

Design and Access Statement

**Proposal for 3 no. flats in addition to those currently
under construction under planning approvals 150395
and 12/00711/OUT**

at

10 Prospect Street
Reading
RG1 7YG

2652-001

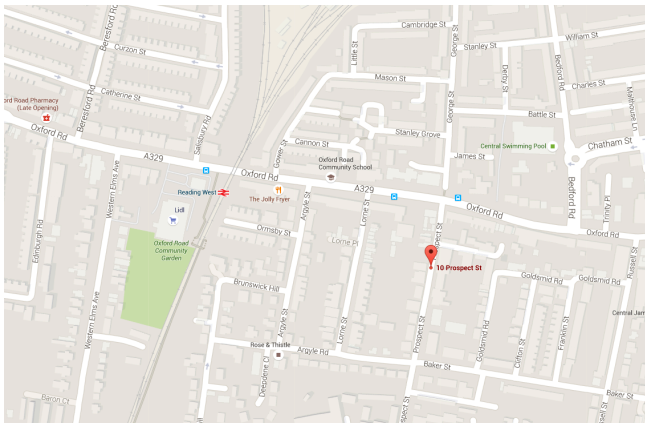
22nd December 2015

INTRODUCTION

Our client proposes to create an additional 3 units to the rear of the site at 10 Prospect Street Reading. Planning is approved for 6 units to the front of the site, currently under construction, but there is opportunity for a more dense use of the site while still achieving required parking and amenity standards for the area.

The proposal is for 2 x 1 bed and 1 x 2 bed flats in a single storey building, with an additional storey in the pitched roof.

The site is located less than 5 minutes walk from Reading West train station making it a desirable location for small residential units. The additional units will not have a significant impact on the street scene or the neighbouring properties and this is an excellent opportunity to create much needed additional housing.



SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site lies east of Reading West Station and is currently a vacant piece of land that is surrounded by residential development. Planning has been granted for 6 units to the front of the site and this is currently under construction.

The site is located in Zone 2, and is less than 15 minutes walk to Reading Town Centre which makes it a very sustainable location for residential development. Reading West train station is adjacent to the site which connects to the main train station, with direct train connections to London. The main

station in Reading is also only 20 minutes walk from the site.

The site is on a predominantly residential street and was previously in use as a stone masons yard. No. 8 Prospect Street has previously been converted into flats, and behind this is a commercial workshop, with a Tesco store to the north of the site. To the southern boundary of the site is a single dwelling, No. 18 Prospect Street. The western boundary of the site adjoins the rear gardens of the properties on Lorne Street.



View of current site

PLANNING HISTORY

The site is allocated for residential use under Policy SA9a of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, altered 2015). This states that the site would be suitable for around 15 dwellings, as a guidance. The northern portion of the site (211 – 221 Oxford Rd) has been developed as a Tesco store, which is accessed from Oxford Road.

The remaining portion of the site consists of land at the rear of nr 8 Prospect Street, and our proposal site at nr 10, both of which are well placed for residential development.

Outline planning for 6 flats was granted under 12/00711/OUT with details of this development agreed under applications 150394 and 150395. This development is currently under construction.

PLANNING CONSULTATION

There is clearly the potential for a higher density on this site and pre application advice was sought in relation to this, reference 151267/PREAPP. This advice was in relation to 3 x 3 bed town houses. This was deemed to be unacceptable for a number of reasons, with concerns in relation to impact of the proposal upon the character of the surrounding area, harm to the amenities of the surrounding residential occupiers and impact upon the provision of amenity space and landscaping/biodiversity measures to the already consented scheme to the front of the site. In the following sections a comparison between our proposal and the pre-app scheme will show how the various concerns have been addressed by reducing the size, height and impact generally of the proposed building.

The pre-app letter advises that a significant reduction in scale of the building and careful siting would be required in order to overcome these concerns.

The current proposal is for 2 x 1 bed and 1 x 2 bed apartments in a single storey pitched roof building that will have significantly less impact than the original proposals. In conjunction with the 6 units to the front of the site, the requirements of planning policy in relation to parking, amenity, quality of living space and overlooking of neighbouring properties have all been considered and the proposals meet the current requirements, as described below.

EXTERNAL DESIGN

The proposal is for one single storey building to the rear of the site. The roof will be pitched, with the loft space accommodating the third unit. No dormers are proposed in order to minimize the impact of the building. Outlook and natural lighting will be provided by rooflights and a recessed balcony space for the upper flat. The external walls will be brick, to match the building that is being constructed to the front of the site. The roof will be plain tiled to match the approved scheme, and the overall general appearance of the building will be understated and low scale. Our proposal will have little impact on the character of prospect street, as it will be visible only when looking down the side access along the

approved flats, where a gable end with balcony has been proposed to fit in with local character of gabled houses at neighbouring sites. Between the proposal and the approved scheme tree planting is proposed with further planting to soften and screen the impact of the new flats on neighbours and the currently constructed 6 flats.

The scale of the building is that of a large outbuilding, and it should be noted that a single storey building existed along the rear boundary of the stone mason's yard, as can be seen on the OS map and existing site drawing.

