

4-6 Station Road, Rickmansworth, Herts



Introduction

This proposal involves extending an existing flat roof two storey property to create two additional flats and a small additional office. Additionally it addresses the contextual conflict generated by a 1960's style flat roof building located on a prominent corner site in the Conservation Area. This proposal also addresses the relationship of the building to Northway and will hopefully set a precedent for improvements further along the southern side of the road.

0.0 Context

The application site is located on the northern edge of the Rickmansworth Town Centre Conservation Area, 130 m to the south-east of Rickmansworth Underground and Railway Station and 27 metres north of the High Street. The adjacent buildings within the conservation area are generally 2.5 storey shop/office properties with pitched, dormered roofs. Opposite the site to the north and just outside the conservation area is a large five storey block of flats built in the late 1980's.

The existing building's primary frontage is on Station Road although a small car park at the rear is accessed off Northway. The Northway access is also used as a rear access for deliveries to numbers 2, 4 & 6 Station Road and 106 – 113 High Street. Refuse bins are also stored around the perimeter of the car park. With the current configuration, the view

into the rear of the site from Northway is dominated by refuse bins, randomly scattered cars, and the rear yards to the High Street shops.

The existing 1960's style flat roofed two storey brick property has ribbon windows at first floor level and glazed shop fronts at ground floor level. Its character is, arguably, not appropriate within the context of the Rickmansworth Town Centre Conservation Area. The building itself is split into two properties, one being an estate agents, with offices at first floor level, the other being a restaurant on two floors.

The car park is compromised by the position of the entrance which is adjacent to the rear of the building. The parking area is split into three ownerships, with the access being controlled by No's 4 & 6 Station Road and the eastern end of the car park owned by No. 2 Station Road. There is a legal obligation to allow access for two cars to park within the area owned by No. 2. Station Road. This obligation limits the amount of parking that can be achieved because a disproportionate amount of the car park has to be dedicated to providing access for two cars. Additionally, number 2 Station Road has parking rights for two cars, whereas it is obliged under planning consent ref; 05/1326/FUL to provide 4 parking spaces.

DESIGN

1.0 Use

The proposed alterations and extensions will provide additional accommodation comprising 2No. 2 bedroom duplex flats and a small office unit, a communal rear access, eight car parking spaces and associated ancillary facilities.

2.0 Amount

The proposed development would involve the addition of a mansard roof and a small first floor extension to the existing building to provide two additional flats. A first floor 'flying' extension supported on brick piers will be built to the rear of the existing building and will front Northway. This extension will contain a small self contained office unit above the vehicular and pedestrian entrance.

3.0 Layout

The site currently provides four parking spaces on the land owned by Nos 4 and 6 Station Road, plus two parking spaces on the land owned by No. 2 station Road. The relocation of the access in this proposal provides a total of eight parking spaces, four of which will be allocated to No.2 Station Road (as outlined in *0.0 Context*), two to No. 4 Station Road and two to no. 6 Station Road.

The office space which projects over the car park is accessed from a communal staircase located within the car park. The communal staircase also provides a rear access to No. 6 Station Road (currently Trend & Thomas Estate Agents), as well as serving the two duplex flats located on top of the existing building. The rear access to No. 4 Station (currently Tamarind Thai Café) remains unaltered.

4.0 Scale

The proposal will be two and a half storey's in height, including a mansard roof with Dormers. The rear office extension is at first floor level, but is open at ground floor level to provide parking and access to the rear yards of the properties fronting the High Street. The scale of the proposal is in keeping with the adjacent properties.

5.0 Landscaping

The proposal has been designed to add security to the site, whilst at the same time addressing the views in from Northway. The car park will be re-levelled but there is little room for soft landscaping.

6.0 Appearance

The building fronting Station Road will be two and a half storeys in height, having a mansard roof and dormer windows similar to that recently approved and built on the neighboring property (No. 2 Station Road). This will be more sympathetic to the elevational treatment and bulk of surrounding buildings. The first floor ribbon windows will also be removed and replaced with more appropriate casement windows.

The whole first floor level of the building will be clad in tiles to disguise the re-construction work that will be carried out at this level.

The first floor rear extension that projects out over the car park is to be built in brick. The piers upon which the structure is supported provide an open feel for the parking beneath at ground floor level, defining the space as private whilst at the same time providing views in. The first floor level of the extension is a pitched roof, with dormer windows facing onto Northway. This addresses the road and enhances the street scene.

The architectural detailing will be in keeping with the surrounding Conservation Area. The mansard roof will be similar to that recently completed at No. 2 Station Road.

ACCESS

Vehicular Access and Car Parking

The proposal makes the best use of the car parking space available by relocating the access. This new location also improves highway safety as it provides improved vision splays to the east.

A distance in excess of seven metres is provided between opposing parking spaces to facilitate turning for cars within the site. Four parking spaces are provided to service the proposed units, four parking spaces are provided to service no 2 Station Road as required by planning consent ref: 05/1326/FUL. The proposal would meet the requirements of future occupants of the duplex flats and the shops (1 space per unit). No parking has been provided to serve the small office extension because the site is in a sustainable town centre location, with ample parking provision by way of public car parks, and good transport links. All spaces have minimum dimensions of 2.4 x 4.8 metres.

Access to the properties will comply with the provisions of Part M of the Building Regulations.

The site is located in a prime town centre location, with access to the Underground & Railway station in walk able distance (130m). There are also other good local public transport connections from the Railway Station and from High Street, with regular bus and coach services to all large and small local towns. The site is 1.7 Miles / 2.7 Kilometres from the M25.

Local recreational space is provided by way of Rickmansworth Aquadrome, located 0.6 Miles / 1 Kilometres from the site. The site is therefore well placed with respect to local and national transport links and local facilities.



Existing front elevation of No's 4 & 6 Station Road



View of No's 4 & 6 Station Road from junction with Northway



View into rear yard / car park of No's 4 & 6 Station Road from Northway



View into rear yard / car park of No's 4 & 6 Station Road from Northway



View of rear of No's 4 & 6 Station Road from Northway



Flats opposite site, fronting Northway