

UPDATE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 May 2018

ITEM No: 14
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Ward: Redlands

App No: 180144/FUL

Address: 25 Redlands Road, Reading

Proposal: Demolition of a single-storey rear projection, followed by the construction of a single-storey rear extension, internal modifications and refurbishment to facilitate change of use from a single dwelling house with detached garage (C3a) to 5no. self-contained flats (C3a) with associated car parking, bin and cycle storage.

RECOMMENDATION

As on main report.

1. Further comments received since main report published

1.1 CAAC have commented on the applicant's Heritage Statement. They raise concerns about the on-site parking layout and whether adequate for 3 cars. They also suggest that the opportunity should be taken to improve the appearance of the property boundary and are critical of the proposal to remove the existing post and rail gate.

1.2 Officer comments are that:

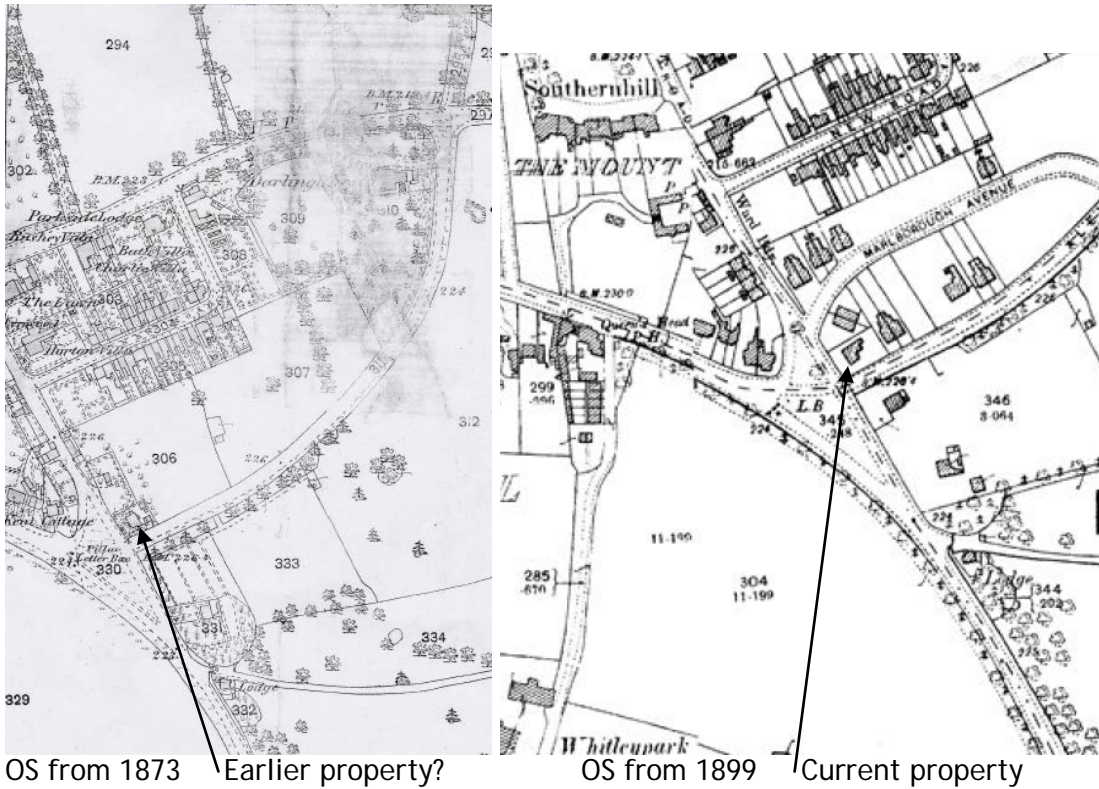
1.2.1 The parking layout has been assessed by transport officers and confirmed to be acceptable.

1.2.2 The existing boundary consists of a low brick wall with close boarded fencing above on to Elmhurst Road, which provides a secure screen for the private area (side and rear) of the property and is appropriate given the function it serves on this busy road. The existing boundary on to Redlands Road is a close boarded fence (approx. 1.4m high) with brick pillars. The appearance of this frontage might be improved by using, for example, a low wall and railings but given that this boundary is next to the traffic light controlled junction officers accept that the residential amenity of future occupiers might be best served by the existing boundary. The suggestion has however been passed on to the applicant and details for final boundary treatments to be approved could be included in the recommended landscaping condition.

1.2.3 The existing post and rail gate is proposed to be removed. In practice, were the gate retained, it is likely that it would remain open to facilitate access to the site so there does not seem to be any merit in insisting that the gate is retained.

1.3 A neighbour has challenged the age of the existing property as described in the heritage statement by providing a map from 1873 (see below). The applicant has reviewed this and other available maps in detail (one from 1899 shown below) and has responded:

"we have studied this map extract closely and confirm that there is an illustrated record of a building and ancillary out-buildings on the application site in the 1873 OS map. However, the building footprint illustrated is significantly different from that depicted on subsequent maps and which exists on site which suggests that it pre-dates the building currently occupying the site and may have been demolished to make way for the existing building".



OS from 1873

Earlier property?

OS from 1899

Current property

- 1.4 Officers consider that, while of interest, the age of the property does not form a significant material consideration in this case as the existing building is being retained.
- 1.5 One neighbour has written in to query the proposed sizes of the flats with reference to RIBA and nationally accepted internal space standards. Officers can confirm that these standards are also referred to in the emerging local plan as required for new build housing. However, they do not apply to conversions to flats unless as an indicator of poor standard of accommodation generally. In this case the flats are well served by amenities and access to natural light and while some units are small they are not that poor as to warrant refusal on this basis. The plans have been considered by environmental protection colleagues who have not raised an objection on the adequacy of the room sizes.
- 1.6 The recommendation remains to grant planning permission subject to a S106 agreement and recommended conditions.

Julie Williams