



ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

PLANNING STATEMENT

PROJECT

**Retrospective Change of Use from Storage (Class B8)
to Barber Shop (Class E)**

ADDRESS

**32A Ardler Road,
Caversham,
Reading,
RG4 5AE**

2026 July

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application seeking permission for the change of use of an existing commercial unit from storage (Use Class B8) to a barber shop (Use Class E).

The application relates solely to the use of the premises. The barber shop has been established within the existing building without any extensions or alterations to its external appearance.

The proposal regularises the current use of the premises while demonstrating that the development is acceptable in planning terms and does not result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers, highway safety or flood risk.

2. Site Description

The application site comprises an existing commercial unit located at 32A Ardler Road, Caversham.

The building forms part of an established commercial area and has historically been used for storage purposes.

The internal floor area is approximately **70 m²**.

No external alterations have been undertaken.

The existing:

- building footprint;
- parking arrangements;
- access;
- servicing;
- drainage; and
- surrounding site layout

remain unchanged.

3. Planning History

The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the existing use of the premises as a barber shop.

No operational development requiring planning permission has been undertaken.

4. The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for:

Change of Use from Storage (Use Class B8) to Barber Shop (Use Class E).

The proposal consists solely of internal alterations necessary for the operation of the barber shop.

No changes are proposed to:

- the external appearance of the building;
- building footprint;
- roof;
- access arrangements;
- parking provision;
- drainage infrastructure;
- external plant or equipment.

These points are also confirmed within the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment.

5. Principle of Development

The proposal represents the re-use of an existing commercial unit for another commercial use within Use Class E.

The development makes efficient use of an existing building without requiring any physical expansion or additional land.

The barber shop provides a local community service while maintaining the commercial character of the area.

As no external alterations are proposed, the development preserves the existing appearance of the site and surrounding streetscape.

6. Design and Appearance

No external changes have taken place.

The proposal therefore has:

- no visual impact;
- no effect upon local character;
- no impact upon the street scene.

The appearance of the building remains identical to its previous lawful use.

7. Residential Amenity

The proposed barber shop operates as a small-scale local business.

Compared with the former storage use, the proposal is not expected to give rise to significant adverse impacts in terms of:

- noise;
- disturbance;
- overlooking;
- loss of privacy;
- overshadowing.

No external seating, plant, extraction equipment or amplified music forms part of this application.

8. Highways and Parking

The proposal does not alter:

- vehicular access;
- parking layout;
- servicing arrangements.

The existing arrangements remain adequate for the scale of the development.

The barber shop operates by appointment for much of the day, reducing peaks in customer arrivals.

No highway safety issues are considered to arise.

9. Flood Risk

A Flood Risk Assessment accompanies the application.

The assessment confirms that although the site lies within Flood Zone 3, the proposal consists solely of a change of use with no extensions, no increase in impermeable area, no alterations to drainage and no changes to site levels.

The proposal therefore:

- does not increase flood risk;
- does not reduce flood storage;
- does not impede flood flows;
- does not increase runoff.

Existing drainage arrangements remain unchanged.

The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that the proposal is acceptable in flood risk terms.

10. Sustainability

The proposal represents sustainable development by:

- reusing an existing building;
- avoiding unnecessary new construction;
- supporting a local independent business;
- providing services within an established urban area;
- making efficient use of existing infrastructure.

No additional land is required.

11. Planning Balance

The proposal delivers several planning benefits including:

- continued occupation of an existing commercial unit;
- support for the local economy;
- provision of a community service;

- no external visual impact;
- no increase in flood risk;
- no loss of residential amenity;
- efficient reuse of an existing building.

No material planning harm has been identified.

12. Conclusion

This retrospective application seeks planning permission for the change of use of an existing commercial storage unit to a barber shop.

The proposal involves no external alterations to the building, no increase in building footprint, no changes to drainage or access arrangements and no additional flood risk.

The development makes effective use of an existing commercial premises, supports local economic activity and provides a valuable service to the surrounding community.

For these reasons, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant planning policies of Reading Borough Council and the National Planning Policy Framework, and planning permission is respectfully requested.