AREA

Gross Internal Area of the proposed development is 193m². The ground floor units are 47m² each. The unit in the loft space will be 79m², measured at 1.5m head height, with an additional 12m² at ground floor for access (101m² total).

In comparison the Gross Internal Area proposed at pre-app was around 300m² ie more than a third larger.

HEIGHT

The ridge height of the proposal will be 6.7 metres from the finished floor level. This is significantly lower than the proposal submitted for pre application advice which was approximately 7.8 metres. The eaves height of the proposal is 3.5 metre off FFL which is also much lower than the previous proposal, which had eaves at a height of approximately 5.5 metres above ground floor level. The previous proposal was over 3 storeys whereas this proposal is 2 storeys, with one storey located in the loft space so it appears to be a single storey building. In comparison the original proposal relied on large dormers at roof level, thus increasing the visual impact, as well as significantly increasing overlooking issues to nr 8 and nr 18 rear gardens.

LAYOUT

Please refer to floor plans for details of the layout of the properties.

2 units at ground floor, will be single bed, 2 person accommodation with private amenity space for both of these units to the rear of the building. It was agreed between the planning consultant and your officer that a 25m² patio garden would be sufficient amenity space for a flat (as this would normally have been required as part of shared amenity) The small patio gardens are about 30m² each and will receive sun in the afternoon being orientated South-West.

The flat in the loft will be accessed from a private front door also, and this unit will also benefit from private outdoor amenity space in the form of a small balcony which will give views back to Prospect Street along the access road. It was agreed with planning officer that the balcony area would negate the need to allow for additional amenity space within the shared allocation.

IMPACT ON CHARACTER OF THE AREA

The pre application advice expressed concerns that siting the building to the rear of the site is not in keeping with the character of the rear gardens in the area. Given the scale of the revised proposal however, as a single storey building, this is similar to the large industrial outbuildings previously used by the stone mason. There is also a collection of 'backyard' developments in this area with the commercial property and Tesco to the North of the site. This proposal would be directly adjacent to those and the impact on the character in the vicinity is minimal.

There were also a number of single storey buildings along the length of the rear fence boundary of the site which this building will replace, as such the relationship to the surrounding properties is similar to what it has been previously.

As stated before impact on Prospect Street would be minimal.

CLIMATE CHANGE: POLICY DM1

The adaptability of the proposal to deal with climate change has been considered and addressed where possible. All units will benefit from good natural lighting, and natural or mechanical ventilation (with heat-recovery potential) and boundary screening will protect the property from exposure to wind.

All units will achieve solar gains from East facing windows in the morning, which is ideal, and will reduce the heating requirement of the properties. The use of trees and planting has been carefully considered and a sustainable drainage system will be used, with permeable paving and rainwater harvesting. High levels of insulation will be used in the walls and roof, ensuring an energy efficient property that will meet the needs of occupants for many years to come. Air source heat pump technology will be considered in order to further reduce carbon emissions.

IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

There will be no overlooking from the ground floor units to the adjacent gardens, as fencing to a minimum of 1.8m, but higher in most places has already been installed under the current approval.

The unit in the loft will overlook the parking area and shared amenity space within the site. The edge of the building nearest to 18 Prospect St is 23m away from this neighbouring building, and due to the limited depth of the balcony and the fact that the gable roof provides screening to the sides, we believe this is acceptable. There are a small number of rooflights proposed to the rear of the building but these will be above 1.7m from finished floor level and used for lighting/ventilation purposes only with limited visibility to the neighbouring properties.

ACCESS

Each unit will have its own front door with level access to comply with Part M, although access to unit 3 requires use of stairs beyond this point.

Vehicular access will be via the same access as for the development to the front of the site, and we propose no changes to the road layout already approved, apart from elongating it and turning the parking through 90 degrees in order to provide the required 9 parking spaces plus 1 for visitors. This will lead to the parking area for all units which is located nearest the new units, in order to provide a decently sized amenity space along the approved building.

A footpath is proposed for pedestrian access. It is proposed that this will be level with the road where it is next to the parking spaces so that it provides the required 1.25m wide manouvring space for the disabled bay.

The width of the road is suitable for fire pump access, but it is not the intention for refuse vehicles to enter the site.

Please refer to the site and landscaping plans for further details of this.

PARKING

10 parking spaces will be provided. This is in line with the Policy which requires 1 space per unit for a 1-2 bed flat in Zone 2, plus 1 visitor space per 10 units, although a visitor space was not provided with the originally approved scheme. 1 of the spaces will be an allocated disabled space.

The number of spaces compares favourably with the pre-app proposal, as 2 or 3 less spaces will be required, thus providing additional space for shared amenity for the existing 6 flats.

If agreeable to the Council we would propose that the visitor space could be omitted which would add a further 11.5m² of amenity space which may be of more value to the occupants.

REFUSE & BICYCLE STORAGE

As part of the approved 6 flats there is bin storage provided for their use within the building currently under construction, and these are suitably close to the highway. Additional Refuse/recycling bins are proposed adjacent to the parking area, with access via the footpath. This is large enough to serve all 3 additional units, but may just serve Unit 3, as units 1 and 2 can store bins in their rear gardens.

