

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT**Case officer:** Daniel Murkin/Richard Eatough**Report date:** 19/1/18**Application No:** 171006/FUL**Target date:** 5th September 2017**Address:** 20 Bridge Street Caversham**Proposal:** Extension of the Riverside Dental Centre on land adjacent to the existing and conversion of the existing building for uses ancillary to the surgery (including staff accommodation on upper floors).**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application site is occupied by a three storey building (No. 20 Bridge Street) in use as a dental surgery (the Riverside Dental Surgery) which has been extended to the rear on two floors with part of the original house garden retained. Adjacent to the north is a segment-shaped site of vacant land which is owned by the Council and divided across by large advertisement hoardings, behind which is a small group of (unprotected) Sycamore trees.

The site is prominently located within a key frontage of Caversham District Centre as shown on the Proposals Map in the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015) and is situated adjacent to the eastern boundary of the St. Peter's Conservation Area. The site is also near The Thames and Caversham Bridge.

Proposal:

The proposals would mainly comprise a large, three storey, curved frontage extension taking up most of the vacant land to the side which the applicant has been granted an option to purchase. The application includes upgrading and modernising the existing dental surgery facilities, with five treatment rooms, a reception (ground floor), waiting rooms (1st/2nd floors), staff offices, kitchen and WCs on three floors of this converted former residential property. Two one-bed 'staff flats' are also proposed in the retained host property.

The principal features of the proposals for the extension can be summarised as follows:

- Ground Floor - entrance foyer with level access; reception and patient waiting space plus quiet room; two dental treatment rooms; patient WCs (incl. disabled WC) and staff offices and facilities (incl. WCs, changing rooms, a breakout area and cycle storage);
- First Floor - four treatment rooms, clean zones, X-ray room, WCs and patient waiting areas accessed by stairs and a lift;
- Second Floor - staff seminar room and kitchen, WCs;
- Staff accommodation - two one bedroom flats (on 1st/2nd Floors) accessed via ground floor or through the practice;
- Layout - extension on three floors to rear of No. 20/off-set from side boundaries and separated from No. 20 by small courtyard; Second floor stepped back (to rear corner of No. 20) with reduced footprint; street level wheelchair accessible ramp to front. Existing trees to be removed;
- Design - modern curved glass façade with solid metal cladding elements (terracotta/copper colour) to street frontage - aligned horizontally with cornice of

Barclays Bank (Nos. 2-6 Church Road); Red facing brick on building to rear with recessed windows, parapets and glass balustrades; second floor (incl. plant room) vertically clad in zinc (grey) metallic cladding; green roofs.

Plans Considered:

14 427 SV02A	Existing Survey
14 427 READ 1401	Chiltern Surveys Site Plan
14 427 PL10A	Site Plan and Site Location Plan
14 427 PL11A	Ground Floor
14 427 PL12A	First and Second Floor Plans
14 427 PL13A	Roof Plan Section E E
14 427 PL14A	Elevations
14 427 PL15A	Elevations

Received on 20th June 2017

Relevant Planning History:

130680/PREAPP	Extension of the dental surgery providing three more consulting surgeries at ground floor level and providing necessary access for the elderly, infirm, disabled and patients with young babies /children (Floor area not to exceed 110m ²)	OBS.	15.7.2013
162223/PREAPP 6.3.2017	Pre-application Level 2 enquiry in relation to proposed extension and conversion of existing building to uses ancillary to dental surgery including staff accommodation.	OBS.	

Public Consultation:

NEIGHBOURS: 29 no. neighbouring or nearby residential occupiers/commercial properties in Bridge Street, Church Street and Church Road were consulted on 17th July 2017 and in addition, a site notice was displayed on 19th July 2017. No public objections were received to the application.

