

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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PROPOSED ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION TO THE SPITIKA GREEK RESTAURANT, 6 PROSPECT STREET, CAVERSHAM RG4 8JG TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SEATING SPACE ON THE GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR, LARGER KITCHEN AND NEW MALE AND FEMALE TOILETS, AND THE PROVISION OF A NEW ESCAPE STAIR TO THE REAR.

Description

The proposal seeks planning permission to make internal alterations and extend the existing Spitika Greek restaurant to increase the existing seating capacity, enlarge the existing kitchen area, and form new Male and Female Toilets on the first floor. Together with the provision of a new fire escape route from the first floor to the Car Park at the rear. The application also seeks to include the formation of a new window opening to the first floor front elevation to improve daylight provision to the new restaurant area.

Design Context

The existing established restaurant is a two storey building forming part of a terrace of Victorian style shopfronts facing Prospect Street, Caversham. Most retail properties having been altered over the years with new shopfronts at pavement level, the first floors little changed other than with replacement windows. As with most properties in the terrace the frontage is at the back of the pavement, and extending to the car park at the rear, there being no amenity space. The building abuts the party wall to No. 4 and No. 8 each side respectively. The original properties being of two storey under a slate pitched roof with lower elements to the rear with mono pitched slate roofs. Further more recent flat roof extensions have been added for various purposes to most properties, extending to the car park boundary. It is understood that the property has fallen under Class E for many years, with the present usage as a Greek Restaurant since 2020. It is also understood that the first floor front room, prior to the present ownership was also restaurant space. The remaining upper rooms being, restaurant toilets, bedrooms and a bathroom, but these have remained vacant, at least since 2020. Alterations to the property fall under Planning Policies within the Local Plan adopted November 2019. From investigation it appears that this and adjoining properties are not Listed, nor do they fall within the constraints of a Conservation Area.

Design Philosophy

The submitted proposals are prepared as a result of the applicant's instruction to increase the existing seating capacity, together with the improvement of the kitchen facilities. New larger toilet facilities are also proposed in line with increased customers. A new fire escape stair and passage to the rear is also provided in view of the proposed first floor usage. By the proposal utilising the small yard area and additional first floor space above, the usable floor space is increased by 26.69 Sq. M

The design solution removes the original rear structures, replacing them with a new two storey structure, attached and extending from the original two storey front structure, retaining the pitched slate roof. The extension walls of brickwork under a flat roof. The boundary with No.4, whilst abutting No. 4, on inspection appears to show each has its own wall construction. The boundary with No.8, for the length of new construction will be built along the boundary and independent of No.8

leaving an open passage with no window openings. It is accepted that a 'Party Wall Agreement' will be required with both neighbours. Additional daylight to the first floor seating area will be via rooflights within the flat roof, and, with the proposed additional window to the first floor front wall. It will be noted that neighbouring properties have two such windows and the proposal is considered to be sympathetic to the character of the front elevation and the street scene. It is not intended to change the front entrance or present 'shopfront'.

From the application form it will be noted that the increased size of the restaurant will result in an Increase in the number of permanent staff from 6 to 10, providing additional job opportunities for the local community.

Parking Transport and Waste collection

No.6 is conveniently placed within Caversham, with good public transport facilities. There is no allocated car parking, but a public car park to the rear, and with others nearby.

The present waste collection system will remain, with bins stored and collected from the rear car Park. There is no hazardous waste, new cooking oil is delivered and used oil retained and removed every two weeks, under contract with the supplier Booker.

Sustainable Design

All new development should seek to minimise carbon and energy impacts associated with its design and construction, and whilst this is accepted, there are limited opportunities on this project to achieve this. However, consideration will be given to reducing the carbon impact through the design of heating and lighting, insulation and glazing through the Building Regulations process.

Conclusion

The design is considered by the applicant to fulfil the brief, to increase the clientele within the boundaries of the property. There will be little or no adverse affect on neighbouring properties, more that when completed, the somewhat unsightly appearance at the rear will be markedly improved. It is considered that the proposals accord with the local development plan and consequently, should be considered and approved without delay.