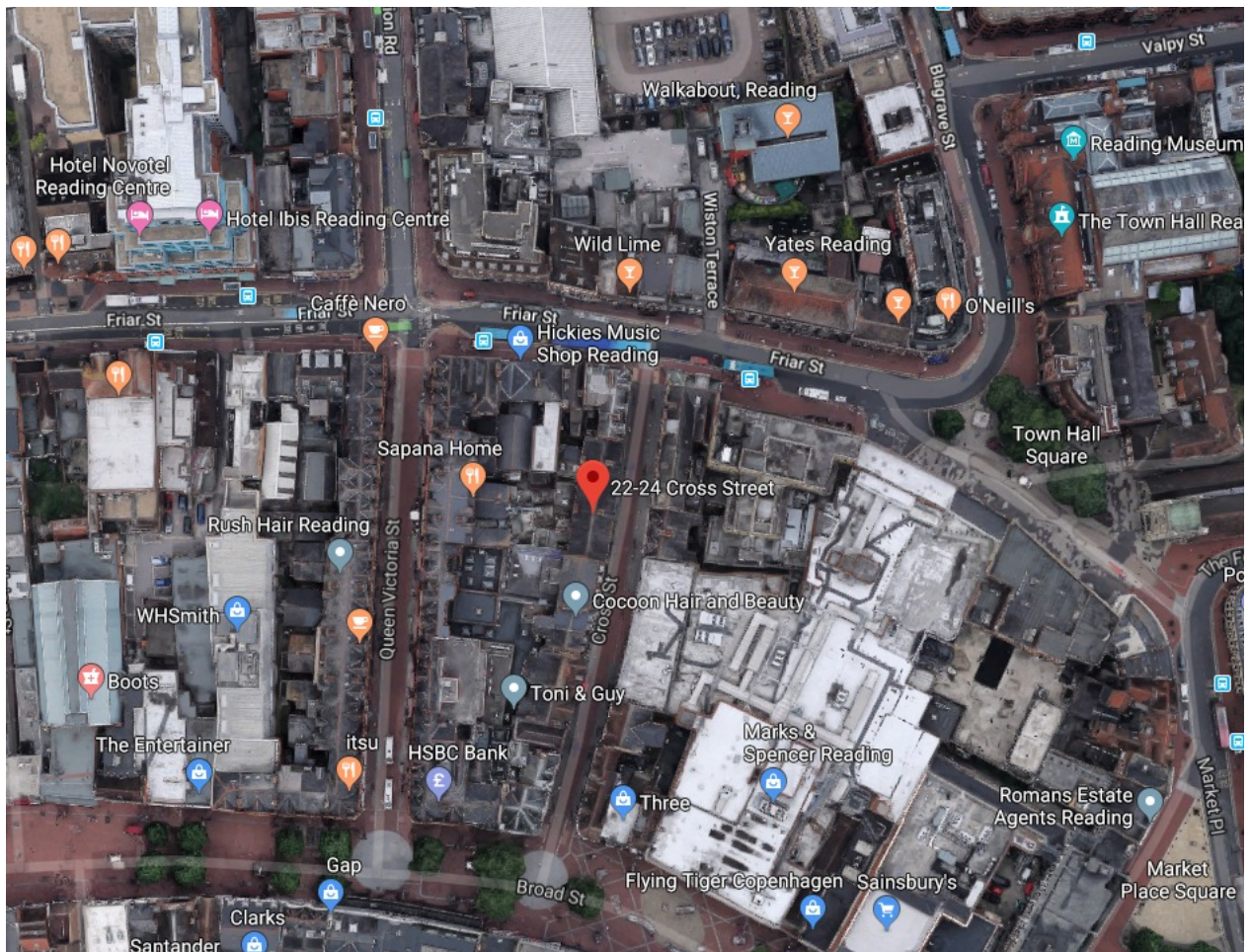


Proposed Fourth Floor Apartments Development

22 - 24 Cross Street

Reading

DESIGN, ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENTS



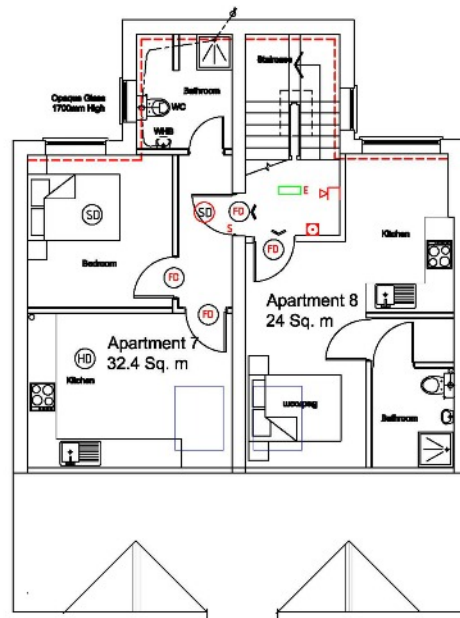
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The application relates to a fourth floor apartments above the existing Third floor apartments. These proposed two apartments will be in the loft space and the sizes will be smaller than the existing flats on the first, second and third floors. The proposed apartments will be above No 22 - 24 Cross Street which connects between Broad Street and Friar Street in Reading City Centre.

2. THE PROPOSALS

- 2.1. The application relates to the erection of two apartments in the Dormer Level / Fourth Floor level above the existing apartments on the first, second and third floors. This proposal has already started on site.
- 2.2. The Proposed flats will have a different size. Apartment 7 will be 32.4 Sq.m and Apartment 8 will be 24 Sq. M.



Proposed Fourth Floor / Dormer Level

3. DESIGN

- 3.1. The application relates to the erection of two apartments in the Dormer Level / Fourth Floor level above the existing apartments third floors. This will be through extending the stair and creating a new floor in the dormer space. The proposed flats will not be apparent from the front elevation apart from the two velux windows in the existing roof. At the rear the roof will be extended by a dormer style roof that will have external covering of hang tile to be sympathetic to the existing roofing tiles in the area.
- 3.2. The Proposed flats will be smaller in size where Apartment 7 will be 32.4 Sq.m and Apartment 8 will be 24 Sq. M. Compared to the flats below which are 36.7 Sq. M and 44.6 Sq. M. respectively.

4.0 ACCESS

4.1. The access to the proposed fourth floor apartments is through an extension of the stair that connects all the floors from the basement at the rear of the building. The stair is designed to be ambulant friendly and has all the necessary side supports and proper lighting to make it easy for residents to use at all times. The lighting has an automatic motion sensor that is active in low light conditions. Cross Street is part of a pedestrian scheme and the road is block paved and is of a good condition footpaths are concrete slab paved and both surfaces will be equally good for all road users including the disabled. The entrance to all the apartments is on the ground floor through a common entrance between the two shops.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2. The Development Plan comprises the Reading Borough Local Development [Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) to 2026] adopted January 2009. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (The Framework) is a material consideration. ***National Planning Policy Framework (2012)***

5.3. The Framework explains that at its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It expects local planning authorities to approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of such sustainable development, and should look for solutions rather than problems working proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

5.4. The Framework explains that delivering sustainable development means:

- building a strong, competitive economy;
- ensuring the vitality of town centres;
- supporting a prosperous rural economy;
- promoting sustainable transport;
- supporting high quality communications infrastructure;
- delivering a wide choice of high quality homes;
- requiring good design;
- promoting healthy communities;
- protecting green belt land;
- meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;
- conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
- conserving and enhancing the historic environment; and
- facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.

- 5.5. It sets out three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and these dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles under each dimension. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
- 5.6. In relation to new housing the Framework expects local planning authorities to boost significantly the supply of housing, require high standards of design, whilst also conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environments.

Development Plan

- 5.8. Part of the vision for the RCAAP is to achieve a distinctive high quality environment, by balancing protection of the historic core, special character and market town intimacy of Reading with modern, intensive, well designed, well connected, highly accessible urban development with first class open spaces and other public realm that will transform Reading into a modern and exciting 21st Century City.
- 5.9. In the RCAAP under RC9 : Living in the Centre it states that new residential development within the central area will be required to demonstrate how the issue of potential noise disturbance from neighbouring land uses and other sources, and air quality implications of residential development, have been considered and if necessary, mitigated. New residential development should not be located next to existing town centre uses where those uses would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance to the occupiers of the new scheme, unless this can be mitigated.

6. MERITS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Housing Supply & Distribution

- 6.1. The current development supports principles in the RCAAP and also the increase of the housing supply for Reading City.
- 6.3. This accords with national policy which seeks to boost the supply of housing to meet the needs of local communities and the various sectors of the housing market. Planning authorities should significantly boost the supply of housing, that are material considerations of significant weight in determining this housing proposal.
- 6.4 This proposal will go towards meeting the area's housing need and is a sustainable development for which there is a presumption in its favour, for the following reasons (with reference to the policies within the Framework and RCAAP):

Sustainability

6.5 This urban area is described in the Local Plan's Settlement Hierarchy as providing the greatest accessibility to key services and amenities and has historically delivered the greatest number of new homes and commercial services. It further states that future development would involve brownfield sites, including adjacent to and beyond the settlement edge. Such development is regarded as sustainable where access to services and amenities is good or can be provided.

6.6 This application site's location and sustainability credentials chime with this strategic Local Plan policy and with the Framework's emphasis on sustainable development.

6.7 The Design will incorporate energy efficiency / carbon reduction measures that will be taken to ensure that the proposed new flats comply with key performance criteria such as insulation, sound insulation, air permeability and water usage.

The new kitchens will be fitted with energy efficient white goods to include A+ graded EU

Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme for fridges and freezers and A graded EU EELS for

and the Materials are to be bought locally wherever possible to lower the embodied energy of the build. Materials, such as timber will also be bought from sustainable manufacturers.

Sustainability – the Economic, Social & Environmental Aspects

6.8 The Framework advises that sustainable development has three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

6.7 Economic - The development will directly either provide or secure jobs during the construction period. The development will also involve expenditure in the local economy through the local supply chain. Thereafter, new residents will use easily accessible services and facilities also involving activity in the local economy. This will help sustain those services and facilities thereby helping to support the local economy, and maintain the sustainability of the City Centre.

6.8 Furthermore, a mix of quality flats will assist with the economic aspirations of the area. In accessibility terms the site is well placed for travel to both Railway and Bus Stations. Public transport to other parts of the city and beyond is also available from the above stations allowing new residents' sustainable modes of access to employment, shops and other facilities thereby helping the wider economy.

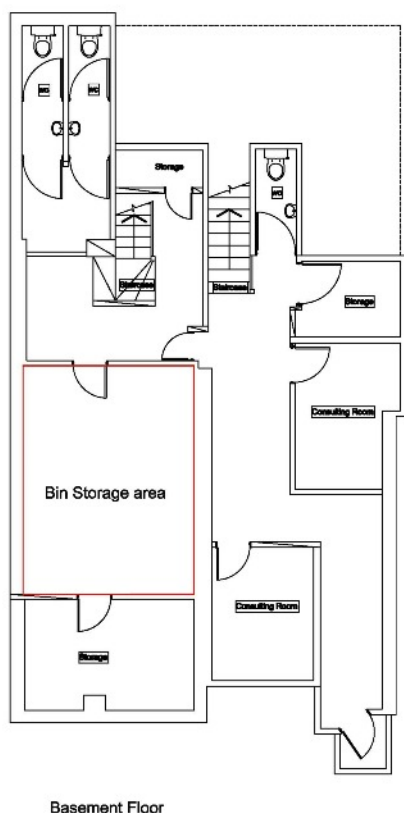
6.9 Social – The Framework's and the Local Plan's ambitions to boost the supply of housing will be met by the granting of permission for the flats on this site.

7.0 AFFORDABLE HOUSING STATEMENT

The proposal is for a net gain of two residential dwellings by way of extension to an existing building and is therefore subject to an affordable housing contribution in accordance with Policy DM6. This development requires an agreement for a contribution. As a scheme for a net gain of 2 units this would equate to 5% of the total gross development value of the dwellings. We will provide 2 independent valuations of the proposed development during the course of the application so that this contribution can be calculated. The contribution would be secured by way of a section 106 legal agreement.

8.0 WASTE COLLECTION

- 8.1 A fixed waste bin for recyclable will be provided within the kitchen of each flat totalling 30 litres in storage and each flat will also have a general waste bin in a shared refuge storage in the bin storage in the basement. Each flat will have its own bin.
- 8.2 It is understood that in Cross Street have waste collected from the street deposited in bags on a weekly basis. The existing residents place their bags on the appropriate collection day and the residents in the proposed flats will do the same.
- 8.3 A management company will be responsible for the general cleaning of the bin storage area on a weekly basis and any rubbish not in bags will be bagged and put on the street on the appropriate collection day.



9 Conclusion

9.1 This proposal should be considered against the Local Plan that are consistent with the principles of the Framework and against the Framework's expectation of the planning system to deliver sustainable development, for which there is a presumption in favour.

9.2 The Framework expects local planning authorities to significantly boost the supply of housing to support economic growth and satisfy an obvious need, whilst preserving and enhancing the quality of the local environment.

9.3 This proposed development delivers on these several aspects of sustainability as set out in the Framework. Notably it will:

- be in a sustainable location within the city centre settlement where future new development is being promoted;
- deliver high quality flats, taking into account future demographic trends and the needs of specific groups in the community;
- help to build a strong local economy creating jobs and prosperity;
- promote sustainable transport as it is walking distance to public bus and train stations.
- have a good design contributing positively to the quality of the local built environment; and
- minimise impact on bio diversity and the natural environment.

9.4 The Framework expects such sustainable development to be approved without delay.