

Design, Access & Heritage Statement

**1.5 storey side extension & part single part 2 storey
rear extension**

**18 Church Road, Caversham,
Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7AD.**

November 2024

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1.0 Introduction

This statement has been prepared in support of an application submitted to construct a 1.5 storey side extension and a part single part 2 storey rear extension 18 Church Road, Caversham.

The design of the proposed extensions has been an iterative process, informed by the constraints and opportunities of the site, a previously withdrawn application and national and local policy guidance.

The property itself is an attractive inter war dwelling and lies within the St Peters Conservation Area, as such the proposals seek to provide an enhancement the property itself and neighbouring amenity whilst not detracting from the existing street scene and the established character of the local area.



Aerial View



Front Elevation

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2.0 Appearance

18 Church Road is of mock Tudor style and was constructed circa 1920, the existing building is of red facing brick cavity wall construction with a plain clay tile roof covering. The original building is under a hipped roof with off centre gable projections to front and rear, with additional dormer windows to front, rear and flank elevations. There is a large later addition to the rear housing a kitchen/diner and boathouse with parapet walls and flat roof. Black PVC windows have been installed throughout but are set in original timber frames on the front elevation.

There is a large rear garden abutting the river and a walled parking court at the front, containing trees that would be considered important to the local character.



Front elevation



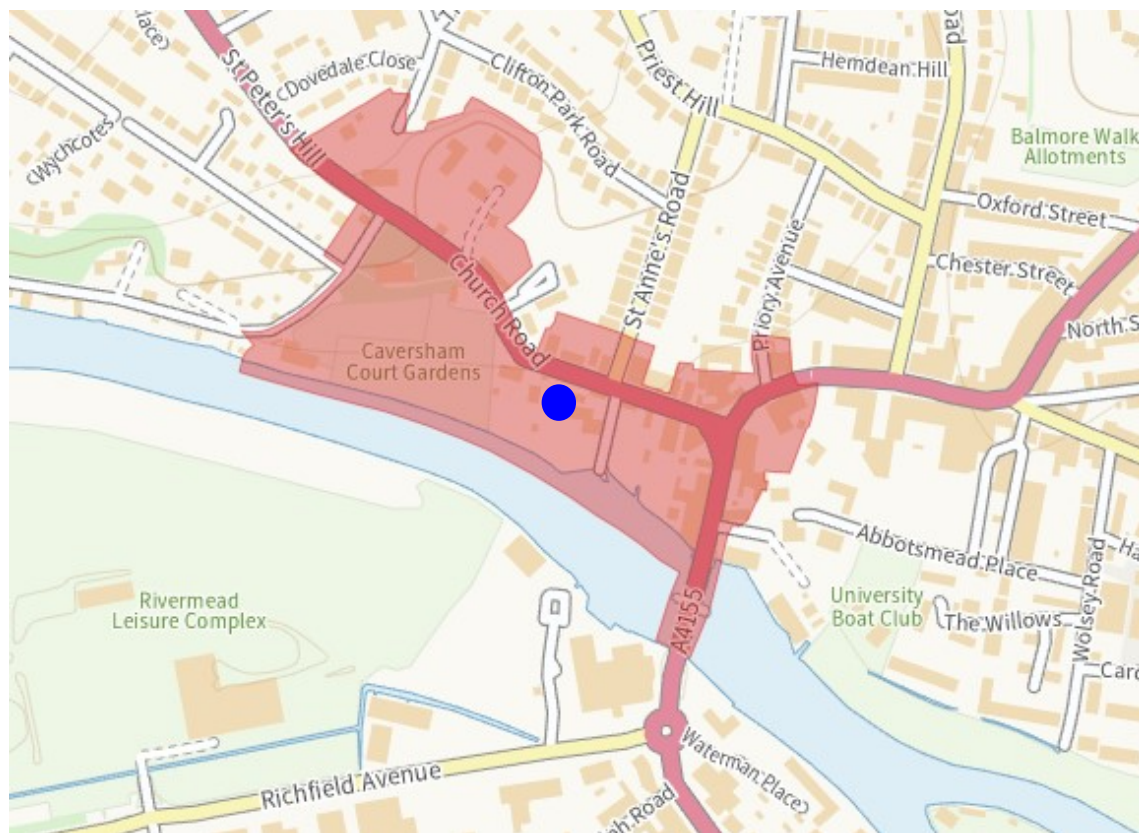
Rear elevation and garden

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3.0 Heritage & Conservation

The property itself lies within the St Peters Conservation Area, north of the River Thames in Caversham, includes the church of St Peter, founded in the 12th century, and Caversham Court Gardens, a historic riverside garden refurbished in 2009. It also incorporates the medieval core of the original Caversham village, running from the end of Bridge Street, along Church Road and up St Peters Hill. This was the old pilgrim route from Reading Abbey towards Oxford, and linked the agricultural hinterland with the village, the economy of which was based on the River Thames.



Conservation Area Boundary with No. 18 Highlighted Blue

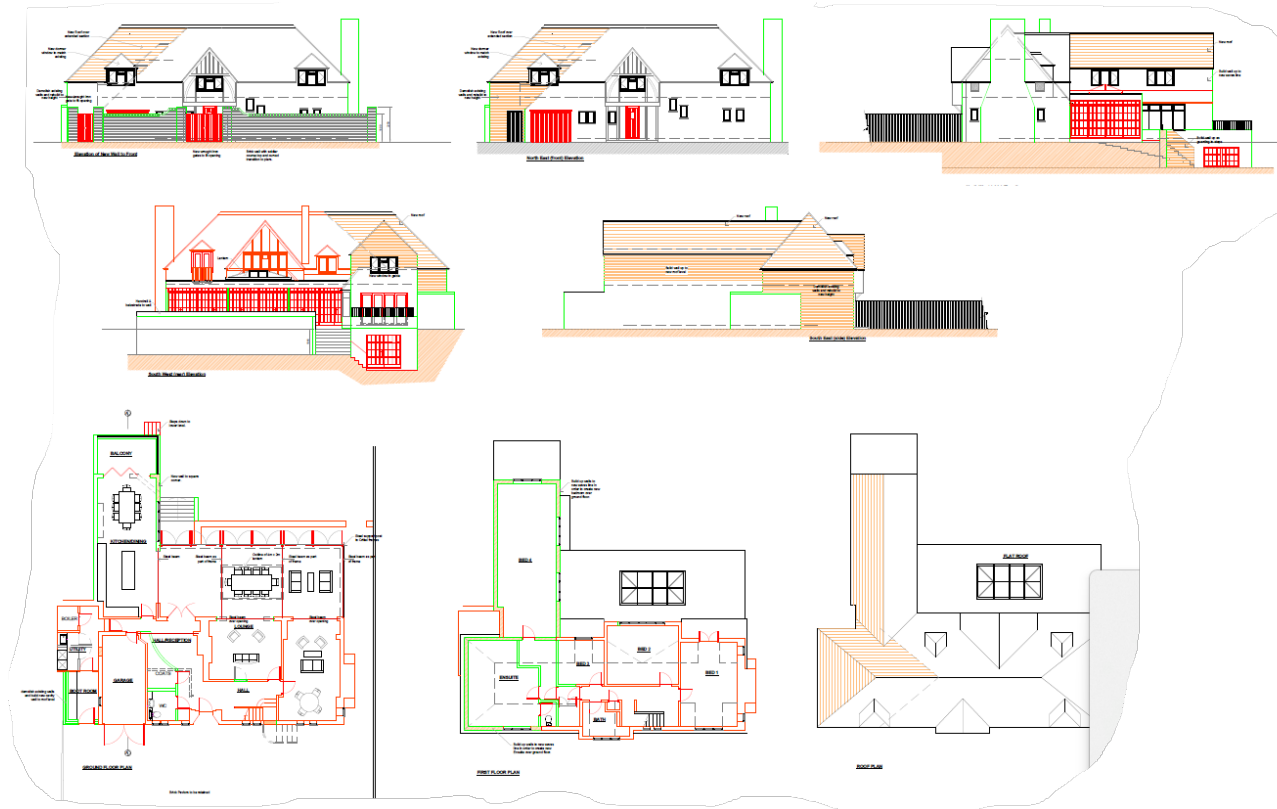
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4.0 Planning History

