SHAUN•TANNER
ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

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PLANNING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

In support of an application for Conversion of the first floor from Offices to 2 x 1-bed & 1 x 2-bed flat (C3 Use Class)

104-108 School Road
Tilehurst
Reading
RG31 5AX

December 2022 - Revision A

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Introduction

This planning design and access statement has been prepared by STL Architecture & Planning to support the detailed planning application submitted on behalf of our client, for change of use of the 1st floor offices to 2 x 1-bed and 1 x 2-bed flats.

This statement has been prepared in the context of the Reading Borough Councils Local Plan, adopted November 2019 and will cover the history and context of the proposal and outline the necessary information required to provide a determination by Reading Borough Council planning officers. The resulting conclusion is that key material considerations, including, impact on; character, neighbour amenity and highways safety are acceptable and the wider objectives of the relevant local and national planning policy are therefore met.

Site Context

The existing site is the 1st floor offices above Co-Operative Funeral Directors, along the commercial road of properties fronting School Road, Tilehurst. Directly opposite St Michaels Road. This site is to the western fringes of the retail area of Tilehurst. Within walking distance of all retail and Blagrave and Victoria Recreation ground residential amenities.

School road is on a major bus link connecting to Reading town centre.

The applicants own and control the application site in red and all land in blue marked on our Location Plan.

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Planning Policy

National

RBC Local Development Framework

Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3: Adaption to Climate Change

CC5: Waste minimisation and storage

CC6: Accessibility and the intensity of development

CC7: Design and public realm

CC8: Safeguarding amenity

EN14: Trees, hedges and woodlands

EN18: Flooding and sustainable drainage systems

H1: Provision of housing

H3: Affordable housing

H5: Standards for new housing

H7: Protecting the existing housing stock

H10: Private and communal outdoor space

TR3: Access, traffic and highway-related matters

TR5: Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging

RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres

RL3: Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres

Supplementary Planning Documents

Affordable housing (2013)

Revised parking standards and design (2011)

Planning obligations under section 106 (2015)

Sustainable design and construction (2011)

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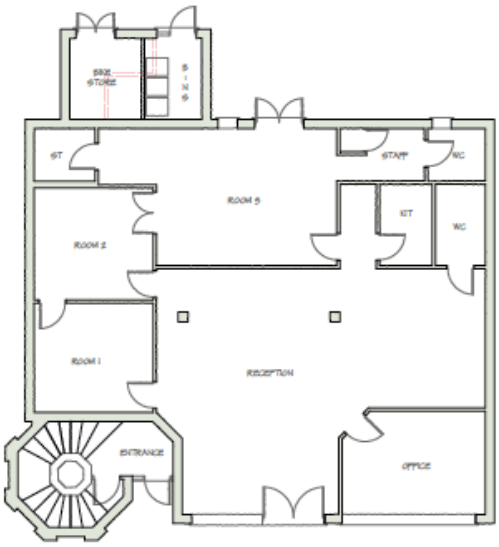
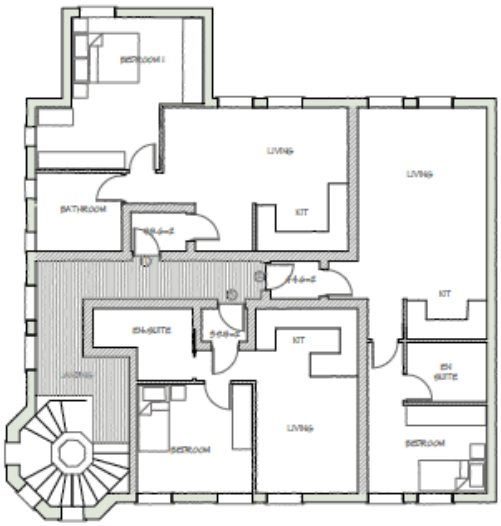
Proposal

The proposal will involve internal alterations of the existing offices with no external changes, to form 2 x single occupancy1-beds (Plot 2: 44.6sqm and Plot 3: 39.5sqm) and 1 x double occupancy, 1-bed flat (Plot 1: 55.6sqm). The application includes the provision of bin and bike stores within the existing stairwell within the rear 2 storey projection.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Access and Parking

The existing 1st floor has the benefit of 5 parking spaces. There is adequate onsite turning provided to allow vehicles to enter and exit in a forward gear.

The existing access serves commercial vehicles for refuse collection.

Access and Landscaping

All proposed 1st floor units have direct access through a protected entrance lobby independent of the retail space below.

There are no plans to provide enhanced landscaping within the existing carparking area.

Principal of Development

The application site has an established existing Class E. The site is located in the District Centre of Tilehurst where there are a variety of land uses. Dual use properties along School Road are common. The proposal is therefore compatible with the wider land uses and would be located in a sustainable location with a variety of shops and public services within walking

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distance. The principle of conversion to residential is therefore acceptable subject to all other material planning considerations being satisfied.

Character and Appearance

Local Plan policy CC7 outlines development must be of a high design quality and should maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the area. There are no plans to alter the current external appearance as outlined earlier in the statement.

Residential Amenity

The current layout is designed to avoid any overlooking of private amenity areas and this will be retained. The bathroom to unit 1 facing west will be obscure glazed.

Flooding and Drainage

The application site does not give rise to concerns with respect to flooding or drainage. The site is not located within Flood Zone 2 or 3. The existing surface water and foul systems are already in place and there are no plans to alter these.

Ecology and Biodiversity

This proposal is not supported by an Ecology survey, as it is not applicable in this case.

Adaptation to Climate Change

The following devices will be incorporated within each home:

- Water efficient taps.
- Water efficient cisterns.
- Low output showers.
- Flow restrictors to manage water pressures to achieve optimum levels.

Renewable and low carbon technologies have been considered and the applicant has elected for a fabric and renewable energy approach to meet the necessary CO2 reduction targets in accordance with Local Plan Policy CC2 and CC3. An efficient mechanical ventilation system is proposed that will introduce fresh air to the building to ensure the internal comfort of the building is maintained.

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The available options for delivery of energy have been appraised and replacement highly efficient individual condensing gas boilers are the optimal method of supplying the homeowners with efficient, cost effective space heating and hot water.

The heating design will be enhanced by specifying full zone and optimum start controls to ensure that the homeowners have an effective, easy to control system. A high percentage of internal lights will be low energy which will reduce energy and CO2 emissions further.

Standards for New Housing – Policy H5

The minimum gross internal floor area for a single occupancy 1 storey dwelling is 39sqm.The minimum gross internal floor area for a double occupancy 1 storey dwelling is 51sqm. The current layout as proposed complies with Policy H5.

Development Contributions

The current offices have been in use for more than 6 months in the previous 3 years. Therefore a CIL charge will not be applicable.

Conclusion

This application makes good use of an existing building in a highly sustainable location including excellent access to frequent public transport links, adequate parking and bin & bike stores. There are parks nearby for outdoor activities

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