

32 ARDLER ROAD

READING

RG4 5AE

PLANNING STATEMENT

JULY 2018

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of the full planning application for the scheme to extend and convert the existing building to a 2-bedroom cottage on land at 32 Ardler Road, Reading, as shown on the submitted drawings.
- 1.2 The site is a former builders yard with the existing building set to the rear of frontage development on the western side of Ardler Road and now in use for B8 storage purposes.
- 1.3 The site is located approximately 700m to the east of central Caversham and within a predominantly residential area. The site is in Flood Zone 3 and is currently covered with the industrial type building and hard surfacing. The proposal here would maintain the overall building footprint and reduce the amount of hard surfacing making the ground more permeable to water in the event of a flood.
- 1.4 The scheme effectively raises the roof of the existing building to provide accommodation in the roofspace and is considered to improve the appearance and make far better use of what is a utilitarian building within this residential area in a sustainable location.
- 1.5 We are of the opinion that the proposed alterations to the building would relate well to the site and adjoining properties and that the proposed residential use would be wholly appropriate in this location. This statement should be read in association with the suite of plans submitted together with the Flood Risk Assessment and Affordable Housing Statement. As the application proposes a change of use of a commercial building to residential a sequential test is not required.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 180195 – Use of outbuilding as residential flat – approved 12/07.2018
040501 – Demolition of builders yard storage building and erection of 2 x 1 bed houses – withdrawn 12 June 2005
04053 – Certificate of Lawful Use for house as two separate flats – granted 28 April 2004

3 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is to effectively raise the roof of the existing building with the provision of dormer windows and to convert the building to a residential use as a single dwellinghouse. The dwelling would contain an open plan kitchen and living room with a dining room, study and WC on the ground floor with two bedrooms and a bathroom within the roofspace. Two car parking spaces would be provided with sufficient space for vehicles to turn on site to allow for access and egress in a forward gear.
- 3.2 The roof would be recovered with natural slate and the walls would be rendered with areas of grass in place of the existing hard surface.
- 3.3 The site is within the flood plain, however this application proposes to maintain the existing footprint and provide ground surfaces more permeable to water. The site is generally level and the finished floor level would not be set any lower than the existing floor. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) accompanies this application.
- 3.4 The site has historically been used as a builders yard and latterly for B8 storage purposes where the comings and goings associated with those uses, together with the somewhat utilitarian nature of the building means that it is not a particularly good neighbor in this predominantly residential area. There do not appear to be any planning restrictions over the 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 where this would also add to the housing stock in this sustainable location.

5 Development Plan

- 5.1 An assessment of the development plan context for the area would indicate the following policies are relevant:
- 5.2 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.

- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 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.
- 5.8 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.

- 5.9 DM6 (Affordable Housing) requires the provision of 10% affordable housing on sites of 1 - 4 dwellings, subject to viability.
- 5.10 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.
- 5.11 Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) is not strictly relevant to the determination of this application where the site is a former builders yard and not residential garden.

6 Policy appraisal

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 The building would be constructed to high 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.
- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 With regard to Policy CS7, the building exists within the local area but the proposal is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the building whilst maintaining a discrete presence within the streetscene. The materials to be used would be appropriate within the local context and the development would add to the density and mix of housing in the local area.
- 6.5 Policy CS9 is acknowledged and the applicant accepts that where appropriate contributions are justified these would be sought under the CIL Regulations.

- 6.6 The scheme provides sufficient car parking on-site and appropriate levels of secure cycle and bin storage can be secured and it is considered that the proposal can be regarded as acceptable with regard to Policy CS24.
- 6.7 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 would provide thermal insulation to current standards and the replacement of a large area of existing hard standing with grass would benefit soakage over the site. The use of water butts for collecting surface water from the roof would also reduce the use of mains water for watering the garden areas.
- 6.8 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 rear along Washington Road and no windows are proposed to the side elevations. Given the existing relationship to houses along Ardler Road there are already issues around overlooking and it is not considered that the scheme would exacerbate that situation significantly.
- 6.9 Policy DM6 seeks to secure affordable housing contributions for new development in the borough and the application acknowledges that policy and proposes that a reasonable contribution could be secured.
- 6.10 The proposal incorporates a small area to the front of the building for external amenity space appropriate to the size of the dwelling, which is not significantly different to that approved at no. 50 Ardler Road through application reference 130293, but it is also noted that there are substantial areas of open public space close the site and that there is only limited amenity space afforded to the adjacent development at Parkwood Court.
- 6.11 There are not considered to be any significant amenity impacts arising from the proposal and where the overall design is considered to be a significant improvement on the existing situation 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.