

PLANNING STATEMENT

40 Church Street
Caversham
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 8AU



November 2015

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement accompanies a Planning Application for the refurbishment of the upper parts of 40 Church Street, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8AU, as shown on our drawing 40Church-Plan-001/002/003.
- 1.2 The application site lies in the centre of Caversham and is in a highly sustainable location in terms of proximity to local services, transport links and easy access to the wider community.
- 1.3 The proposal seeks to convert the upper floor of the existing shop into residential use and provide residential extension to the rear of the property to form 2 no. flats.
- 1.4 The existing site comprises of a flower shop which under uses the first floor and some of the rear storage areas. It is proposed to continue the use of this flower shop under a reduced footprint so as the retail activity is maintained onto the main road.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located on a parade of shops on the road of Church Street in Caversham and is very centrally located.

There is a car park to the rear which is a pay and display public car park. Transport and amenity links are available within Caversham and to further local areas and into Reading town city centre.

- 2.2 The rear portions of the property are fairly dilapidated and the first floor is in a poor condition and requires quite extensive refurbishment.

3. HISTORY

- 3.1 Caversham is a small town in the suburbs located north of Reading city centre.

The road of Church Street is typical Victorian architecture with terraced rows of brick built shops with accommodation over and slated roofs over.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposal is to completely refurbish the existing two storey front section including the shop and upper parts. Conversion of the upper parts to two small self-contained flats.

- 4.2 The demolition of the corrugated structure to the rear of the property which is heavily dilapidated and the construction of a two storey new build block which would house 2 no. flats.

Commercial use would be maintained to the shop front at ground floor with a separate access created for loading to the rear public car park.

- 4.3 The flats will be constructed to the following sizes:

Flat 1 – 33.3sqm

Flat 2 – 30sqm

Flat 3 – 41.4sqm

Flat 4 – 41.4sqm

- 4.4 Provision will be made within the site for cycle storage as shown on our plan 40Church-Plan-002, there will also be provision to the rear of the site for bin storage with easy access to the rear car park.

- 4.5 The new build element of the project will be constructed of facing brickwork with a slate tiled roof over, this is in keeping and matching with the existing line of development, we note that there are other extensions in the immediate vicinity which have been constructed in a similar style and fashion.

There will be a small link between the old and new building at first floor level to facilitate access to the existing first floor area above the shop.

- 4.6 It should be noted that the property is within 19 minutes' walk of Reading Central Station, being less than 1 mile from this major transport link into London and to the West Country.

It is proposed that this development will be a car free development with no car parking being allowed on site, there is provision for visitor parking to the north of the site in the public pay and display car park.

- 4.7 The proposed extension would not be visible from the main street scene of Church Street, it will only be visible from the rear of the property from the Chester Street car park. The design as mentioned previously is in keeping with similar applications in the area.

One notable extension is that to no. 44 Church Street where a large two storey brick built extension with pitched roof over has been approved, we completed a search on Reading's planning web site but cannot find any reference to this application.

We also note that planning reference 151230 – 16 Church Street, Caversham, Reading has given prior approval for the change of use to the first floor to 3 no. 1 bed flats.

5. PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 In this section we will highlight the planning policies which we feel are relevant to this application under the Adopted Core Strategy Document 2008 and Revised 2015.

Policy CS14 – Provision of Housing.

In this policy provision of 572 dwellings per annum for the period to 2006-2016.

This policy highlights the use of previously used sites which it is felt this application is one of and it includes sites with change of use and conversion. It is felt that this site represents a good use of this land with further provision of accommodation.

Policy CS18 – Residential Conversion.

This policy seeks to ensure that the quality of residential conversions and provision is to a good standard.

It is felt that this application is a good use of the existing under used space to the first floor shop and that the new provision to the rear is of a high standard.

There will be no parking on site and this should be classed as a car free development. There are bin storage areas to the rear.

Policy CS15 – Location, accessibility, density and housing mix.

It is felt that this site is ideally located for good accessibility for local amenities and services and also good transport links to the main hub of Reading Town Station and further cities beyond. All of these facilities and amenities are within walking distance, with the station being under a mile from this site.

CS16 – Affordable Housing.

We note in the Reading policies that there is a requirement for Provision of Affordable Housing over a 15 unit limit, this scheme comes under this requirement therefore this requirement is not applicable. We note in some of the previous applications ref. 111745 that contributions have been made to a 106 agreement and that our client is willing to partake in negotiations to meet these requirements.

Policy CS24 – Car and cycle parking.

Provision of cycle cupboards and cycle parking will be available on the site as shown on our plans.

There will be no provision of car parking on the site but there is easy accessibility to a public pay and display car park to the rear for visitors.

The development should be seen as a car free scheme, therefore on-site parking provision will not be required.

Policy CS35 – Flooding.

We do not feel there are any issues with flooding in the locality of the site as it is located a fair distance away from the River Thames.

Policy CS36 – Bio-diversity and geology.

This site is located in a very urban environment and there are no intentions to remove any trees or endangered species on the site.

6. PLANNING POLICY JUSTIFICATION AND EXAMPLE PLANNING APPLICATIONS IN THE LOCAL AREA.

6.1 It is felt that this brownfield site offers a good opportunity to provide additional residential accommodation within the Borough of Reading which will meet the Local Authorities needs and requirements to provide additional accommodation as set out in its Adopted Core Strategy.

6.2 They will be maintaining the existing retail unit to the ground floor and with a separate access to the rear of the property for deliveries.

There will also be a new entrance to the rear of the property for access to the residential units.

6.3 It is noted under planning ref:- 151230 no. 16 Church Street, Caversham that a prior approval was given for the change of use to the upper portions of the property to 3 no. 1 bed flats which is of similar design and location to this application.

We would also like to bring your attention to previous application ref:- 111745, for 40 Church Street, the subject property which gave permission for a ground floor workshop and studio flat over in June 2011.

6.4 We feel that the proposal meets the above policy set out by Reading Borough Council.

6.5 We also are willing to enter into further discussions into contributions for leisure and transport improvements which were identified in the previous application and we would request further information during the planning application with the allocated planning officer.

7 Neighbour Consultations.

- 7.1 As part of our consultation process, we have been in full contact with the tenant of no. 40 Church Street, who is fully aware of the owners' intentions.

8 Photos.



001 – Front Elevation



002 – Rear Elevation



003 – No. 44 Church Road



004 – 4 Prospect Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8JG



005 – Dilapidated state of first floor