



Waterbridge Court, 50 Spital Street

Dartford, DA1 1DT

Design and Heritage Statement

Full Planning Application

**Conversion of the upper floors (first and second) office space into  
8 residential units and the conversion of the ground floor  
commercial space into one residential unit**

This document has been prepared by Arcvelop Ltd. appointed  
as the Architect's representing Waterbridge Court,  
50 Spital Street, Dartford, DA1 1DT

October 18, 2021

## **Site information**

Consultant Arcvelop Ltd

Client David Guest

Site Address 50 Spital Street, Dartford, DA1 2DT LA Dartford Council

Description of Development **Conversion of the upper floors (first and second) office space into 8 residential units and the conversion of the ground floor commercial space into one residential unit**

Pathway (PD/Application/Appeal) Full Application

## **Constraints Review**

Flood Risk Zone Flood Risk Zone 2

Contaminated Land No

Tree Preservation Order No

Heritage Assets No

Noise Abatement Areas No

Explosive Hazard Areas No

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty No

Special Protection Area No

Site of Specific Scientific Interest No

RAMSAR Convention Site No

Site of Importance to Nature Conservation No

Article 4(2) Directions No

## **Local Policy Requirements**

Local Plan/Core Strategy Dartford Local Plan

## Introduction

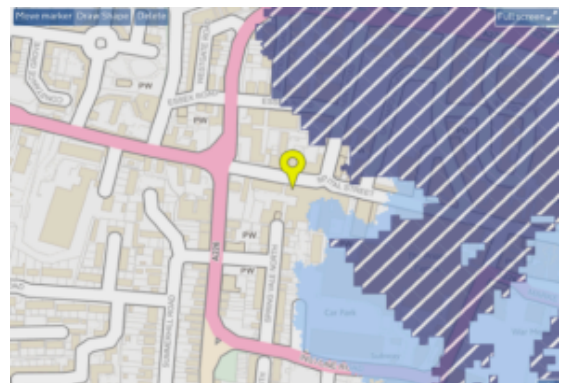
This statement is submitted in support of the full planning application for one additional unit to the previous approved Prior Approval schemes for the conversion of the offices at Waterbridge Court, Dartford, DA1 1DT to create 9 residential flats in total. This statement seeks to demonstrate that the scheme will comply with the the Council's guidance and national framework. This planning application follows the positive pre-application advice provided by the Council.

## Site and Surroundings

The site comprises of the ground, first and second floors of Waterbridge Court, a three storey commercial property built in the 1990's, with a period façade that gives the impression of an older property. The second floor is within the roof space and has three dormer windows to the front and five to the rear. There are 14 car parking spaces to the rear.

The site is within the defined area of Dartford Town Centre and the surrounding uses are a mix of retail, commercial and residential as you would expect. The site is in a sustainable location, close to local services and benefits from good public transport access being just 7 minutes walk from Dartford Station and a similar distance to the Dartford Central Park.

The site is partially within an area of Flood Risk (Zone 2) as can be seen on the map below, although this appears to just fall within the car park area to the rear. The site lies within a mixed area of both commercial and residential uses along Spital Street and properties on the adjacent road to the west and south. The site is located within walking distance of a range of shops, facilities and services. The site is well served by bus and rail services.