A planning application was submitted under application number 220548 in April 2022, the proposals consisted of first floor rear and side extensions, a single storey rear extension, a new front boundary wall and gates and alterations to window fenestration. The application was withdrawn in November 2020 due to a number of issues and objections.

The current application does not include the boundary and fenestration alterations but comprises of a re-design of the side and rear extension to address previous issues.



The main issues with the previously withdrawn proposals that are relative to this application were as follows:

1. Negative impact on amenity of neighbouring property at no. 18a Church Road due to first floor side extension and the first floor extension over the existing projection to rear.
2. Negative impact on amenity of no. 3 Buckside due to the first floor extension over the existing projection to rear.

These issues are discussed and addressed in the following design sections.

Previously Withdrawn Proposals

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5.0 Design

The proposals consist of a 'in keeping' side extension which will blend in with, and provide additional balance to the front elevation. Constructed to match existing detailing and materials, the proposals seek to blend seamlessly with existing and ensure the amenity of no. 18a Church Road is not negatively impacted by;

1. Proposing a reduced eaves level from the previously withdrawn submission, reducing overall height and pushing the roof plane away from the boundary.
2. Ensuring existing overlooking is removed by removing the existing flank elevation dormer.
3. Providing increased access space for maintenance and improved outlook at ground floor by constructing the proposed flank wall further into the applicants site and demolishing small section of boundary wall, giving over a small section of land.

A contemporary glazed extension is proposed to the rear with a flat roof and gable projection, high quality in detailing and materials the proposals seek to improve the overall aesthetic from previously submitted schemes whilst addressing the negative impact on neighbouring properties at 18a Church Road and 3 Buckside by;

1. Moving the first floor extension away from the boundary to a more central position on the existing dwelling, removing over-shadowing and increased height of an already very tall boundary wall.
2. Removing excessive glazing bars, busy detailing and simplifying the proposed aesthetic. Use of modern materials such as glass and Cor-Ten steel to soften the impact of the proposed extension and separate new additions from the original structure, allowing the history of the building to be read more clearly.
3. Setting back of proposed first floor gable glazing and Juliet door within the roof plane to obstruct sideways views and remove any perceived additional overlooking.

5.1 Layout - Side Extension Impact Appraisal

Constructed on the left flank of the existing dwelling the in keeping extension will have no negative impact on the street scene of wider conservation area due to the use of traditional materials and detailing to match existing. In fact the proposals represent an improvement of the balance of the existing structure by centralising the gable projection and mirroring the existing front facing dormer window onto the new roof plane directly above the garage door.



Previously withdrawn proposal

Previous proposals saw the flank extension wall built on the existing boundary at approximately 320mm away from the neighbouring property (existing boundary position), at a height of 3700mm to eaves. The current proposal demolishes the boundary wall and constructs the new flank wall 480mm inside the existing boundary line, handing over the additional 480mm strip of land to form an 800mm maintenance/access space owned by the neighbour. The newly proposed eaves of 3100mm is 600mm lower than previously proposed and has the effect of pushing the flank roof slope 600mm further from the neighbouring property further reducing impact.



Current Proposal



5.1 Layout - Side Extension Impact Appraisal (continued)

The proposals also remove the existing side facing dormer window, removing all overlooking of the private garden space and inter-looking of bedrooms of no. 18 and 18a Church Road.



