

14A / 14B South Street, Caversham, RG4 8HY

Context:

1. In August 2009 a planning application (Ref: 09/0981) was made to Reading Borough Council (RBC) for the conversion of a 4-bedroom property (14 South Street) to provide two 2-bedroom units. As part of the planning permission that was granted on 18th December 2009 a condition was imposed to remove the right for residents to apply for a parking permit with the following wording:
2. **Condition 4 - "The occupiers of the residential units may not be entitled to an on-street car parking permit in the interests of the proper management of parking, and to ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area in accordance with adopted RBLP policy TRN12. The site is located close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads. The parking permit conditions above place a requirement that the Council be notified of postal addresses of the residential units before occupation and that the occupiers / transferees to be informed of the prohibition on entitlement to a car parking permit"**
3. This application seeks the removal or variation of Condition 4 that was imposed on the two properties. The justification for the removal / variation of the Condition is outlined below. The location of the two properties is shown below in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1- Location Plan

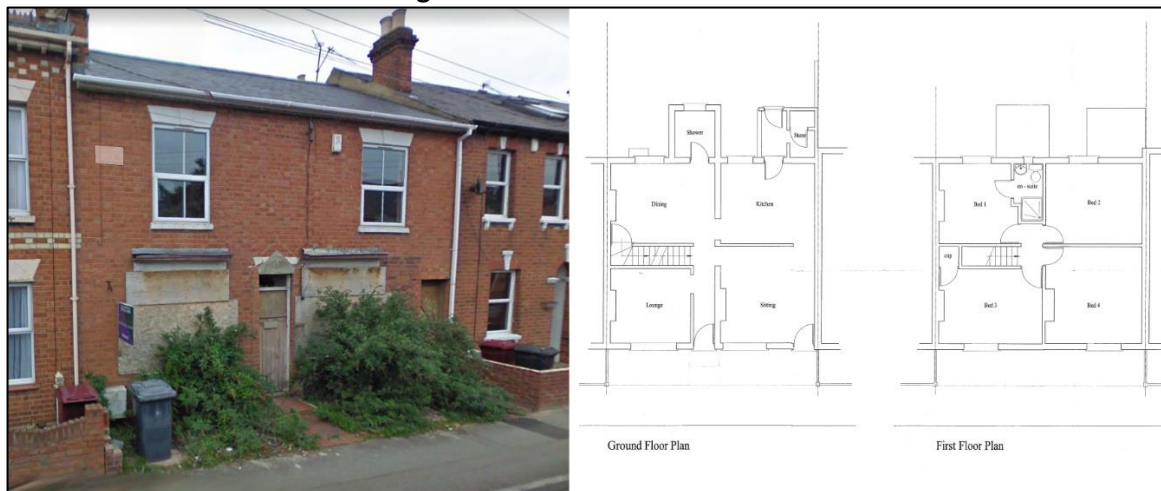


Information:

4. The Condition imposed was due to the property being sub-divided in two 2-bedroom houses. It is considered that the property was originally two 2-bedroom properties with the front doors always

remaining (as shown below in **Figure 2**). Therefore, the sub-division brought the properties back to their original state.

