

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham

App Ref: PL/25/1693 Removal/variation of conditions

Address: 10B BRIDGE STREET, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 8AA

Proposal: Partial demolition of rear extension and new rear extension to create ground floor flat and shop and 5 bedroom HMO to first and second floor (amended description) without complying with Condition 2 of planning permission PL/24/1098 to amend approved plans to change the layout of the ground floor flat (amended description)

Applicant: Nathan Crook

Received date: 25/11/2025

Target Decision date: 17/02/2026 (EOT)

Case Officer: Marcelina Rejwarska

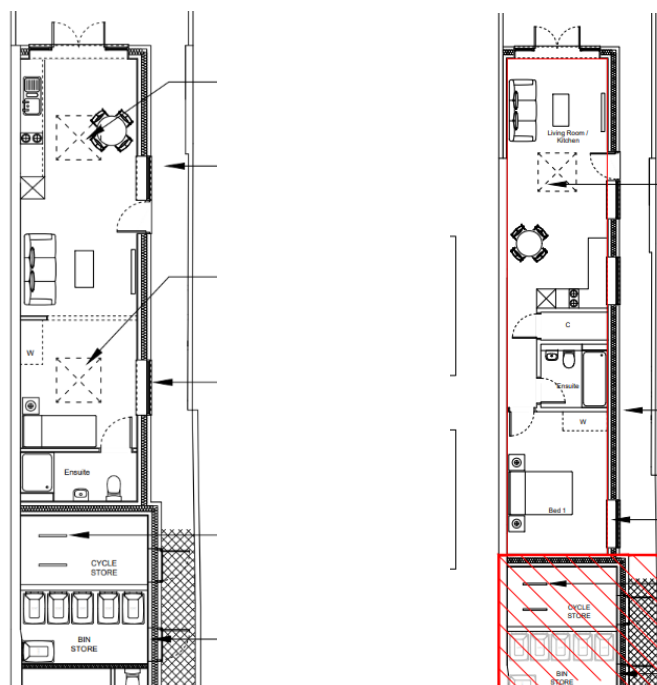
1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a mid-terrace two storey property on the west side of Bridge Street in Caversham. The existing use of the site at the time of the application is commercial on the ground floor with a 2-bedroom self-contained flat on the upper floors, although work has commenced on the recently approved application to convert part of the ground floor into a self-contained flat and the upper floors to a 5-bedroom HMO. The site is within the Caversham District Centre (RL3) and is identified as a key frontage within that centre. It is also within an Air Quality Management Area.

The application site is within the St Peters Conservation Area. It is also located within both Flood Zones 2 and 3, within 19m of the River Thames at the nearest point. The surrounding area is commercial in nature, with properties in varying character. Residential uses on the upper floors are also commonplace.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal seeks to vary condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission ref PL/24/1098 in order to change the internal layout of the approved 1 bed ground floor flat, as shown below.



Left: Approved ground floor plan. Right: Proposed ground floor plan.

2.1. Information submitted:

BHD-0183-P100 - Proposed Site and Location Plans, received 25 November 2025

BHD-0183-P1002 - Proposed Elevations, received 25 November 2025

Planning Statement – A, received 19 December 2025

BHD-0183-P1001A - Proposed Plans, received 27 January 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/24/1098 - Partial demolish of rear extension and new rear extension to create ground floor flat and shop and 5 bedroom HMO to first and second floor. Shop access door position changed with access ramp. Application permitted on 14 March 2025

PL/24/0417 - Partial demolish of rear extension and new rear extension to create 7-bedroom HMO. Shop access door position changed with access ramp. Application withdrawn following case officer feedback that proposal is an overdevelopment of the site.

4. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the front of the site.

One objection was received citing excessive intensification of the site, along with previously raised concerns regarding the lack of enhancement to the character of the conservation area and concerns regarding refuse storage on the public pavement. These concerns were raised with the agent by the case officer and the proposed plans were subsequently amended to remove the additional bedroom to the ground floor flat. The other issues regarding refuse and character are not considered relevant to this application, and to have been sufficiently resolved by the original permission.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

S73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides the ability to vary a condition on a planning permission. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 streamlined the procedure to enable local planning authorities to use its discretion on which statutory consultees should be consulted when such an application is submitted in order to speed up the system by being more flexible. This Statutory Instrument was accompanied by 'Greater flexibility for planning permissions' which contained relevant guidance. This states that a minor material amendment is 'one whose scale and nature results in a development which is not substantially different from the one which has been approved'. This is not a statutory definition and the decision on what constitutes a minor material amendment is at the discretion of the local planning authority but is considered to include, "any amendment where its scale and/or nature results in a development which is not substantially different from the one which has been approved".

Section 73 of the Act instructs the Local Planning Authority to consider the variation to, or relief of conditions that are applied for, stating that "if they [the LPA] decide that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions differing from those subject to which the previous permission was granted....they shall grant permission accordingly" (s.73(1)(a)). As such, the Local Planning Authority can grant permission unconditionally or subject to different conditions or alternatively refuse the application if it is deemed that the original condition(s) should remain in place.

The grant of a planning permission under Section 73 essentially provides a new planning permission. It is therefore necessary to reconsider the overall development proposal against the development plan. The

key issues for consideration comprise the principle of the development whilst having regard to the impact upon the character and appearance of the area, the effects on traffic generation and highway safety, amenity and the natural environment.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

SPD

Affordable Housing (2021)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Residential Conversions (2013)

Other documents

St Peters Conservation Area Appraisal 2018

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

6. APPRAISAL

Policy CC7 requires all development to be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in which it is located. Policy CC8 requires all development to not cause detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties and future occupants.

The proposal initially proposed an additional bedroom in the ground floor flat, however, this has been removed at the request of the case officer. The ground floor flat is not large enough to provide more than one bedroom in line with the limits set out in the nationally described minimum space standards.

The proposed amendment to the layout of the ground floor flat would create a larger double bedroom with more privacy than that on the original approved plans. The increase to 2 bedspaces (within one bedroom) is within the limits set out in the national minimum space standards. The bedroom would be located directly next to the cycle store; however, this is not considered to pose a risk of harm to future occupants as the wall would be insulated and any resultant noise from the use of the store would be intermittent and not constant. Overall, the amendments to the floor plans are considered an improvement on the approved plans. All other conditions continue to apply as per the original permission.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed variations to the approved scheme are considered acceptable in the context of the national and locally adopted policies. Conditions 5 and 7 have also been varied for consistency where they refer to plans and documents which would be superseded as a result of the grant of this S73 permission.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT VARIATION

Conditions as per PL/24/1098:

1. Time Limit (S73)
2. [VARIED] Approved Plans
3. Materials to match
4. Flood mitigation measures as specified
5. [VARIED] Habitat enhancements as specified
6. HMO management plan to be submitted prior to first occupation
7. [VARIED] Communal rooms to be retained
8. Parking permits 1
9. Parking permits 2
10. Noise assessment to be submitted
11. Noise mitigation as specified
12. Ground floor rooflights to be obscure glazed
13. CMS as specified
14. Construction hours
15. No bonfires
16. Cycle parking as specified
17. Refuse collection to be submitted prior to first occupation