A response has been received on behalf of the **Caversham GLOBE Group** with the following comments:

- removal of 5 mature and healthy trees without adequate replacements (high public amenity/wildlife value)/contribute to surrounding built-up area and the adjacent conservation area and are widely visible from Caversham Bridge, Church Street, Bridge Street, Church Road and from the river;
- to accord with Reading's Tree Strategy and mitigate impact on the adjacent conservation area there should be no overall reduction in the number of trees.
- lack of any soft landscaping or tree planting at the frontage;

- ugly ramp and over-sized metal facade dominates the frontage (could be relocated to run sideways rather than along the front) or redesigned to incorporate planting/screening in front of it to soften it.
- metal facade is too large and is out of keeping with the local area.
- application makes no reference to the immediately adjacent conservation area which it will greatly impact, particularly in terms of tree loss.

Consultation Responses:

RBC HISTORIC BUILDINGS CONSULTANT - Strongly objects to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Detrimental impact on the setting of CA due to the mass, scale, materials and prominence in street;
- Scale - too far forward; too much on the site; visually dominant in relation to existing buildings (esp. No. 20 Bridge Street)
- Design - unbroken frontage; use of other (ie. more traditional incl. stone) materials is preferable

RBC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (Environmental Protection & Noise): No objection subject to conditions re. noise mitigation scheme, hours of construction and demolition working, control of noise & dust and no burning of waste materials on site plus Informatives. In addition, makes the following comments:

The noise assessment submitted shows that the recommended standard for internal noise can be met, if the recommendations from the assessment are incorporated into the design. A condition be attached to consent to ensure that the glazing (and ventilation) recommendations of the noise assessment (and air quality assessment, where relevant) will be followed, or that alternative but equally or more effective glazing and ventilation will be used.

The proposed development is located within an air quality management area identified with monitoring as being a pollution hot-spot (likely to breach the EU limit value for NO2) and introduces new exposure/receptors.

RBC's Air Quality Policy DM19 requires that developments have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality through design, mitigation and where required planning obligations to be used to help improve local air quality. I am satisfied that the air pollution mitigation measures proposed by Pam Brown Associates in their Air Quality Assessment dated June 2017 should be sufficient to protect future occupants.

RBC NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (Trees & Landscape) - Objection for the following reasons:

20 Bridge Street is located in a prominent location at the busy junction of Bridge Street with Church Road and Church Street. Land to the rear of the property is within the boundaries of a Conservation Area.

I have read the argument put forward in the design and access statement as justification for both the removal of trees and proposals not to replace the trees on site. I am still of the opinion that allowing visibly significant trees to be felled in urban locations to facilitate development without any provision for replacement planting or landscaping is unsustainable and will be to the long term detriment of our Borough.

I cannot support this application which proposes the removal of all trees on site without street side provision for new tree and landscape planting. The frontage of the extension will restrict long views from the highway junction increasing the sense of enclosure in views from Bridge Street to the detriment of the local character.

The fastigiated tree(s) proposed to the rear of the property will have very limited amenity value and are likely to be removed at a later date when they become a nuisance in the available space. Policies CS7: Design and the Public Realm and CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodland apply.

RBC NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (Ecology): No objections, the bat survey report that has been submitted with this application has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the risk of bats being affected by the proposals is minimal.

RBC ACCESS OFFICER - Makes the following comments:

At what gradient will the ramp be? I do not think that the ramp is “ugly” - as the proposed annexe is itself rather large, it is in-keeping addition to the extension of the building. Screening would not be in character with the rest of the proposed building - why should be pushed round the side (or where?). Disabled people should not be pushed “out of sight, out of mind”.

On the second floor, there is lift access, but the WC is not marked as an accessible WC. Is there a possibility that alterations could be made so that it could be used by all - hanging the door the other way, maybe? I don't know if the room would be big enough.

Are there sufficient Blue Badge parking spaces, either in car parks or on street, or double yellow lines, or Pay and Display spaces for disabled drivers/people with disabled passengers to park?