Overlooking of 18a garden from existing dormer to be removed



View into 18a bedroom from existing dormer to be removed

From the above images it can be seen that the proposals for the side extension constitute a marked improvement on the privacy for the residents of the neighbouring property at no. 18 and to some lesser extent those at 3 Buckside which can be seen in the background.

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5.2 Layout - Rear Extension Impact Appraisal

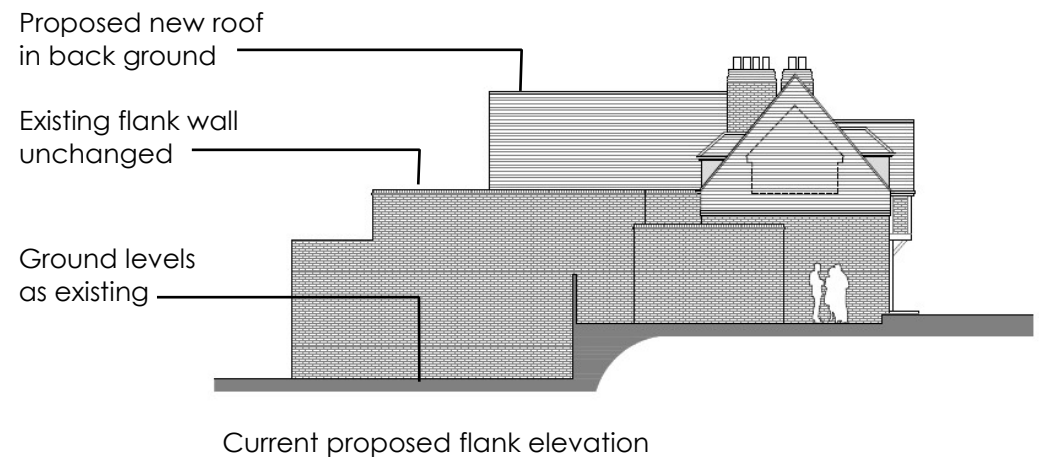
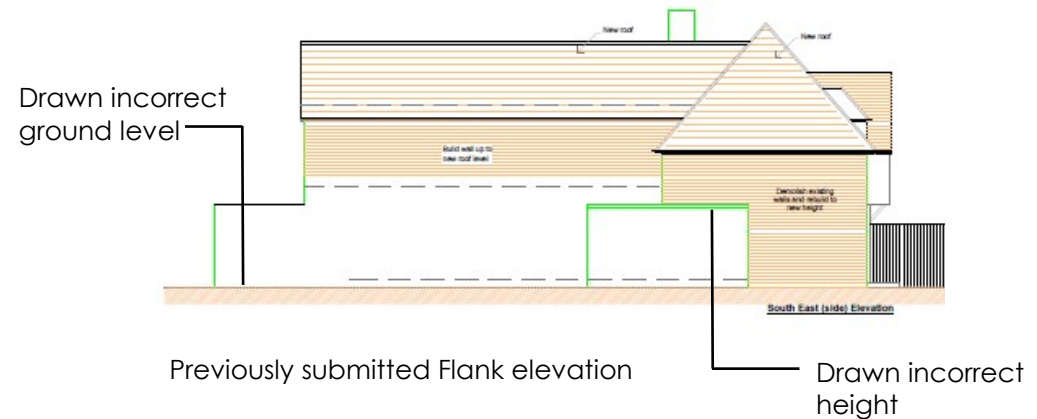
Whilst the current proposals represent a vast improvement aesthetically, the main aim of the scheme alteration is to relocate the first floor rear extension away from the boundary so as to not increase the height of the already overbearing boundary wall to 18a and 3 Buckside. The current proposals represent a marked reduction in impact over those submitted previously and would no longer over shadow neighbouring properties. It should be noted that the previous proposals were incorrectly drawn giving the impression the existing walls were lower than they currently are.



