

PL/25/1693 - 10B Bridge Street

CADRA previously objected to application PL/24/1098 for 10B Bridge Street. This latest proposal intensifies the scheme further by adding an additional bedroom, which only increases the concerns we raised previously. We regard this as overdevelopment within a highly sensitive and constrained location, the St Peter's Conservation Area (CA).

This is a significant building in a prominent position, forming the gateway to Caversham. The building has important original brickwork which contributes positively to the character of the area. A renovation of this building offers a rare opportunity to enhance the CA, rather than erode it.

Given the location within a CA and the cumulative intensification now proposed, it should not be approved without acceptable heritage, and design and access statements. As it stands, the application fails to prove that the significance of this heritage asset has been understood or that harm has been avoided.

The proposal is contrary to national and local policy requirements to preserve or enhance designated heritage assets.

Refuse management on Bridge Street is already a persistent and well documented problem, with bins frequently left out on the pavement and piles of rubbish accumulating. This severely erodes the character of the CA and harms the visual approach into Caversham.

The previous proposal indicated six bins, that will inevitably obstruct the pavement further and impede pedestrians, including those with mobility issues, wheelchair users, and families with pushchairs. Whilst it also noted that the managing agent will have responsibility for putting bins out, it should be explicitly stated that they are also responsible for promptly returning them to avoid ongoing obstruction and visual harm. The current application makes no mention of bin management. A statement should be provided.

Whilst we recognise the need to deliver additional homes of varying sizes, the removal of the proposed courtyard garden results in an unacceptably limited level of amenity space for future residents and significantly worsens the outlook from the principal living areas. This change disrupts the essential balance between the intensity of development and the provision of usable outdoor space, leading to living conditions that fall below what we would consider healthy or sustainable. The NPPF (2023), Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places – is clear that local authorities must ensure developments “create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.”

The location of the apartments and the increased intensity of occupation will also result in additional noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties and to the public realm.

In conclusion, this new application does not address the fundamental concerns we raised previously. Instead, it intensifies the development providing unhealthy living, increases pressure on an already problematic refuse situation, and provides no adequate assessment of heritage impact despite its location within the St Peter's Conservation Area.

For these reasons, CADRA objects to this application and urges the Council to refuse it.