

Alison Amoah
Planning Department
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU
01/03/2024

Subject: Formal Objection to Planning Application No. 240161 - 41 South Street, Reading, RG1 4QU

Dear Mrs Alison Amoah,

We are writing to formally object to the proposed planning application for 41 South Street, Reading, RG1 4QU, under planning application number 240161. Our property, a Grade II listed building, is directly adjacent to the proposed development site. We have significant concerns regarding the impact of the proposed four-storey development next to our property, the Close it backs onto, and the precedent it sets for future developments. Our objections are based on specific aspects of UK planning law, local policies, and the special considerations required for listed buildings, which we believe have not been fully addressed.

Invasion of Privacy and Loss of Residential Amenity: The proposed balconies pose a significant invasion of privacy, directly overlooking our garden and living areas. With only an alleyway of 110cm separating us, this development will significantly reduce our sense of space and privacy in our garden, a vital outdoor space for our family. This aspect is particularly concerning as the garden is integral to our residential amenity as much as the interior of our home, highlighting the proposal's direct conflict with the principles of good design and residential amenity outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local council policies.

Impact on Light and Enjoyment of Property: The proposed development will significantly block natural light to our rear garden, affecting our enjoyment and use of the space. This garden is the only outdoor area our family has, and the proposed extension will extend directly upwards and into the direction that the sun shines into our garden, a factor the planning application has overlooked. The proposed development will also obstruct natural light within our property. The right to light, a key consideration under common law and within the NPPF, is not adequately addressed, underscoring the development's disregard for the importance of amenity for existing and future buildings.

Drainage and Structural Concerns: The proximity of the proposed development raises serious concerns about drainage and the potential impact on the structural integrity of our historic property. The NPPF mandates that developments should improve local environmental conditions, including drainage systems. The drains under Livery Close, a private Close, have been poorly maintained and have blocked in the past. These drainage systems were not designed considering future property development and the increased load from the proposed development. The potential impact on local drainage, especially given the pre-existing issues, could be detrimental, necessitating a thorough hydrological assessment to ensure the safety of our property and the sustainability of the local infrastructure. Our Grade II listed property, constructed primarily of flint and limestone mortar, faces serious concerns regarding the impact of increased stress and disruptions to the foundations surrounding our building on the structural integrity of our house and garden wall. It is also important to note that the road between South Street and Livery close is sloped, therefore making the ground more unstable.

Heritage and Conservation Impact: The scale and proximity of the development are inappropriate for the setting of our Grade II listed building. It fails to comply with statutory duties and local policies

aimed at preserving the historical and architectural significance of the area, undermining the protection of existing residents' amenities and the imperative for contextually appropriate development, directly impacting the character and value of our home.

Parking and Traffic Concerns: The current plans remove all private parking provisions, yet the increase in property size will only exacerbate the demand for parking. This development contradicts local planning policies designed to manage traffic flow and parking in residential areas, with inadequate consideration for the subsequent impact on congestion.

Density and Overdevelopment: The proposed development constitutes an overdevelopment of the site, risking the amenity of the neighbourhood. The increase in density exacerbates issues related to privacy, light, and overcrowding, further detracting from the quality of life for existing residents.

Impact on Private Close: The anticipated increase in traffic through Livery Close, a private road, has not been sufficiently considered. This oversight is likely to lead to increased maintenance costs and potential safety issues for its residents, especially children.

Given these concerns, especially the invasive nature of the proposed balconies which directly threaten our privacy and residential amenity, we strongly urge the council to reconsider the proposed development. The application fails to meet the essential considerations for historical context, neighbourly amenity, and sustainable development principles as outlined in local and national planning policies.

We trust that our objections will be taken into consideration and look forward to your careful review of the proposed development.

Yours sincerely,

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