Previously submitted rear elevation



Current Proposed rear elevation

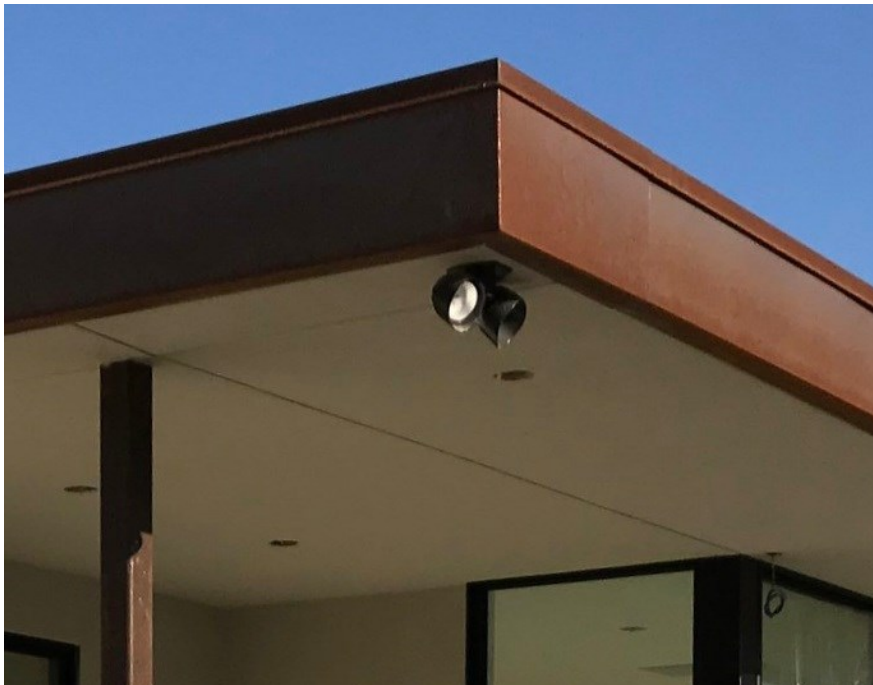


5.3 Appearance

As previously noted the proposed side extension will be traditionally detailed with materials to match existing, designed to blend seamlessly when viewed from the front and public areas.

The rear extensions will be contemporary in design with roof projections for solar shading of glazing at ground and first floor and to screen neighbours from overlooking at first floor.

It is proposed to use a blended red stock facing brickwork to match the existing on the external walls and to finish the roof extension at first floor with plain clay tiles to match existing.



Sample photo of CorTen steel fascia for reference only.

Black slimline aluminium frames are proposed for the sliding doors and first floor gable glazing, with CorTen steel facings to the flat roof and gable projections.

The weathered effect and colouring of the CorTen steel will help to soften the projections and help them blend with the rusty tones of the existing brickwork and clay roof tiles, especially viewed from distance across the river. From distance the proposals will be seen as a high quality modern addition which settles into the host building rather than an abrasive bolt on.

The contemporary design at the rear has been proposed to compliment and enhance the existing building rather than constructing a reproduction of a historic building. Previous submissions attempted to emulate a traditional style but were poorly detailed and at odds with the host structure.

6.0 Pre Application Advice

No formal pre application advice was sought for this application however the proposals have been formed based on previous application comments and objections, along with email exchanges with planning officers prior to the previous application being withdrawn.

7.0 Conclusion

Consisting of side and rear extensions constructed with high quality materials and detailing, the proposals for 18 Church Road compliment the existing building. They form a positive addition to the host dwelling and improve the living conditions of the occupants.

The form and materials do not detract from the wider Conservation Area or neighbouring amenity and therefore meets the requirements of Section 72(1) of the Act. In fact there will be no demonstrable negative impact on either, due to redesign and reduction of the previously proposed side extension and the re-positioning of the rear first floor extension.

There is no additional overshadowing or overlooking from the proposals, instead an improvement to neighbouring amenity by removing existing over/inter looking from the existing side facing dormer and improving access to their property.

For these reasons it is proposed that the alterations meet the criteria of the NPPF and the Local Authority is therefore invited to support this application.