RBC TRANSPORT STRATEGY (DC Officer) - Recommends conditions re. Construction Method Statement, bicycle parking and bin storage to be approved plus Informative(s) on any permission granted. In addition, makes the following comments:

This application is for the proposed extension of the Riverside Dental Surgery on a vacant parcel of land (currently being used for large boarded advertising), and conversion of existing building to uses ancillary to the surgery. Pre-application advice was sought under application no. 13/00670/PREAPP and 162223.

The site is located at the Church Road/Bridge Street junction within Caversham local centre which is within close proximity to a wide range of bus services including premier

bus routes, which run to and from the Reading Town Centre area and is therefore accessible to good public transport links. Bridge Street and the surrounding road network all have parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. There are also limited waiting bays located on Church Road which restricts parking to 30 mins between 8am-5.30pm. Outside of these hours, these parking bays are available without restriction. The Chester Street public car park is also within walking distance of the site.

The site is currently operating as a dental surgery with 5 treatment rooms. The proposal is for an updated/modern practice with 6 treatment rooms and two staff residential units. The application statement indicates that there is no specific intention to increase patient numbers but the proposal would improve accessibility and facilities for those already registered at the practice.

There is no on-site parking provision for the proposed development. However, considering the proximity of the site to public transport provisions and given that the Bridge Street and surrounding roads all have extensive parking restrictions which are enforced by Reading Borough Council, it is concluded that the proposed development would not unacceptably prejudice the safety of other highway users.

However, the applicant should be aware that there would be significant transport implications constructing a development in this prominent location which should be considered through the design process. Any full application would be conditioned to ensure a Construction Method Statement is submitted and approved before any works commence on-site and any works affecting highway would have to comply with the Borough's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway. It should also be noted that there is an existing lamp column located on the footway to the front of the site.

In accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards and Design SPD, a minimum provision of 1.5 cycle parking space per consulting room plus 1 space per practitioner should be provided. Provisions have been made on the ground floor for secure cycle parking but the proposed area does not appear large to meet the required standards. It is requested that a minimum of 10 cycle parking spaces are provided within the site for staff and patients. The applicant is requested to address this issue before the application is determined.

Additional Comments:

In this location, we would not want to introduce an access point onto the busy junction. Therefore, we could only consider it as a car free development. Given that the site is located within a district centre with good access to public transport services, the non-provision of parking for this type of use is considered acceptable.

In respect of disability parking, the closest public car park would be Chester Street car park but this is a short walk away from the site, I don't think there are any on-street disabled bays close to the site. The non-provision of disabled parking spaces is not a highway safety concern given that the area is regulated with double yellow lines and loading bans.

RBC VALUATION OFFICER: No comments.

RBC WASTE OPERATIONS (STREETCARE):

If the two apartments are paying council tax the bin store on the new site isn't sufficient for the amount of receptacles required for both the business and residential, as they would be entitled to 2x240 for each apartment.

READING CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAAC) - Support the redevelopment of the site and discontinuance of the advertisement hoardings with the following comments (summarised):

- the site has been an eyesore, with its untended and often litter strewn frontage to the hoardings, for a number of years. The site is on an important junction and a principal entry point to Reading, close to listed buildings and buildings of townscape merit.
- The CAAC welcomes the proposed street facade of the new building. The strongly modelled 2 storey curved modernist facade in contrasting materials to the Barclays building and the existing Dental practice building represents, in our view, a successful approach which should complement the older buildings in the extended Conservation Area. The two existing buildings effectively 'book end' the new building, and are not over dominated by it. The new building successfully takes a cue from the cornice line of the Bank building. Care in the selection and detailing of the metal cladding and glazing will be necessary for a successful outcome.

C) The existing sycamore trees on the advertising hoarding site contribute largely as a green back drop at high level to surrounding buildings. Ideally the terrace at the rear of the new building should be increased in size to allow sizeable fastigate trees to grow to a reasonable height to compensate for the loss of the existing trees. This rear part of the site is directly adjacent to and overlooks the Beer garden of the Griffin. There is concern in the new CA appraisal at cumulative loss of tree cover in the area and we note that one of the large mature trees in the adjacent Griffin garden has also recently died.

