the site is a hardstanding parking area as existing, therefore no features of the site that are worthy of retention would be lost. The use of this area for parking and ancillary residential amenity areas would not be out of keeping with the character of the site.
- 5.10 The extension would be of a high quality design that would incorporate features of the existing building and would not result in an overly prominent addition to the site. As such it would maintain and enhance the character of the area of Reading in which it is located, and would not be contrary to Policy CS7,

Heritage

- 5.11 Core Strategy Policy CS33 protects historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings. This includes both listed buildings and conservation areas. Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings.

- 5.12 Full details of the heritage impact of the proposals are contained within the accompanying Heritage Statement.
- 5.13 Although no planning history is available online, the element to the side that the extension would project off is a 20th Century addition to the property. As such no original brickwork is required to be removed to accommodate the proposals. Furthermore, internal access into the extension will be located in place of existing window openings, thereby minimising the loss of 20th Century brickwork.
- 5.14 The extension would appear subordinate to the existing building, with a similar design and using materials that would match. As it would be located to the rear it would impact on views of the historic façade which are gained from the front. It is therefore not considered that the development would not result in an adverse impact on the heritage asset or its setting.

Residential Amenity

- 5.15 Policy DM4 of the SADPD states that development will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties in terms of privacy and overlooking, access to daylight and sunlight, and visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development.
- 5.16 The land bordering the site to the south is vacant, therefore the nearest neighbouring buildings to the extension are St Giles Court to the west and the former Red Lion public house to the south. The elevation of St Giles Court which faces the application site does not contain any habitable windows that would be affected by the proposals. The border with the Red Lion site is over 13m from the application site, and due to this separation it is not considered that an extension would result in an unacceptable impact on that property.
- 5.17 The extension would be visible from the rear facing ground floor and first floor windows of Flat 1 and Flat 2 which would both serve bedrooms. In accordance with BRE standards, although a 45 degree line drawn on the horizontal plane from the midpoint of these windows would intersect the extension, a 45 degree line drawn on the vertical plane from the point of intersection towards the windows would not overshadow more than 50% of either window. As such the development would not result in a loss of light to these units. The development would also maintain a suitable level of amenity to the outdoor amenity areas.

- 5.18 Although the recent application at the neighbouring site is noted, this does not have planning permission and there is no indication on the Council's website that approval of the application will be forthcoming. It is our understanding that the application is likely to be withdrawn. As such the impact on this potential development should not be given any weight in the assessment of these proposals.
- 5.19 The development would therefore maintain an acceptable level of amenity for existing and future occupiers. The proposals would therefore comply with Policy DM4.

Private and Communal Outdoor Space

- 5.20 SADPD Policy DM10 requires dwellings to be provided with functional private or communal open space. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space.
- 5.21 The site is located within the Reading Central Area, and Policy DM10 sets out that flats in central Reading will not require the same amount of outdoor space as houses in other parts of Reading, and the sites are usually more constrained in any case. This is because often the needs of residents within central Reading can be different to those of the rest of the Borough. Flats in central Reading are less likely to attract families, and the ability to walk to public open space reduces the need for private open space.
- 5.22 Notwithstanding that, although the proposal would reduce the amount of amenity space available for House 1, the site as a whole would provide approximately 97m² of amenity space for the three units. The proposed scheme is therefore policy compliant in its provision of outdoor amenity space. In addition to the on-site provision future occupiers will have access to local public outdoor amenity spaces, including the River Kennet canal path.

Transport and Accessibility

- 5.23 Core Strategy Policy CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development) states that 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 CS22 indicates that development proposals shall ensure an adequate level of accessibility by all modes of transport, particularly public transport, walking and cycling.

- 5.24 The site is in a highly sustainable location close to Reading Town Centre and therefore benefits from access to services, amenities and public transport. There are a number of shops in the immediate locale including The Oracle shopping centre and additional services in the town centre are also easily accessible by pedestrians.
- 5.25 The site has excellent public transport links with strategic bus routes running along Southampton Street. Reading Railway Station is within reasonable walking distance, approximately 0.8km to the north of the site. The proposed redevelopment of this site is therefore consistent with Core Strategy Policy CS4.

