

PLANNING STATEMENT
[amended - v.3]
79-81 Cheriton High Street, Cheriton
Erection of extension and alterations

Introduction

This application seeks permission to refurbish the existing building at 79-81 Cheriton High Street and carry out alterations and an extension to form a single, smaller shop unit, one 2 bedroomed flat and three 1 bedroomed flats. It is a reapplication for those refused under references Y17/0081/SH & Y17/0548/SH.

The derelict ground at the rear will be restored as garden and provided with storage for refuse, cycles and shop stock if required.



The Property

79-81 Cheriton High Street is a pair of 3 storey buildings combined to form an end-terraced property comprising a shop on the ground floor with two storeys of accommodation above. The upper floors are semi-abandoned but were used partly residentially and partly for ancillary purposes connected with the retail unit below.

The building dates from the early 20th Century, forms part of the crescent of properties adjoining Cheriton traffic lights and lies immediately opposite the library. Shops, with residential accommodation above, adjoin to either side.

The upper floor facade of the building was refaced at the end of the 20th century, but this only masked the underlying structural problems and did not remedy them. Buildings in the area vary in their appearance, albeit the application property and its immediate neighbours are very similar in scale, appearance and use.

Defects and layout issues

A recent full Building Survey (September 2016) revealed

- there has been structural movement to the rear rooms,
- also on the first floor to the chimney stack and on the party wall line
- there is dampness throughout the building from defective gutters etc.
- structural works have been undertaken in the removal of party wall/chimney breasts and
- the current layout of the property would be considered to be a fire hazard.
- Mature trees in the rear garden are identified as potentially causing damage to the buildings, including the adjoining property (these have since been removed) and
- the thermal properties of the building fall below current day standards.
- Where openings have been cut through to link the buildings, it seems unlikely that any form of support has been provided above.

The report recommends that all these defects should be addressed. The fundamental nature of these dictate structural remediation extending far beyond simple repair work. The opportunity has therefore been taken to review the present layout of the building and assess the opportunities that might thus arise for making better use of the premise.

The building benefits from a relatively extensive rear garden area running the full width of the paired properties. There is also a garage within the rear curtilage, but access to this is direct from the roadway edge, which means its use is severely restricted by the lack of visibility and extremely restricted width of the car park service road (see over).



At the rear there are two single storey extension wings at ground floor level, these are single skinned and in poor condition. Access to the living accommodation is via an open external steel fire escape at the rear directly into the first floor.



The accommodation is entered via a kitchen/diner serving the entire upper floor accommodation, which has been interlinked and one of the internal stairs has been removed (no 81) to form a single extremely large unit.

Large front gable windows light the second floor level, two smaller dormers provide light into the rear rooms. These only marginally intrude into the useable floor area, however, due to the generous ceiling heights.

The setting

The jumble of extensions and alterations at the rear of this and adjacent premises is apparent.



The Risborough Lane car park lies behind the photographer in the above image and is well used, where spaces are available at all times.



There has been a pattern and history of vandalism and theft in this car park, and it is suggested that increasing the level of usage will reduce the incidence of crime.

A second photographic survey has been undertaken to include the rear elevations of all the buildings fronting the car park and can be used to assess both their appearance and their visual impact on the area. This is supplied again in support of the newly revised application.

The study reveals no consistency of design, layout, appearance, scale or materials, reinforcing the functional, workmanlike impression of the properties gained from a preliminary visual assessment.

This enclosed zone is entirely encompassed by the rear facades of the buildings facing Risborough Lane, Cheriton High Street and Broomfield Road, with the exception of the terrace of new houses at Broomfield Crescent, which face the former St John Ambulance premise.

Materials used for the built form include brick and render - both painted and unpainted - flat and pitched roofs covered in profiled, plain and slated tiles, a multiplicity of colours on walls and uses varying from residential, commercial, retail, catering and 'personal services'. Levels change significantly between Cheriton High Street and the car park so that two storey properties fronting the surrounding roads are three stories in height at the rear; some have been extended to full height, some are two storey and others single storey. Some plots are entirely built over and again display a complete range of design approaches from brick to render, flat to pitched and pent roofs.

A number of yards appear derelict, overgrown and disused whilst others are hard paved or contain outbuildings comprising stores, garages and sheds, there are fences of all types, walls, garage doors and Heras fencing, steel and wooden staircases, roof gardens, extract equipment and pipework, satellite dishes and all manner of window and door styles.



It is difficult to categorise kindly the general appearance from the car park, other than to describe it as 'random'.

Within this setting, any form of extension to the application building would not look out of place. Tucked into one corner virtually out of sight of the main car park and adjoining the full depth double-width two-storey store rear of 73-75, the design of the proposal is well-conceived, appropriate in scale and materials to the host building and will not harm the character or appearance of this area.

The Proposals

The extensive structural and engineering works required to stabilise and secure the property provide the opportunity to review the internal layout and remedy the defects arising from the recent crude formation of interconnecting rooms at first and second floor levels.

Removal of the poor condition single storey wings also enables construction of a central extension at the rear of the property capable of providing both additional accommodation and a new, safe entrance to the upper floors.