D) The three storey part of the new building is set back from the frontage, and may not be visible from the street, other than down the adjoining access way. There is a lack of section information in the application drawings, however, and it would be useful to see a section taken through the new building and across the street to a viewer positioned say in front of the old Lloyds Bank. This would establish how visible the rear part of the new building is.

E) The new bin store for the restaurant and surgery on the back edge of pavement is a potential nuisance. If it remains in this position then it would be useful to have confirmation that it has a roof and no ventilation on the street side. Any re siting of the air conditioning units for Barclays should be on one of the lower extension roofs to the rear and not be visible from the street or impinge on the view of the early 20th C Barclays building.

F) With regard to the existing Dental Practice building, in view of the upcoming inclusion in the extended Conservation Area, we would request that the upper floor timber sash windows are kept and refurbished, weather stripped and double glazed if necessary to meet modern standards.

CAVERSHAM AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION:

Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA) welcomes this application, with some minor concerns, and agrees with the points made in the CAAC's response.

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> CADRA was closely involved in the review of the St Peter's Conservation Area, of which a key recommendation was to extend the area to include Bridge St, and thus this site. This raises the calibre of design needed for this site, and the review makes two key points about it: the impact of the present unsightly advertisement hoardings, and its potential as an infill site demanding careful design.

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> The principle of its development is therefore doubly welcome, and we feel a truly modern building of this calibre is appropriate. Its alignment picks up the curve of the street while reflecting some aspects of its neighbours in terms of materials and cornice lines. While the loss of trees is regrettable, it is difficult to envisage any viable form of development which could retain them.

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> Our reservations are the same as the CAACs: the need for more convincing new trees to the rear; the difficulty of judging the visibility off the third floor, to which we ask you to have particular regard; and the undesirability of the restaurant bin enclosure on the frontage. We hope these relatively minor points can be resolved in your continued discussions with the applicants, which we feel have produced a promising outcome thus far, and we are grateful to the applicants and yourselves for the care taken.

THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - No comments received.

BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY - Recommend condition requiring approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation is attached to any planning permission granted to mitigate the impact of the development with the following comments:

The proposal site is located within an area of archaeological potential situated in the historic core of Caversham. The site is located a short distance from Caversham Bridge, the earliest reference for a bridge here dates to 1231, although it is possible that this was used as a crossing point earlier than this. There is the potential for archaeological remains dating to the Medieval and post-medieval periods to be preserved within the site. There is also the potential for earlier remains to present as well.

Due to the potential for archaeological remains to be impacted by the proposed development further information from field investigation is required. We would recommend an initial phase of trial trenching prior to development to evaluate the archaeological potential within the site. Depending on the results of the trial trenching further phases of investigation prior to development may be required and adequate time should be allowed for this within the development programme.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations

indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

Paragraph 132 advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that the local authority has a statutory duty that with respect of any building or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015)

CS1	Sustainable Construction and Design
CS4	Accessibility and Intensity of Development
CS5	Inclusive Access
CS7	Design and the Public Realm
CS8	Waterspaces
CS20	Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy
CS26	Network and Hierarchy of Centres
CS33	Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
CS35	Flooding
CS38	Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015)

SD1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
DM3	Infrastructure Planning
DM4	Safeguarding Amenity
DM6	Affordable Housing
DM12	Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
DM13	Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres
DM18	Tree Planting

Appraisal

Principle

That part of the site occupied by the existing building falls within the Key Frontage of Caversham District Centre therefore an active frontage should be retained at ground floor of the building. The proposals indicate that the public entrance to the surgery would be re-located to the extension occupying the presently open gap in the site's street frontage with the ground floor of the existing building converted into an administration office and laboratory. In this regard therefore, the proposals would be in accordance with the objectives of the policy.

The principle of additional development ancillary to the established dental surgery use at this site including the provision of residential accommodation on the upper floors of the existing building is also acceptable in terms of location and accessibility but subject to other considerations below including the scale, design and appearance of the extension.

