

1A STANLEY GROVE

READING

RG1 7NS

PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of the full planning application for the scheme to change the use of the existing building at 1A Stanley Grove to a 1-bedroom cottage, as shown on the submitted drawings.
- 1.2 The property is located within a residential area, less than 1km from the centre of town, but has historically been in employment use, though most recently it has been lived in as a domestic dwelling.
- 1.3 The site is on land to the rear of frontage housing along George Street to the east and Stanley Grove to the north and to the rear of Oxford Road Primary School to the south. The site is within the settlement boundary and falls within an accessible suburban location on a brown field site.
- 1.4 As will be discussed further in this statement, there is a body of planning history around this site, including a recent application for a lawful use certificate that was withdrawn in October 2017, and we understand there is an on-going enforcement case in respect of the residential use.
- 1.5 Notwithstanding that, we are of the opinion that the proposed residential use would be wholly appropriate in this sustainable location and that the living conditions for future occupiers would be of an acceptable standard for the type of accommodation it is.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 910196 – Change of use from storage and ancillary offices to light industrial with ancillary offices – approved 03 March 1992
060931 – Proposed 4no skylights (retrospective) – approved 08 March 2007
070296 – Change of use from storage building to residential unit – refused 08 June 2007
071272 - Change of use from storage building to residential unit – refused 14 September 2007
171454 - Certificate of Lawful Use for existing residential use of property – withdrawn 09 October 2017

3 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is to change the use of the building to a residential use as a single dwellinghouse. The dwelling would contain a kitchen, living room, bedroom and a bathroom and includes storage space. There is no vehicular access to the property so no car parking spaces are possible
- 3.2 Additional doors and windows over those that existed with the 2007 applications have been added and a partition has been erected to provide storage space where cycles can be accommodated.
- 3.3 The site has historically been used as a B8 storage purposes and light industrial where the comings and goings associated with those uses means that it would not be a particularly good neighbor in this predominantly residential area. Notwithstanding that the site has most recently been used for residential purposes, there do not appear to be any planning restrictions over the previous operational use of the site and therefore activities could potentially take place at unsocial hours, whereas the proposed use as a residential unit would be more appropriate and where this would also add to the housing stock in this sustainable location.

4 Development Plan

- 4.1 An assessment of the development plan context for the area would indicate the following policies are relevant:

- 4.2 Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design) states that proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of climate change.
- 4.3 Policy CS5 (Inclusive Access) states that 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.
- 4.4 Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks to ensure that all development is of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.
- 4.5 Policy CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities) states that proposals for development will not be permitted unless the LPA is satisfied that infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets lost or impacted upon as a result of the development or made necessary by the development will be provided or re-provided at the appropriate time.
- 4.6 Policy CS24 (Car/ Cycle Parking) states that maximum 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.
- 4.7 Policy DM1 (Adaption to Climate Change) sets out to deliver the requirements of Policy CS1 and states that all developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Such measures should include orientation to maximise the opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and reducing exposure to wind and other elements, maximising resistance and resilience to climate change for example by including measures such as solar shading, heating and ventilation of the building, provision of suitable landscaping and measures to minimise the impact of surface water runoff from the development.

- 4.8 Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to ensure that development does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties in terms of, inter alia, privacy, access to sunlight and daylight and visual dominance.
- 4.9 DM6 (Affordable Housing) requires the provision of 10% affordable housing on sites of 1 - 4 dwellings, subject to viability.
- 4.10 Policy DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) states that developments are provided with appropriate levels of outdoor space which allows for sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space.
- 4.11 Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) is not strictly relevant to the determination of this application where the site is a former commercial building and not residential garden.

5 Policy appraisal

- 5.1 There do not appear to be any policies directly related to the conversion of existing commercial buildings to new dwellings in the borough but assessed against other policies we are of the opinion that the proposal is appropriate.
- 5.2 The building has been converted to appropriate environmental standards as required by **Policy CS1** and the current Building Regulations but with the 2015 Deregulation bill having received Royal Assent in March 2015 new planning consents from that date can no longer include a condition to comply with the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- 5.3 The development would also conform to Part M of the Building Regulations as appropriate with respect to disabled access and it is considered that the proposal is acceptable with respect to **Policy CS5**.
- 5.4 With regard to **Policy CS7**, the building exists within the local area but the proposal, with additional windows and doors is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the building over the 2007 situation whilst maintaining a discrete presence within the streetscene.

- 5.5 **Policy CS9** is acknowledged and the applicant accepts that where appropriate contributions are justified these would be sought under the CIL Regulations.
- 5.6 The scheme does not provide for car parking on-site but that is not unusual within the local area and such developments are becoming more common in the borough, which seems sensible and reasonable given the levels of congestion on the roads and poor air quality associated with motor cars. In that regard, we are of the opinion that the lack of off-street parking would not prejudice highway safety and that the scheme would be acceptable in terms of **Policy CS24**.
- 5.7 With regard to **Policy DM1**, in existing urban situations, and where existing buildings are to be re-used, it is not always possible to design and orientate dwellings to maximise passive solar potential but this scheme provides thermal insulation to current standards and skylights in the south facing roof slope do allow for solar gain.
- 5.8 In terms of safeguarding amenity and the requirements of **Policy DM4**, the site is in a suburban area where there will always be some acceptance of overlooking. This is an area of quite tight grained development but there would not be any significant impacts on properties to the east along George Street or to the north along Stanley Grove and to the south is the primary school. Given the existing relationship to houses in the local area it is not considered that the scheme would exacerbate that situation significantly.
- 5.9 **Policy DM6** seeks to secure affordable housing contributions for new development in the borough however, it is understood the policy excludes development involving the conversion of an existing property.
- 5.10 Notwithstanding that, there are not considered to be any significant amenity impacts arising from the proposal and where the overall design is considered to be an improvement on the situation as it existed in 2007 we are of the opinion that the proposal would comply with the development plan for the area and it is hoped the application can be supported by officers.