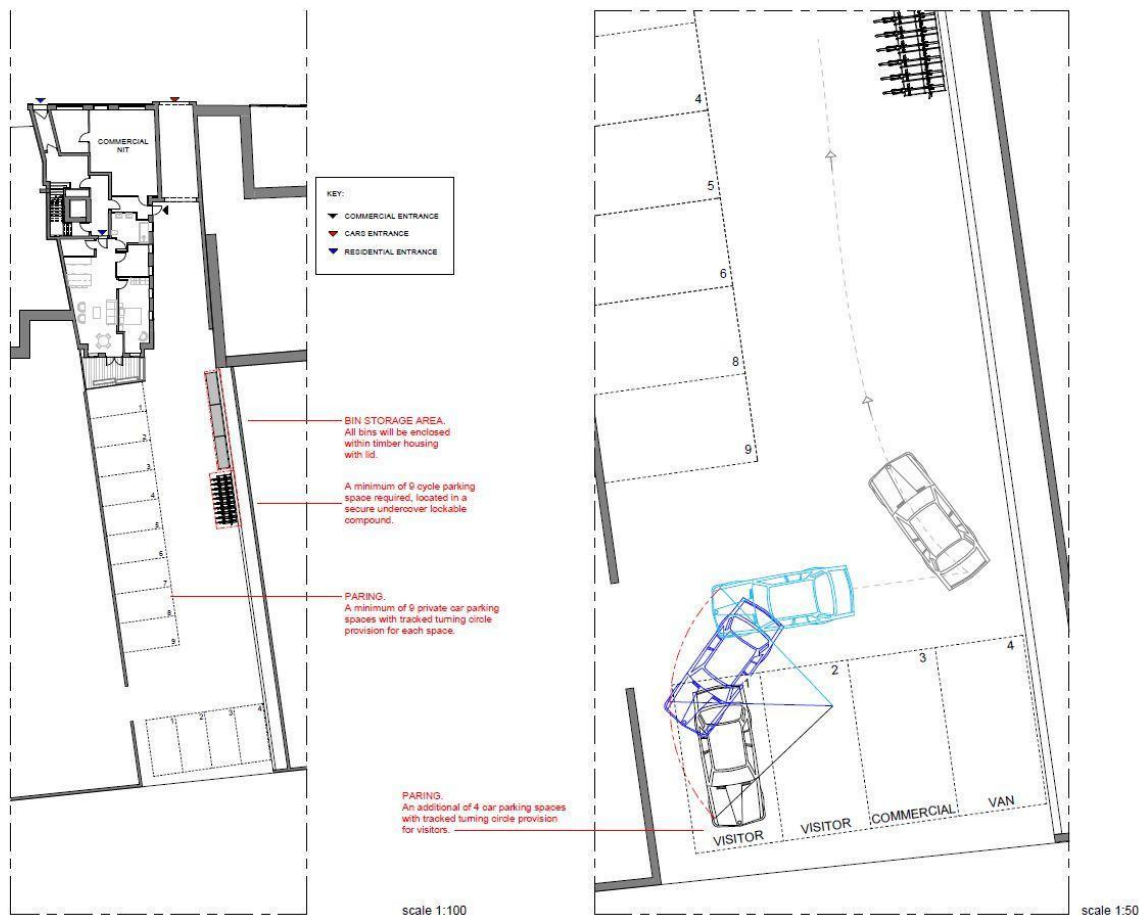
## The Proposal

The proposal site is a commercial building within Dartford Town Centre and consists of three storeys of offices, with the ground floor tenanted and the first and second floors vacant. The second floor has been vacant since 30th April 2019. The first floor has a lease expiring and has been unused since March 2020. The proposal seeks to convert the vacant floorspace to residential use.

The application follows the previously approved Prior Approval applications for the conversion of the upper floors (first and second) office space into 7 residential units and the conversion of the ground floor commercial space into one residential unit.

This application is for an additional one bedroom flat to create a total of 9 residential units with associated existing car parking at the rear. The key change is on the second floor to create units 8 and 9. Similarly to the first floor, the front of the property has been divided equally. At roof level, a series of skylights have been added to the existing roof to maximise the amount of light to each of the units.

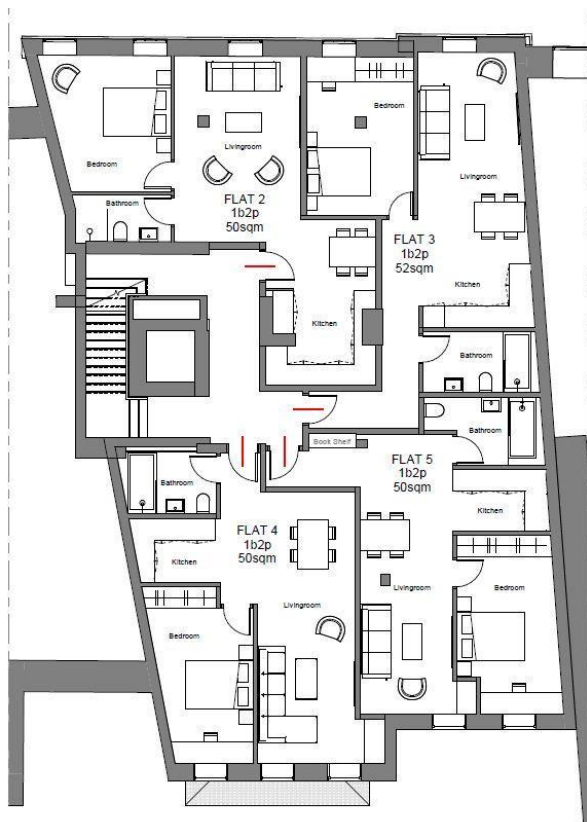
These dwellings would appeal to those wishing to enter the housing market, with the flats meeting the relevant floorspace standards. The flats will offer a good standard of floorspace, layout and general amenity. The site already has a residential refuse store and the proposal will provide space for bins for use by the future occupiers.