Figure 2- Previous Site Plans



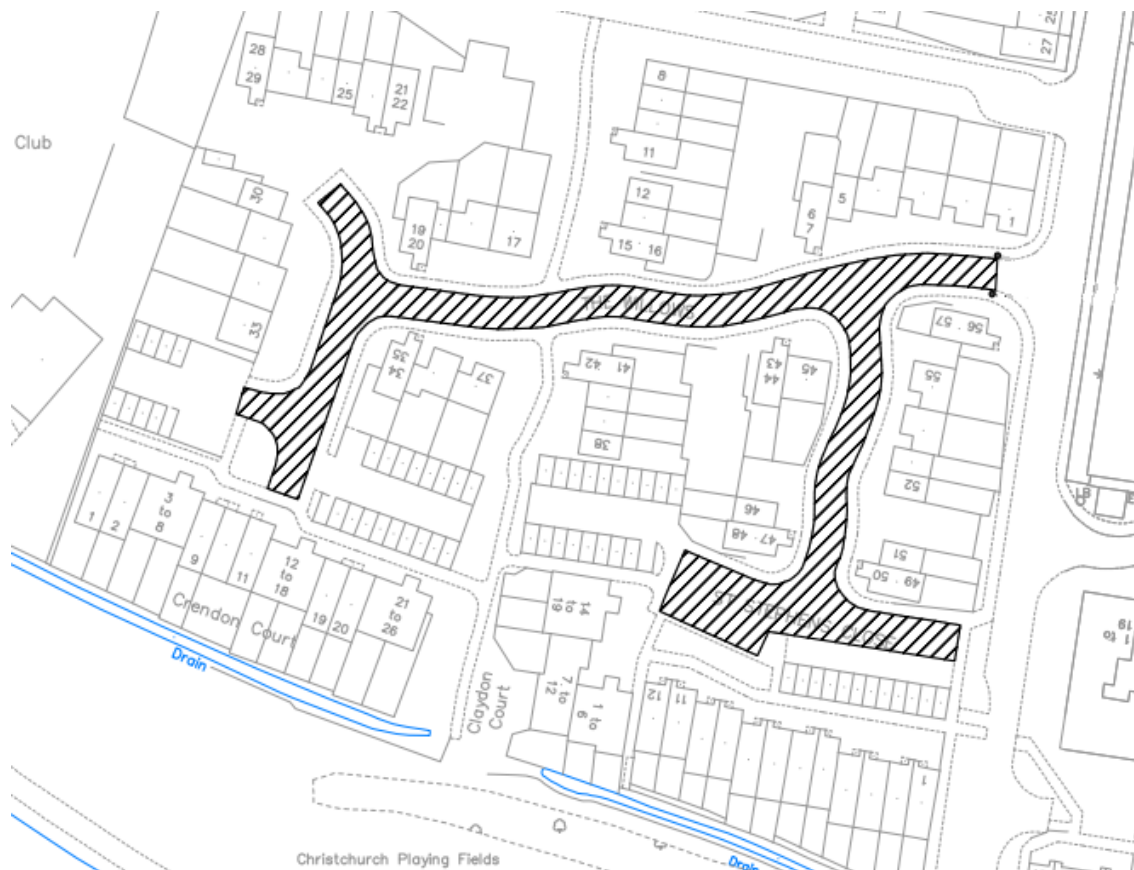
5. It is of note that nearly all of the properties on South Street in Caversham are two bedroom dwellings and therefore the conversion of the existing large 4-bedroom dwelling to create two much smaller 2-bedroom dwellings meant that the property was more in-keeping with neighbouring properties on South Street. All of the properties on South Street are entitled to a parking permit with the exception of the two properties in question.
6. It is of note that RBC parking standards for Zone 2 state that a 2-bedroom house requires one parking space and a 4-bedroom house requires two parking spaces. As such it is evident that RBC themselves accept that a 4-bedroom house is likely to require twice the amount of parking than a 2-bedroom house would require, and therefore the subdivision in to two 2-bedroom properties would result in the same parking demand as one 4-bedroom house.
7. It is acknowledged in the original planning response that the properties are located in an accessible location **“close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads”**.
8. However, the parking standards for RBC class the area as Zone 2 (with Zone 1 being the most accessible areas where car free development could be supported) and therefore Zone 2 recommends 1 space per 2-bedroom unit. These parking standards take into consideration the accessibility of an area and it is of note that in less accessible locations such as Zone 3 or Zone 4 the same properties would require 1.5 or 2 spaces per dwelling respectively. Whilst no off-street parking is provided at the properties the requirement for one space per property in this area is clearly outlined by RBC. Due to the terrace nature of the properties, this parking would have to be on-street, as is the case for the neighbouring properties.
9. South Street is located within RBC Controlled Parking Zone 01R which restricts parking to **“Permit Holders Only”** at all times. Zone 01R is outlined below in **Figure 3**. All residents are entitled to up to two permits with the first permit at a cost of £30 per annum and the second permit, at a cost of £120.