Parking

- 5.26 Policy CS24 states that car parking standards and cycle parking requirements will be applied in relation to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport
- 5.27 The adopted parking standards are set out in the "Revised Parking Standards and Design" (SPD), which was adopted in October 2011. RBC operate a zonal system when determining the level of parking a site is required to provide. The application site is within Zone 2, where the required parking standards for 1 or 2 bed dwellings is 1 space per unit. The SPD also requires cycle Parking to be provided at a minimum ratio of 0.5 spaces per dwelling for 1 or 2 bed dwellings.
- 5.28 Although the number of bedrooms in House 1 would be increased as a result of the proposals, the parking standards for one and two bedroom dwellings in Zone 2 are no different. The development would maintain an acceptable level of parking for the whole development, cvompliant with the level of parking required by the parking standards. Cycle parking would be provided for all three units. The development therefore complies with the requirements of Policy CS24.

Trees/Landscaping

- 5.29 Core Strategy Policy CS38 outlines that trees, hedges and woodlands should be protected from damage or removal.
- 5.30 The site contains a significant tree to the front which would not be affected by the rear extension. The land to the rear where the extension would be sited is a parking area as existing and as such would not affect the primary rooting areas of trees on the adjacent land to the south. In any case none of the surrounding trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- 5.31 As such the development would not be contrary to Policy CS38.

Ecology

- 5.32 Core Strategy Policy CS36 states that development should retain and protect important features of biodiversity found within the application site. The application is accompanied by a Bat Scoping Report which demonstrates compliance with Policy CS36.

Air Quality

- 5.33 The site is located within an Air Quality Management Area. Policy DM19 states that development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality. Development that would detrimentally affect air quality will not be permitted unless the effect is to be mitigated.
- 5.34 The previous change of use application was accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment which set out that no increase in transport related emissions was expected as a result of the proposals, given that no change in traffic generation is expected. As such no mitigation was required. The additional of one bedroom through the extension would not alter this previous assessment, therefore the development would not be contrary to Policy DM19.

Noise and Acoustics

- 5.35 Policy DM4 of the SADPD states that development will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties in terms of noise and disturbance or vibration.

- 5.36 The acceptability of the site for residential use was assessed under the previous application, and the addition of an extension would not add to noise disturbance in the area. The development would not be contrary to Policy DM4.

Flood Risk

- 5.37 Core Strategy Policy CS35 (Flooding) states that planning permission will not be permitted for development in an area identified as being at high risk for flooding, nor shall development be allowed to increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 5.38 The site is on the edge of Flood Zone 2. The previous change of use application was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment, which concluded that a residential use would be appropriate in this location.
- 5.39 The extension would be to the rear of the property over an existing area of hardstanding. As such it is not considered that it would result in any additional flood risk. An extension of the size proposed to an existing property is considered to be 'minor development', and as set out in the guidance such developments are unlikely to raise any significant flood risk issues unless they would have an adverse effect on a watercourse, floodplain or its flood defences, they would impede access to flood defence and management facilities or where the cumulative impact of such developments would have a significant effect on local flood storage capacity or flood flows. As this would not be the case, the development would not be contrary to national guidance or Policy CS35.

Waste

- 5.40 SADPD Policy DM10 requires dwellings to be provided with refuse storage within outdoor amenity space.
- 5.41 Separate refuse storage areas will be provided for both the dwelling and the flats as depicted on the submitted site plan. For the dwelling this would be located adjacent to the extension, and for the flats the storage would be within the communal area to the rear. This is sufficient to comply with the requirements of Policy DM10.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed development would not result in an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area or the amenities of current or future occupiers. It would not result in an adverse impact on the existing heritage asset, highway safety or flood risk.
- 6.2 The development would therefore comply with the relevant development plan policy. As such it is respectfully requested that permission for the development be granted.