

8 May 2024

My Ref. A24/01

Reading Borough Council
Planning & Development
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading, RG1 2LU

DD: 07824 428455
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Dear Sir or Madam,

CHANGE OF USE FROM SHOP (CLASS E) TO DWELLING HOUSES (CLASS C3) TO THE FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR TO FORM 2 No. 2-BEDROOM UNITS & ASSOCIATED ALTERATIONS TO SHOP FRONT AT 90-91 FRIAR STREET, READING, RG1 1EL

With regard to the accompanying planning application for the above development, please refer to the following Design and Access Statement;

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

a) Introduction

The application site comprises a three-storey mid-terraced property which was used as a shop with ancillary accommodation on the west edge of Reading town centre opposite Greyfriars Church. The property has remained vacant since 2017.

The proposed development effectively seeks to renew permission granted on 12 June 2017 under application number 170501. The earlier planning permission was not implemented and in accordance with condition 1 of the full planning approval, permission has now expired.

The proposed development comprises the same conversion of the upper parts into two self-contained maisonettes. The internal layouts are substantially the same as previously approved, except for some modification of the staircases to ensure that the means of escape from the second floor is enclosed, as required under current Building Regulations. The ground floor and basement will remain as shop unit.

The Planning, Design and Access Statement prepared by Ridge Property Consultants and dated 29 March 2017, submitted with the earlier planning application (re. 170501), remains relevant and addresses the history of the site, background to the proposed development and relevant planning policies.



Existing Front Elevation – View from Friar Street

b) Proposal

The proposed development comprises the change of use from shop (class E) to dwelling houses (class C3) to the first and second floor to form 2 no. 2-bedroom dwelling units (maisonettes) and associated alterations to the shop front.

The proposed development is shown on the accompanying drawings, numbered;

- AD/01 Existing basement and ground floor plans
- AD/02 Existing first and second floor plans
- AD/03 Existing front and rear elevations
- AD/04 Proposed basement and ground floor plans
- AD/05 Proposed first and second floor plans
- AD/06 Proposed front and rear elevations
- AD/07 Site and location plans

The proposed gross internal floor areas of the new dwellings are as follows;

- **Unit 1** (two bedroom / 3 person) 58m²
- **Unit 2** (two bedroom / 3 person) 59m²

b) Design Statement

The building is traditionally built with brick-faced walls and a slate-covered pitched roof and is thought likely to have been built approximately 150 years ago. The front elevation incorporates decorative brick detailing of a type common in Victorian properties in Reading. Other than alteration of the shop front to accommodate new entrance doors to each new dwelling and replacement of the existing windows with sash style uPVC top hung casement units, the façade of the building is not being significantly changed and will remain sympathetic to the character of the adjacent properties and surrounding area.

The proposed development will provide much needed additional residential accommodation in the town centre, making use of space which would otherwise be of limited benefit. The two dwellings created will provide adequate family accommodation.

The proposal is fundamentally the same as the development approved in 2017 which was considered to be acceptable and compliant with the relevant local plan policies and guidance at that time. No significant changes in policy are understood to have been made to prejudice the proposed development.

The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its design context.

b) Access Statement

Access to the property for disabled persons and emergency vehicles will remain as presently exists. No alteration of the pedestrian or vehicular accesses is proposed.

The proposal will not therefore adversely affect access to the property and is considered to be acceptable.

c) Biodiversity Statement

It is anticipated that the proposed development will not adversely affect the biodiversity of the surrounding area.

I trust that you will be able to consider the application based on the submitted information and in light of the earlier planning permission. If you have any queries or require any further information, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours faithfully,



Andy Colangelo FRICS
Chartered Building Surveyor
Cc file