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Site Address:

2 Priory Avenue Caversham Reading RG4 7SF

Description:

Change of use and conversion of the building from doctors surgery to residential in the form of 4 x 1-bed flats and 2 x 2-bed flats including provision of bin and cycle storage.

Case Officer and Phone No:

Anthony Scholes

Dear Mr Scholes,

As will be clear from the planning statement, CADRA has taken a particular interest in this fine Arts and Crafts building. Having been a doctors' surgery for a long period, both the exterior and interior of the building are well known locally and held in great affection

As part of the research for the reappraisal of St Peter's Conservation Area, it was established that the house was built in 1902 for Dr Hope, who lived and practised there. As medical practice changed, it became entirely a Surgery and was later extended in the early 1990s. Nevertheless, its original purpose was primarily residential, and it is an important building showing Caversham at that time. See photo below, where the red gable can be seen on the left, behind the car.



The revised appraisal document for St Peter's Conservation Area is scheduled for the SEPT Committee on 21 November 2018 with a recommendation for adoption. This would confirm the

extension of the Conservation Area to include the building. The appraisal document refers to the building as follows:

page 4, **SS5 The 2018 Boundary adjustment**

- There are several unlisted buildings of townscape merit within the proposed extension. These include the three early 20th century bank buildings at the junction of Church Road, Church Street and Bridge Street, which have group value: the former Lloyds Bank building in particular stops the vista down Church Road. Other buildings of merit include the Crown Public House and the Priory Avenue Surgery with its Arts and Crafts detailing. Interesting details include the main door entrance and canopy of the original building, battered brick buttressing and a large oriel bay window at first floor level to the southern elevation. The original surgery building forms a valuable group with the adjoining pair of grey and yellow brick semi-detached shops typical of the period. This group of buildings forms a logical end to the extended Conservation Area. On Church Road, opposite the Griffin Public House, Nos 9 and 11, a pair of Victorian brick semis with original shopfronts and a gated passageway between them, stand out as being of townscape value.

page 22 **5.4.2 Buildings of townscape merit**

The eastern part of the Conservation Area contains several individual or groups of buildings of townscape merit.

- Priory Avenue Surgery and 14 to 16 Church Street. Group value. The Priory Avenue Surgery, 1902, with Arts and Crafts detailing and a mature magnolia, on the corner of Priory Avenue and Church Street, forms a group with the two and a half storey buildings, 14 to 16 Church Street, of grey and buff brick typical of the late C19 in Reading. These buildings together form a group of similar scale and height which marks the limit of the proposed extension to the Conservation Area.

As indicated in para 2.3 of the Planning Statement, the building has exceptional Arts and Crafts features which we believe are very important to preserve. We were therefore very pleased that the owners of the building were willing to submit an application which makes no changes to the exterior of the original building and retains the exceptional internal features shown in the photographs.

The application provides a viable future for an important building and we urge the Council to approve the application. In the event of a recommendation to refuse, we may wish to discuss 'call in' with ward councillors.

On behalf of CADRA