

Planning Statement relating to 85 Cressingham Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7RX



The Keen Partnership

The Courtyard

Edinburgh Road

Reading

RG30 2UA

Introduction

The following Design and Access Statement is in support of a Full Planning Application for the proposed demolition of the existing building, consisting of a shop and 2 flats, and the erection of 2 buildings:

Building A, towards front of site (Nearer to Cressingham Road):

Ground floor shop with basement,
First floor containing 2 one-bedroom flats.

Building B (Towards back of site):

Ground floor 1 two-bedroom flat,
First floor 2 one-bedroom flats.

Secure private bicycle storage

8x Parking spaces, meeting parking requirements for the flats (to be used by the shop during daytime hours)

Juliet Balconies to upper storey flats

93.38 m² of Private garden for the 2-bed ground floor flat at rear.

Dedicated bin store area

Private secure trade waste area.

In addition to this Planning Statement, the application has been submitted with the following:

PL-01 Location Plan

PL-02 Topography Survey

PL-03 Existing and Proposed Block Plan

PL-04 Existing Elevations

PL-05 Proposed Ground and First Floor Building A

PL-06 Proposed Loft and Roof Building A

PL-07 Proposed Ground, First Floor Building B

PL-08 Proposed North and East Elevations Building A

PL-09 Proposed South and West Elevations Building A

PL-10 Proposed Elevations Building B

PL-11 Proposed Street Scene

PL-12 Proposed Sections Building A

PL-13 Proposed Sections Building B

PL-14 3D Images

PL-15 Basement of Building A

Cil Form

Planning Policy

The site is subject to the following planning policies, and they have informed design decisions accordingly:

Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008): CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
CS7 Design and the Public Realm CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities CS24
Car/Cycle Parking CS29 Provision of Open Space
Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012
DM4 Safeguarding Amenity DM5 Housing Mix DM6 Affordable Housing DM10 Private and
Communal Outdoor Space DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters DM18 Tree Planting
Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents Affordable Housing SPD (2013)
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2013) Sustainable Design and Construction
SPD (2011)

History

85 Cressingham Road has been a shop and 2 flats for 10 years or more. The shop has been vacant for the previous 10 months.

There have been multiple applications made for this site, all of which bar one were rejected:

11/01324/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a new two-storey building containing five flats. (Resubmission of planning application 11/00248/FUL). Appeal dismissed. Inspector found this scheme with flat in the roof to be too high and with an unacceptable mass. He also found the amenity for occupiers of the top floor flat to be unacceptable.

11/00729/PREAPP - Pre-application advice for demolition of existing building containing five flats – Observations sent

11/00248/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a new 2-storey building containing 6 flats – not entertained

08/00861/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling and the erection of a new two storey building containing five self-contained flats – refused

05/01158/CLP - Erection of outbuilding (280sq m) to be used as garage, storeroom and playroom – refused

03/01491/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling and the erection of a new two storey building containing 4 x 2-bedroom units and a 1 x 1-bedroom unit with associated parking and amenity space – refused

12/01670/FUL - Demolition of existing building and erection of a 2-storey building containing 4 x 2-bedroom flats (resubmission of 11/01324/FUL) – Application permitted

On review of these applications, major concerns were:

That the proposal will cause traffic concerns – we believe we have addressed this by meeting the parking requirements of 8 on-site parking spaces. Additionally, note the site is located less than 100m from no 9 and no 19B bus service stops.

Lack of amenities at upper flats. We have provided for balcony space at the upper floor flats, and a garden for the ground floor 2-bedroom family flat.

A previous application was made under reference 17/171277/FUL which was later withdrawn due to perceived issues of massing and a design out of keeping with the area - particularly with the front building.

Considering this, we have made changes to a more traditional design by creating a pitched roof and altering the scale by the loss of the second story to the front of the building, matching the height of adjacent properties. There have also been changes to the windows to avoid overlooking, respecting the adjacent dwellings.

We have allowed further soft landscaping by reducing the amount dwellings by 2 which in turn allows for less parking spaces and more green space.

The rear dwelling orientation has also changed to allow better use of the amenity/garden space and provide more light, whilst maintaining the privacy of adjacent properties and bearing no overlooking.

Flood Risk

The site is located within a Flood Zone 1, the site is below 2 hectare in size, and there is no risk of flooding.

Existing Site



Existing Building September 2016 (c Google Maps)

The site is located on Cressingham Road, in a residential area in the South of Reading. A public footpath runs down the side of the site. The front of the site features hardstanding and the rear is a large garden. The surrounding area contains a mix of residential styles.

The existing site contains a mixed-use building, ground floor being an A1 retail shop, and the first floor and part of the ground floor being a C3 use flat.

The current shop is not meeting the needs of the area, is empty and we believe a slightly bigger shop with a more attractive façade will serve the area better. Locals have expressed a desire for the shop to be reopened to the applicant. The current flats are small and cramped

space, and the proposed development offers a far better standard of living for future occupants.

The existing site contains a large amount of unused, overgrown space that has much more potential than the existing use takes advantage of, and we believe the proposal offered provides a much better solution.

The road facing elevation features hard landscaping and the building sits close to the road, ultimately this does not create an attractive view and is quite imposing on the road.

Cressingham road slopes from East to West, and as such the height of houses increases with this slope. The houses immediately surrounding are a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings.