Bins for the new units will be brought to the road on collection day, and an area of hardstanding is identified on the plan adjacent to the road for this purpose. The store will also accommodate bicycle storage for four bicycles. This will meet the needs of the cycle storage for the 6 units to the front of the site, as well as for the 2 ground floor units proposed. Cycle storage for the new 2 bed flat is in the ground floor entrance, with potential additional cycle storage being able to be provided in the patio gardens for the ground floor units also.

AMENITY SPACE

The proposed amenity space is in line with the Councils guidance of 25m² per unit for a 1-2 bed flat. 6x25m²=150m², just over this area has been provided when excluding paths, parking and roads. The pre application advice raised concern that all the amenity space for the units to the front of the site would be lost, but this revised proposal and landscaping plan allows for sufficient shared amenity space to meet the guidelines provided by the Council. Private amenity space will be provided to the new ground floor units, and a recessed balcony will be provided for the new upper floor unit. In conversation with the Council it was agreed that a balcony replaces the requirement for 25m² of shared amenity.

LANDSCAPING

The landscaping of this proposal has been given careful consideration to ensure that good quality and usable amenity space is provided. Biodiversity measures have been proposed, mostly in line with the approved scheme, along with a number of landscaping features that will make the space accessible and offer valuable amenity to the residents of the properties. Further detail can be seen in the descriptive text on the landscape drawing, and we feel that a more intense use of the amenity space allows for more visual amenity and good space for children to play.

CONTAMINATION

Please see the report included with the 6 flat application, this detail was agreed with application 150395.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION

2652 001 Design access statement, construction method statement
 2652 010 site location plan
 2652 012 block plan, site sections
 2652 015 GA plans, sections, elevations
 0604.1.1 proposed landscape plan and explanatory notes
 10710_200_10A topo survey existing plan
 Planning Statement
 CIL form
 Planning Form (via planning portal)

CONSTRUCTION METHODOLOGY STATEMENT

a) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors

Sufficient parking will be provided within the site boundary to accommodate all staff operatives and visitors vehicles, and will eliminate the need for parking on Prospect Street or other surrounding roads. Personnel unable to park on site will be bussed in. The Contractor will manage the on-site parking by appropriate signage e.g. "Parking Area Reserved for Construction Operatives Until Further Notice".

b) Loading and unloading of plant and materials

All major deliveries to site will be via the current site access off Prospect Street and into the contractors site compound.

Plant and materials will be unloaded in the designated area within the site boundary. Vehicles will not be allowed to create an obstruction on Prospect Street.

Vehicles arriving unexpectedly and unable to park in the designated area will be directed to a holding area and called in when space is available.

c) Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development

Safe and secure plant and material storage areas will be utilised as the overall site develops. The site compound will be sub-divided into trade specific sections, and will facilitate the safe segregation of materials (flammable/non- flammable, etc). There will be a permit system in place for the issue of keys for the plant on site, and all vehicles will be locked and secured at the end of each working day and the keys returned to the site management for safe keeping. All plant and materials will be stored on site.

d) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays, facilities for public viewing, where appropriate

The site will be surrounded by the appropriate hoarding, in this instance heras fencing, to ensure that it is kept secure and the public are unable to gain access.

Barriers on or abutting the highway will comply with Chapter 8 of the Dept. Transport Traffic Signs Manual. The Contractor is aware that a Hoarding Licence must be obtained from RBC Highways Dept.

e) Wheel washing facilities

Where necessary wheel wash facilities are to be provided on site and the provision of hard standing areas on site will reduce the possible egress of materials on to the road. The road will be inspected, and if necessary, cleaned up after exits from site.

f) Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction

Wherever possible dust from the construction will be minimised through off-site pre-fabrication. Where this is not possible operations will be carried out in a designated area using dust extraction and filters on the cutting tools. Any dusty operations i.e. stone or brick cutting require local screening or the activities may be limited to certain areas or time periods in order to limit impacts. Dusty materials stockpiles and dusty activities such as stone cutting and grinding to be sited away from the site boundary and/or effectively screened where practicable

Regular damping down and the use of suitable screens to prevent dust spreading will keep dust creation during demolition etc. to a minimum. Dust will be regularly cleared up using suitable vacuum devices. Sweeping, which tends to spread dust, will be avoided where possible. Any land clearing activities including excavation and ground breaking will be “damped down” using water suppression particularly in dry weather. In wet weather greater attention to be paid to ensuring any vehicles onsite do not traffic debris onto local roads. Loaded lorries and skips will be covered with netting/sheeting, and the wheels of all vehicles/plant leaving site will be cleaned so that dirt is not spread onto the surrounding roads. Drop heights, when loading and unloading materials, would be minimised.

g) A scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction programme

A scheme will be implemented with the contractor’s waste collection sub-contractor to sort all waste in to different piles and these will be recycled where possible. All skips collected from site are subject to sorting at their recycling station. The development also maximises the re-use of the existing building fabric to reduce overall waste production onsite