However, officers identify five key areas of concern with this application.

Bulk, scale and massing

Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that all development is of a high design quality including materials that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located and makes a positive contribution to the public realm.

In general design terms, it is considered that a three storey extension to the existing building occupying most of the width and depth of the open parts of the site would represent an overdevelopment in terms of the scale and impact significantly upon the setting of the adjacent and surrounding buildings which are of good quality.

The main issue is the excessive height, width, scale and massing. This would produce a development which would fail to appear as a subservient addition to the host building and would also, through its bulk and frontal curved projection, form a dominant feature in the streetscene. This would overwhelm the host building and appear as an overdevelopment of the site and be harmful to the character of the host building and the neighbouring buildings.

Impact on the streetscene, locality and conservation area

Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy confirms that historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including listed buildings,

Conservation Areas and their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. Planning permission will be granted where development has no adverse impact on such historic assets and their settings and all proposals will be expected to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.

In addition, **Policy CS8** seeks to protect Reading's waterspaces so that they can continue to contribute to local and regional biodiversity and ecology, local character and visual amenity. Attractive buildings that enhance the relationship of buildings, spaces and routes and make positive contributions to the distinct character, landscape and amenity of the waterways and protects habitats (etc.) is acceptable.

The site is in a very prominent location at the front on the corner but also to the rear, being adjacent to the St. Peter's Conservation Area. It is currently in a poor visual state and there is clear potential for improvement and whilst an attractively- designed infill of this triangular shaped site would otherwise be acceptable, the proposed footprint (scale) and three storey height combined would tend to dominate the area and adjoining buildings. The proposed design and materials fail to adhere to the general street context and would thus have a detrimental impact on the streetscape to the front and also in views towards the Conservation Area.

The loss of the long distance views between the existing buildings on this side of Church Street towards the River Thames and those back across to the site is also a consideration. In this regard, it should be noted that if the advertisement hoardings were not erected on the site, the view towards the river would be largely uninterrupted by buildings and framed by the trees on the site. In this instance the use of mostly glazed elevations within a set back and far less prominent frontage that retained some of the existing visual amenity in the form of tree planting and/or implied views to the river beyond would be preferable, but has not been achieved in the current proposals.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would detract from the setting (views into and out of) of the CA and the visual amenities and character of the surrounding area generally and for all the reasons given above is contrary to the objectives of Policies CS7, CS8 and CS33 of the Core Strategy.

The proposal would harm the streetscape and views into the Conservation Area through its excessive width, which would disrupt the rhythm of the generally narrow, traditional building frontages in the vicinity, where the horizontally-oriented design would appear as a dominant and alien addition to the streetscene. There is therefore no clear design rationale for this shape of orientatsion.

Furthermore, the scale and massing when combined with the loss of existing significant trees would create an overbearing and a significant adverse impact on views into the adjacent St. Peters Conservation Area and in particular from the car park and river environs at The Griffin pub (10-12 Church Road). Overall, there is a failure to adequately maintain and enhance the character and appearance of this area of Caversham and the proposal scheme is not considered to outweigh the current harm to the area caused by the condition of the site: it would make the situation worse.

Amenity of the flats

Policy DM4 seeks to maintain existing and future residential amenity. The proposal includes 2x flats which the applicant suggests are ancillary but given their nature, they are perfectly capable of not being ancillary. In any case, they are situated on a busy street corner to the front.

Worse, the rear outlook from the bedrooms in the flats on first and second floor is from rear-facing windows, which would be obstructed by a blank wall at 1.6m from the face of their windows. This would produce a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of these dwellings in terms of access to daylight and sunlight, visual dominance and overbearing of the development itself and lack of outlook. This is unnecessary and driven by an overdevelopment and is unsuitable.

Flooding

Policy CS35 of the Core Strategy sets out that planning permission will not be granted in an area identified as being at risk of high flooding where development would reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store or impede the flow of floodwater or in any way increase the risks to life and property arising from flooding.