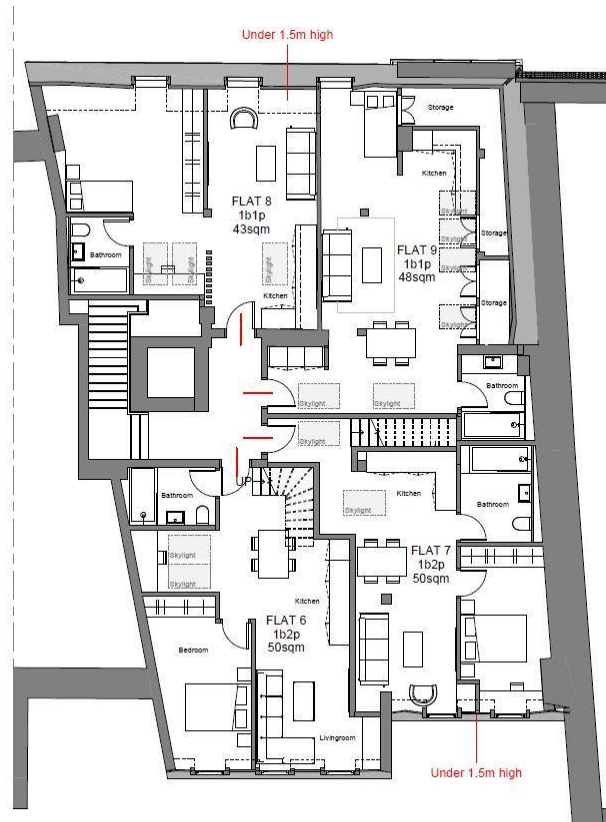
## Internal Changes

The application follows the previously approved Prior Approval applications for the conversion of the upper floors (first and second) office space into 7 residential units and the conversion of the ground floor commercial space into one residential unit.