The fragile trading position of Cheriton High Street at this point is evidenced by the shuttered premises to either side...



...therefore it is proposed to reintroduce the traverse wall to subdivide the frontage retail area from the rear of the building, to enable subdivision into one or two smaller kiosk sized units for use as A1, A2 or A3 purposes.

The two existing single storey wings at the rear are to be removed, together with the external metal fire escape accessing the upper floor accommodation. A two storey pent-roofed extension is erected to provide additional accommodation within the units, accompanied by a gable roofed enclosed staircase extending to the second floor, providing access at all levels. The extension is to be rendered and tiled to match the existing building and has been amended to reduce its depth and condense the structure (revision 1).

The design and layout has been further amended to remove the external staircase to the top floor and simplify the external appearance (revision 2).

Further care has been taken to ensure that no part of the structure impinges on the 45 degree lines of adjacent properties (revision 1). There is a single storey rear extension at number 83, which was built with a non-conforming full height window on the boundary, looking directly across the rear garden of the application property. Permission was granted for the extension to contain a high level window only on this side, nevertheless an uninterrupted aspect is retained. As the proposed extension lies to the north of this window, sunlight and daylight entry into that room is barely affected.

The extension had been entirely replanned to reduce its depth and alter its profile. Window arrangements throughout were reviewed and rearranged to be symmetrical and consistent and the roof treatment redesigned to take account of the criticisms levelled against the proposal (revision 1).

It has twice been modified in response to design criticisms, revision 2 amendments include:

- Removal of the pitched roof in favour of a lean-to roof form
- Ensuring window uniformity across the rear façade
- Introducing cills to each

Rearrangement of floor plans, internalising the staircase access to the second floor

Of the various alterations recently carried out to buildings in the area, attention is particularly drawn to the appearance of the extensive alterations and conversion undertaken at 39 Risborough Lane, when viewed from the rear:



Internal planning:

The proposed layout of the building is to be as follows:

Ground floor: 36 square metre retail unit with w.c. plus 1 x 1 person flat:

Flat One – 1 person unit:

Living/dining/bedroom – 30 square metres.

Kitchen – 8 square metres.

Bathroom and hallway.

Total – 48 square metres.

First floor: 2 x one bedroomed flats:

Flat Two – 1 person

Living/dining/kitchen – 18 square metres.

Bedroom - 10.25 square metres.

Bathroom and hallway.

Total – 46 square metres.

Flat Three – 1 person

Living/dining/kitchen/bedroom – 32 square metres.

Bathroom.

Total – 36 square metres.

Second floor: 1 x 2 bedroomed flat:

Flat four – 3 person

Living/dining – 23 square metres.

Kitchen – 8.25 square metres.

Bedroom one – 12.85 square metres.

Bedroom two – 10.5 square metres.

Bathroom and hallway.

Total – 70 square metres.

The previous layout was reviewed in the context of the Health and Housing Officer's previous comments to ensure that all rooms within the units achieve acceptable standards (revision 1).

The external alterations have required additional internal modifications that formed part of the pre-application consultation. Suggestions for improving the external appearance did not refer to the layout therefore the plans remain unchanged as no adverse comments were made to this part of the scheme.

All comply with the Nationally Described Space Standard 2015, table one and its preamble:

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

External planning

Externally there will be no changes to the front elevation.

The existing two metre high close boarded fence and garage are both retained. The presently derelict and disused rear area is re-landscaped to retain the garage as a store (potentially for use by the shop) and create pedestrian access, an area for bins, bikes and storage, a lawn and ornamental shrub border. The garden has been re-planned in accordance with the LPA Urban Designer's previous comments and will remain accessible to all units (revision 1). Samples and/or images will be supplied in response to the normal landscaping condition.

No off street parking is proposed for the reasons set out in the introduction, and the plot width is such that only two or three cars could be parked off the street in any event.

This is a sustainable location, close to all services and amenities and the public transport network, furthermore served by a free public car park at the rear of the premises where space is readily available, and it has been agreed that the lack of parking is not considered to cause any operational difficulties for the occupiers.

A ground floor retail frontage is retained in acknowledgement of

- policy S7, Shepway District Local Plan review of 2006,
- policy SS4, Core Strategy Local Plan 2013, and
- draft policy UA2, Places and Policies Local Plan, Preferred Options 2016.

Summary and Conclusions

The premises are extremely tired and, in very many respects, unfit and structurally unsound. The premises fail to contribute positively to the local economy due to being under-occupied by the previous user, who occupied the upper floors simply as a rest room and kitchen.

The application proposes essential repairs and refurbishment and retains a retail frontage of appropriate size and with the potential to attract occupiers in this trading position, acknowledged by SDC's own studies to be marginal. The property will also provide four small units of accommodation in an area of high demand with good access to facilities, amenities and the public transport network.

The scheme has been reviewed and redesigned in response to the criticisms levelled at the previous applications and is much improved as a result.

The proposal is fully consistent with National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance and local policy.

18 January 2017: 0409/16
1st revision : 2 May 2017
2nd revision : 14 August 2017