September 2016 - Housing directly opposite



Neighbouring Housing to West



Neighbouring House to East

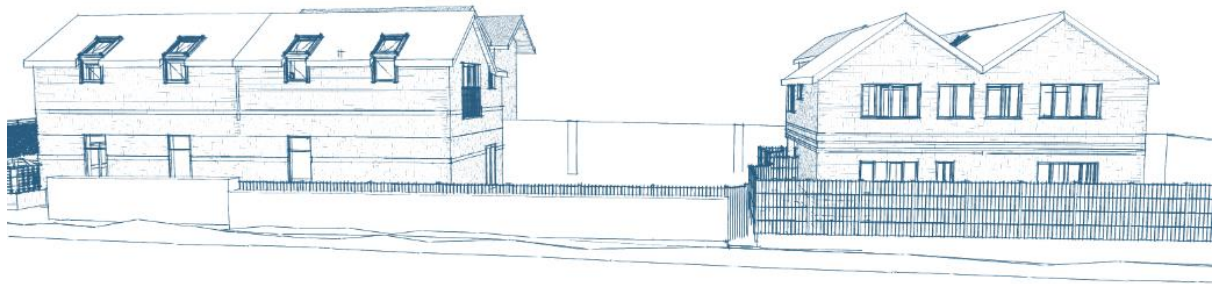
Transport

The site is located approximately 1.4km from the local centre on A327 Shinfield Road between Elm Road and Whitley Wood road, and approximately 300m from a shopping parade (takeaway shops,

small Supermarket, and a Post Office / Shop) on Northumberland avenue. It has good connections to the M4 motorway which links to London towards the East, and Wales towards the West.

The site is located within walking distance to bus services, stopping within 100m at Birdhill Avenue and Staverton Rd. The “no 9 Scarlet” and “Nineteens 19B” both provide regular transport to Reading Town Centre.

Proposed Use



Building A (Left) and B (Right)

Access

The site sits within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area and the maximum parking requirement for the proposal is 1.5 parking spaces per flat, a maximum of 7.5 spaces.

The proposal offers 8 parking spaces, which are mixed use – during the day they may be used by the shop customers, and at night they can be used by residents of the flats.

The previous proposal's Planning Officer noted the Neighbourhood Statistics (2007) of the area at 1.01 vehicles per household, so recommended a revised requirement of 1 space per flat. The 2011 Census noted Reading as having 66,681 Cars and 62,869 Houses, or 1.06 Vehicles per household. (*Table HS404EW, 2011 Census: Car or Van Availability, Local Authorities in England and Wales*). So, we suggest the previous requirement of 1 parking space per flat is still adequate, and we more than meet this.

Use

Locals have expressed an interest in when the shop is reopening – there is a proof in the sites history as a shop that it is fitting a need in the area. However, the current shop is small and not fit for use, and the existing living arrangements are cramped and uncomfortable, not utilising the large site at all.

The proposed use more efficiently utilises the land available, providing a more spacious shop provides a more aesthetically pleasing street scene view, and more comfortable living arrangements for the tenants. The current state of the shop and flats needs revitalising, and we believe this will provide a benefit to the surrounding area.

This proposed use is appropriate to the surrounding area, mainly residential while maintaining the previous contribution the shop has made to the area, and providing good quality housing, an improvement on the current standing.

Layout

The existing building has a shop at the front of the building (approximately 29m²), and a ground floor 1-bed flat at the rear (approximately 31 m²) and 3-bed flat (approximately 64m²) on ground and first floor. Access to the shop is at the front facing the road, with entrance to the flats at the rear and side.

The proposed building A, at the front of the site, sits further back from the road than the existing, and features standard shop access towards the front, facing Cressingham Road, and flat access at the right side of the building, accessible from the front parking spaces and from the public pathway at the right side. The building in the rear, Building B, has gated access and a small lobby area.

High level rear facing windows and side windows that have potential overlooking issues are specified as high level windows to prevent any possible overlooking. Additionally, at the rear of building B

The proposed building access will use the existing dropped kerb, so disturbance to the existing road will be negligible. The parking will be provided at the front of the site, five spaces, and towards the back, five spaces. The ground floor flat at the rear benefit from a garden. The floor above windows at rear are angled to prevent overlooking.

Space has been provided for trade waste for the shop, a secure location within the building itself. Bin stores for residents are located at the front of the site adjacent to the entrance.

Appearance



Previously accepted application street scene (note doesn't include new development next to 89 Cressingham Road)



The previously accepted proposal was a large dwelling that matched the surroundings in a safe manner, however it was very similar to 81 & 83 Cressingham road -more of the same and not offering anything new. The proposed dwelling is a visually different building that still suits the surrounding context and is visually pleasing to the eye.

The narrower visual allows a break in the street massing, and the public pathway has been treated as an equally important façade, with equal attention to the appearance of the development.

This proposal aims to improve the existing area, with a more aesthetically pleasing street scene, which is narrower than the existing and not as imposing on the road as it is further back.

The current building is a tired unattractive one, with worn down hardstanding for parking at the front. The proposed building A features a modern brick façade, some landscaping to soften features, and a sleek modern zinc frontage. Building B at the rear is a similar brickwork style and the same material achieving a harmonious look on the plot that is not out of character with the predominantly brickwork characteristics of the area.

Sustainability

The building orientation is typical of the street, and window placement and scale has been considered to maximise opportunities for natural light and ventilation. The construction will be standard UK construction, ensuring a good quality build that is capable of providing comfortable housing throughout the year.

The proposal sets out to maintain areas of landscaping towards the front rear and side, to maintain a softer visual than the existing dwelling, and will be native species adapted to the area.

Surface water treatment will be tackled by Sustainable Underground Drainage Systems, such as a soakaway.

Photovoltaics are being considered for the roof to reduce the energy requirements of the dwellings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe this proposal is a far better use of the site, that will benefit locals and the local area with better quality housing and a better quality local shop than it currently offers.

The amendments made regarding the previously withdrawn application have allowed for a better use of the site, a design and mass in keeping with the area and overall a positive contribution to the area that utilises the site well.