Figure 3- Zone 01R Controlled Parking Zone



10. The RBC parking standards state **“Conversion of an existing residential dwelling to multiple dwellings or redevelopment of a dwelling and creation of multiple units will not entitle the additional dwellings or units to additional parking permits.”**
11. The previous 4-bedroom property was entitled to two parking permits and therefore the conversion to two houses should still enable the properties to have up to two permits between them. The original application at the site, was for the creation of flats rather than 2 two-bed houses, and it is of note that some of the documentation submitted with the planning application still referred to flats and not houses. As such it is considered that this permit condition may have been placed on the properties by accident, due to a lack of care and consideration by the previous applicant.
12. South Street provides a total of 19 on-street parking bays on the northern side of the carriageway. Zone 01R in total provides 593 on-street parking spaces (Based on the RBC Annual Report 2017/18). A total of 611 permits are issued for Zone 01R of which 586 are resident permits, 9 discretionary resident permits, 3 business permits and 12 carer permits. The recent conversion (May 2019) of The Willows and St Stephens Close to resident permit holder only parking spaces will enable circa 36 additional permit parking bays to be added to Zone 01R, therefore increasing the parking capacity to circa 629 spaces. The Willows and St Stephens Close parking zone is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4- The Willows Parking Permit Zone



13. The vast majority of properties in The Willows and St Stephens Close have driveways or private resident parking spaces in parking courtyards and therefore the on-street bays will likely be used primarily for visitors and therefore the on-street parking capacity within Zone 01R will likely increase substantially. Furthermore, the conversion to permit bays will help to prevent the road being used for commuters to park.
14. However, this is one of the only viable places for residents of 14A / 14B South Street to park and therefore the exemption on these properties from applying for a permit means that both properties have to park a long way from their properties.
15. A number of the routes to areas where permit free on-street parking is provided are poorly lit and are not attractive routes for pedestrians after dark. This is evident when one of the residents of the properties in question was mugged on their way to the property from permit free parking spaces on South View Avenue (Crime Reference Number: 43SW0386817).
16. As a result of this Reading Borough Council issued the property with a temporary parking permit in order for them to park within the Zone 01R CPZ whilst they applied for the parking permit restriction at the property to be removed. See **Figure 5** for image of the temporary parking permit.

Figure 5- Temporary Parking Permit Issued



17. Due to the costs of the planning application, at the time the decision was taken not to apply for the permit restriction to be removed and instead the resident choose to park in The Willows once the temporary parking permit ran out. However, given that the parking restrictions have now been introduced at The Willows the decision has been made to now apply for this restriction to be removed.
18. It is of note however, that during the time in which the resident was able to park within Zone 01R, they were at all times able to find an available space. As such it is evident that there is reserve parking capacity within the area.
19. Further to this, it is of note that the previous occupants of 14B South Street (prior to February 2017) were always entitled to a parking permit despite the restriction on the property. It was not until the new occupant moved in that RBC realised that there was a restriction and prohibited the resident from applying for a permit.

Summary:

20. This application seeks the removal of the Condition 4 which exempts 14A / 14B South Street from applying for an on-street resident parking permit in Zone 01R. This will ensure that both properties can park safely and conveniently within close proximity to their homes.
21. Alternatively, if RBC do not consider this a suitable option then an alternative option would be to enable both properties to apply for up to one permit, but prevent them from applying for a second permit. This would limit the number of available permits for the two properties combined to two permits; which would be the same amount as the previous 4-bedroom property was permitted to apply for.