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5858/HH

10th November 2025

DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT FOR PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM FINANCIAL OFFICE (CLASS E) TO DWELLING HOUSE (CLASS C3), 95 HIGH STREET, CRICKLADE, WILTSHIRE, SN6 6DF

1. Introduction and Planning History

This Design & Access Statement supports a planning application for the full conversion of 95 High Street into a single dwellinghouse (Class C3).

The site benefits from an existing planning permission, Reference 20/08287/FUL, granted on 20 January 2021, for:

- Change of use from a financial office (Class E) to a retail unit (Class E(a))
- Creation of a 3-bedroom dwellinghouse (Class C3) to the rear and first floor
- Erection of a rear extension and associated works

Listed Building Consent was also granted under Ref.20/08712/LBC 20.08287.FUL - Decision 20.01.21

The accompanying Design & Access Statement set out the rationale for a mixed-use arrangement. The current proposal builds on that established design and previous approval, but now seeks to convert the entire building into one single dwelling, reflecting revised circumstances and market realities.

2. Site Description

95 High Street is a Grade II listed two-storey property, centrally positioned within the Cricklade Conservation Area. Historically used for retail and commercial activities, the building most recently operated as a financial services office. Earlier consent in 2007 (refs. 06/03176/FUL & 06/03177/LBC) approved its use as A2 (financial services) and authorised a single-storey rear extension.

Existing Ground Floor

- Reception area with large shopfront glazing
- General office containing a former server room
- Two further offices to the rear
- Ladies WC

- Central passageway leading to the garden
- Main staircase accessed from passageway, with secondary staircase in the rear office

Existing First Floor

- Break room overlooking the High Street
- Kitchenette
- Male WC
- General office
- Rear meeting room

3. Proposed Development

3.1 Full Change of Use

The proposal seeks to convert the entire building from Class E to a single private dwellinghouse (Class C3).

This supersedes the previously approved mixed-use scheme, eliminates the need for a dividing party wall and simplifies internal planning. The full residential conversion also supports the viable long-term use of the listed property, which has become increasingly unsuitable and undesirable as a part-retail building.

3.2 Ground Floor Alterations

The following changes represent the main revisions from the previously approved design:

- Reception becomes a Study
- Server room partitions removed to create a larger and more functional snug/living area
- No new party wall required (no commercial space now proposed)
- Ladies' WC partitions removed to form part of the new kitchen (as previously proposed)
- Existing door on the south elevation replaced with a matching window
- Installation of aluminium bi-fold doors on the east elevation, within the modern 2007 extension

These adjustments improve the internal flow and enhance the functionality of the home.

3.3 First Floor Alterations (as previously approved)

The first-floor layout remains substantially the same as the scheme permitted in 2021:

- Break room becomes Bedroom 1 (Master)
- Kitchenette converted to en-suite
- Former male WC becomes storage cupboard
- New studwork forms Bedroom 3, a new landing, and circulation
- Rear meeting room becomes Bedroom 2 with an en-suite and cupboard

New family bathroom provided within the small extension footprint

4. Extension and External Works

The proposal retains the previously approved extension located within the footprint of the modern UPVC lean-to, which is to be removed. The extension:

- Adds approximately 3m² of internal space
- Is fully enclosed by surrounding buildings
- Is not visible from Cricklade High Street or public viewpoints

External alterations are unchanged from the approved scheme and include:

- Replacement of door on south elevation with matching window
- Installation of east-facing bi-fold doors
- Minor alterations to doors/windows/rooflights previously accepted

No new external construction is visible from the High Street.

5. Marketing History & Justification for Full Residential Conversion

Despite the previous permission for a mixed-use arrangement, the applicants have faced significant difficulty selling the property, which has directly influenced the decision to pursue a full residential conversion.

Marketing Efforts

The property was listed for sale in April 2024. Since then:

- 18 viewings have taken place
- 2 were second viewings
- No successful sale has been achieved

Offers Received

1. May 2024 – £350,000
 - Offer withdrawn: prospective buyer stated the “risk outweighed the reward.”
2. May 2025 – £250,000
 - Buyer unwilling to increase the offer
 - Believed £250,000 was fair given the amount of work required
 - Low offer remained on the table but was not viable for the applicants

Conclusion from Marketing

The mixed-use arrangement has proven unattractive to buyers, with estate agents confirming that the combination of a small shopfront and a dwelling behind/above is:

- Commercially unappealing
- Unviable for modern retail needs
- Less marketable than a full dwelling
- Costly and complex for prospective purchasers to adapt

A full residential conversion will:

- Make the building marketable and financially viable
- Reduce the maintenance and operational burden
- Provide a sustainable long-term use for the listed building
- Align with current demand for quality residential properties in Cricklade

This marketing evidence provides a clear and robust justification for removing the retail element entirely.

6. Heritage Statement

6.1 Significance of the Heritage Asset

95 High Street is a Grade II listed building, contributing to the character of the Cricklade Conservation Area. Its significance arises from:

- Its age and historic fabric
- Architectural character, including traditional frontage and internal proportions
- Its contribution to the historic pattern of High Street development
- Its evolution from domestic to retail/commercial use

While altered in the 20th century (including the modern rear lean-to), historic elements remain, and overall, the building retains legible heritage value as a traditional Cricklade High Street property.

6.2 Assessment of Impact

The proposals have been carefully developed to avoid harm to the listed fabric and to align with the alterations previously granted Listed Building Consent (20/08712/LBC).

Internal Works

- Removal of partitions is restricted to modern, non-original elements
- Original structural fabric and plan form are preserved
- New partitions at first floor (as previously approved) are lightweight and reversible
- Conversion to a single dwelling simplifies circulation and improves functional hierarchy without affecting historic features

External Works

- All external works replicate those deemed acceptable under the previous LBC
- Replacement of a modern UPVC lean-to with a small extension is an enhancement
- Windows and doors match existing materials except bi-folds, which are located within modern, non-historic fabric
- No changes are proposed to the principal High Street elevation

Shopfront

The existing shopfront will remain entirely unaltered

This ensure:

- No impact to the principal façade
- The historic High Street elevation remains unchanged
- The buildings contribution to the Conservation Area is fully preserved

Setting

- The building's appearance from the High Street is unchanged
- The contribution of the property to the Conservation Area is preserved

Use and Long-Term Viability

- Returning the property to full residential use is considered entirely compatible with its historic origins
- Securing a viable, long-term use is a key objective of national heritage policy

- The mixed-use configuration has proven unsustainable in practical and market terms

6.3 Heritage Impact Conclusion

The proposed works:

- Preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building
- Cause no harm to its significance
- Reuse and adapt non-historic modern elements
- Respect the historic plan form and character
- Represent a modest, sensitive continuation of previously consented works
- Support a viable, sustainable future use, which is essential for heritage conservation

7. Amount and Scale

The development does not increase the overall footprint of the building.

The small 3m² extension reuses the footprint of the existing lean-to and results in no net increase in built form.

8. Layout

Ground Floor

- Entrance hall and staircase retained
- Study (formerly reception)
- Living/snug (after removing server room partitions)
- Rear kitchen
- Access to garden via bi-folds

First Floor

- Three bedrooms
- Two en-suites
- Family bathroom
- Cupboard and landing

The layout creates a functional, balanced and attractive single-family home.

9. Appearance and Materials

Materials match those previously approved under permission 20/08287/FUL:

- Render to match existing
- GRP fibreglass roof
- Timber doors and windows matching existing historic joinery

Aluminium bi-fold doors on east elevation

10. Access

Access remains unchanged.

The existing High Street entrance continues to serve the building, with internal circulation improved through rationalised layout.

11. Parking

Parking arrangements remain unchanged, with residents continuing to rely on High Street parking as presently.

12. Conclusion

The proposed full residential conversion:

- Builds upon the design principles already approved in 20/08287/FUL
- Removes an unviable and unattractive retail component
- Provides a sustainable and sympathetic use for this Grade II listed building
- Enhances the internal functionality and long-term viability of the property
- Is consistent with the character of the Cricklade Conservation Area
- Is supported by clear and demonstrable marketing evidence

The proposal represents a sensitive, practical and well-justified evolution of the previously approved scheme.