The application site is located within Flood Zone 2 of the River Thames and as such the probability of flooding is somewhere between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 year flood event.

In support of the application, the applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (by Hydro Logic Services, dated June 2017) which recommends the installation of an attenuation tank underneath the new extension. In addition, the green roofs proposed would intercept 5mm of rainfall from the most frequent events and if saturated any discharge would be as surface water to the attenuation tank or to the local drainage network (subject to an agreement for connection with Thames Water).

However, the extensive coverage of the adjacent segment-shaped plot has resulted in another issue, that of being caught by the provisions of the flooding sequential and exceptions tests. The proposal would introduce a more vulnerable use (health services) and associated residential uses on a site which presently does not have a planning use, as the site from visual and other records seems to have had a nil use for anything other than some billboards since the 1960s, possibly even as long ago as the 1930s. The development is at a scale which is not a 'minor development' in flood risk terms. This means that the development, at the scale

submitted, is not exempt from the strategic site considerations requirements in national planning policy. The applicant does not agree, but has not provided suitable information to demonstrate otherwise. The application has therefore failed to demonstrate via the application of the 'sequential test' or the 'exception test' (as may be applicable) that the development is necessary in this location and would not lead to either an increased risk of flooding in the area.

The inclusion of the residential units in the proposal causes concerns for 2 reasons.

Firstly, the proposal includes dwelling units which are perfectly capable of being occupied as separate residential units, where for the reasons set out above (outlook, light), would not be acceptable as such. It is not therefore clear how such accommodation might be occupied acceptably and if so, the method of control needed which is likely to be via a s106 legal agreement.

Secondly, the development proposal includes the introduction of residential units as part of the proposed redevelopment (capable of being occupied as separate residential units) which requires a contribution towards affordable housing in the Borough, as required by Policy DM6 and the Affordable Housing SPD.

Other matters:

Transport, parking

Policy DM12 of the SDPD will permit development only where accesses comply with adopted standards and would not be detrimental to the safety of transport network users including pedestrians and cyclists.

The site is located at a very busy junction of two roads near Caversham Bridge. In the circumstances there is no opportunity to provide on-site parking as this would either require a new vehicular access or some kind of shared arrangement with the adjacent commercial uses (No. 18) which has a rear car park - and neither of these options is likely to be acceptable in terms of their potential impact on traffic flow. The availability of good public transport and parking facilities in the vicinity is also a factor.

Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy considers the level of accessibility of a development and **Policy CS5** the suitability of buildings into, and within, its facilities, for all potential users including disabled persons.

The proposals are designed to help the elderly, parents with children and disabled/wheelchair bound persons by having new accessible surgeries on the ground floor. The Council's Access Officer has commented on the parking for disabled in the vicinity to which the Council's Transport DC Officer has replied. In all other respects however there are no highways objections raised and accordingly the proposals accord with the relevant policies in these respects.

Cycles and bins: officers are content that given the internal space produced in the proposal, these requirements could be secured via conditions.

Environmental protection

Policy DM4 of the SDPD seeks to safeguard the living environment of new residential properties in terms of various potential impacts including noise and disturbance, lighting and vibration. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that the

recommended noise standard and air quality measures can be achieved for the proposed residential staff accommodation in the existing building to be converted.

Impact on adjoining occupiers

Policy DM4 of the SDPD seeks to safeguard the living environment of existing or new residential properties in terms of various potential impacts including privacy and overlooking, daylight and sunlight, visual dominance and any overbearing effects. There are no apparent flats in the adjoining properties - the bank premises (Nos. 2-6 Church Road) are secured to the rear whilst No. 8 is sufficiently far away and would not be overlooked or otherwise affected. There is a car park (rear of No. 18 Bridge Street) and the adjacent amenity spaces are associated only with the bank. The proposed extension to the rear should not have any significant impact on the residential amenities of the nearest dwellings.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal is unacceptable for the reasons set out in this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE.