

PLANNING STATEMENT

S96a non-material amendment

For:

**114-116 OXFORD ROAD, READING,
BERKSHIRE, RG1 7NE**

Date: 28th February 2019
Ref: JFS - planning statement

HISTORY

Planning application 150721 was approved on 17th February 2016. The application was for the erection of a Part 4, Part 5 storey building providing 16 (2x1, 13x2 and 1x3 bed) residential units with associated parking and landscaping, following demolition of the existing buildings.

The site has been recently purchased by Fynecast Limited and having reviewed the drawings, Fynecast are now considering some minor amendments to the design and this application seeks guidance from the Council regarding these amendments.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

FRONT & REAR ENTRANCE CANOPIES

In the original approved planning permission neither the front or rear entrances to the flats had a canopy or porch over. The proposal is to provide a simple canopy to both entrances to provide shelter during rainfall for tenants or visitors as they enter or wait to be let into the flats. The canopy will have a glass roof and the supporting structure will be in dark grey to compliment the windows, measuring 1.2m deep x 3.6m wide

FRONT & REAR ELEVATION LOFT WINDOWS

The original scheme included two duplex flats (flats 13 & 14) on the third and fourth floors. These flats had windows to the rooms on both floors on the front and rear gables to provide natural daylight to the rooms.

Subsequent to the original application, an application for a non-material amendment was submitted seeking to remove the second floor to the duplex apartments. This application was Approved on 28th June 2018 under Planning Application no. 180739.

As the second floor will no longer be built, the level above the entrance story of the flats will effectively become a loft to flats 13 & 14 and the windows to the former second floor will become redundant and we would seek to remove the windows. There are a number of reasons to remove these higher-level windows, other than the obvious reason that they would serve no purpose.

- If the current second floor window arrangement is retained, the roof structure (the timbers supporting the roof and new loft area) will be visible through the glass
- The loft insulation will also be visible through the windows in their current form which will look out of place/strange
- The windows will look “odd” providing light to a loft with the structure (rafters and roofing felt) visible through the glass
- Windows are not a very environmentally friendly form of construction and removing this element in favour of cladding is environmentally friendlier
- It is considered that removing the windows in favour of a central feature window provides an improved elevation. The window will contain a cross shaped glazing bar to reference the Church next door
- The remainder of the gable will be clad with the dark grey cladding to match the cladding elsewhere on the third floor of the building.

ENTRANCE & SIDE GATES

The original planning drawings, specifically drawing 8538-PL-10 Rev A indicated solid wooden vehicle entrance gates and solid gates and wall to the right hand side of the development (as viewed from the road). Solid gates provide places for people to hide behind and create a barrier..

The proposal is to introduce black wrought iron gates which it is felt not only improve the appearance, but importantly improve security as there is no longer anywhere to hide behind, rather you can see right through from the road to the rear of the property, with no hiding places.

181994/PREAPP

A pre-application enquiry was submitted to determine if the Council would consider the above amendments favourably, and also to seek advice on which form of application would be suitable.

On 28th January 2019 the Planning department responded as follows:-

“In conclusion, it is considered that in the context of the permitted scheme it is not considered that the amendments, either individually or cumulatively, will have any material impact on the over design idiom or neighbour amenities. This is primarily owing to the context of the overall approved scheme and the nature of the surrounding context, with the proposed changes being of a relatively minor scale and nature in this context. As such, the amendments sought could be achieved via an application for a non-material amendment (a s96a application), and that such an application would likely be supported by officers.”

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the above amendments are deemed to have improved the development as a whole, both for the residents and the external appearance of the building and are not led by a drive to reduce costs, but rather an ethos to provide a high class development which we as a company will keep at the end, rather than sell on, so it is in our interests to provide a quality building.

A pre-application was submitted and received support from the planning department.

As such we respectfully request that the amendments are viewed in a positive light.

Thank you