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First Floor



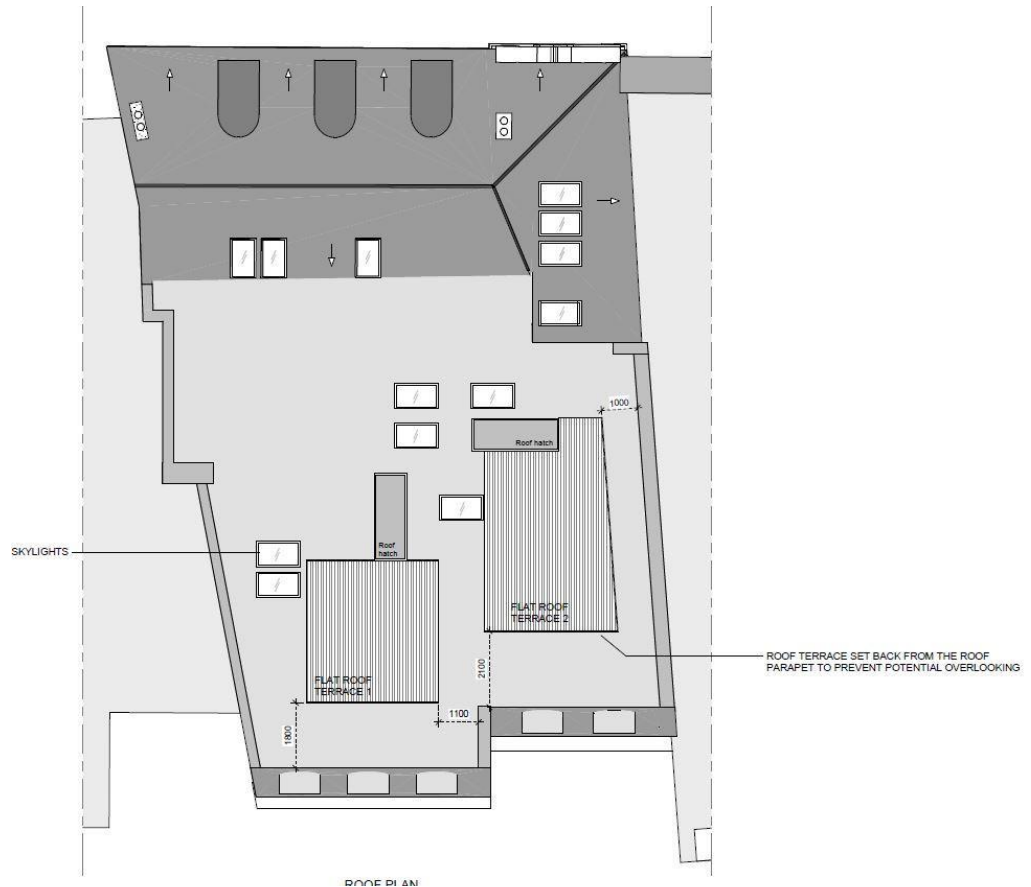
Second Floor

## External Changes

The roof changes propose to utilise the existing roof space to enhance the quality of the internal accommodation for the flats on the second floor. There are a number of skylights proposed across the roof to maximise the light into the units. These have been carefully positioned along the flat and pitched roof. None of the roof lights are visible from the street level.

For units 6 and 7, the flat roof area at the rear has been used to provide amenity space for the respective apartments below. The roof terraces have been appropriately set-back from the parapet of the roof so they will not be visible to any neighbouring properties and avoid any overlooking issues. The railings surrounding the terrace will comply with regulations at a height of 1100mm.

On the ground floor, it is proposed to create some amenity space for Flat 1 by changing the rear windows and give access to a small decked terrace area. As the rear of the property is completely private, this external space will allow users an amenity area from their living room. To avoid disturbances from the car park, the terrace will be screened with fencing, trellis and planting.



Proposed Roof Plan

### 3D Street Views

The proposed street views above demonstrate that the skylights in the pitches of the roof will not be visible from the street view along Spital Street. The view below is taken from the rear car park to demonstrate the skylights and roof terraces will not be visible. The roof terraces have been set back to prevent any potential overlooking and interference for the neighbouring properties.



Street views. Front Elevations

## **Transport and Highway Impacts**

The proposed use of the site would offer a reduction in highway impacts compared to the existing use and will lead to a reduction in the use of the access to Spital Street. In comparison, the flats are aimed at 1-2 people occupiers who would be looking to utilise public transport and would mainly be single people or couples occupying the units. However, the scheme retains 9 spaces for these occupiers. In this regard, even with a conservative view considered with an estimated 2 trips per residential unit, this would still result in a reduction in vehicle trips compared to the existing uses and at worst no intensification of use. There would also be a significant reduction in parking demand as a result of the development but in any case the scheme retains 9 spaces for the development.

Even if parking was not proposed, it is not considered the proposed use would need parking in any case due to the studio nature of the flats and the excellent access to public transport which includes Dartford train station, together with sufficient bus route provision along West Hill. Local shops, including convenience stores, supermarkets, pharmacies and other retail outlets are located within 400 metres of the site.

The proposed use offers a reduction in trips rates and parking demand and thus presents a benefit to reducing local congestion and parking demand. Furthermore, the proposed use is one which can utilise the good connections to public transport and local shops and facilities and the type of unit proposed will encourage a type of occupier that will undertake such a lifestyle.

In this regard, there are no concerns regarding transportation and highway impacts which would outweigh the benefits of the development.

## **Contamination Impacts**

The site lies within a residential area and has been used for offices for many years and there have been no heavy industrial uses present. Thus, there are no grounds to suspect contamination nor should it present an issue to withhold the prior approval consent.

## **Flood Risk impacts**

The property is partly within Flood Zone 2 this appears to relate to the car park area, whilst the proposal site and the main access would be within Flood Zone 1. Please refer to the Flood Risk Assessment attached with this submission.

Paragraph 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that inappropriate development in areas at high risk from flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). In this regard, the site lies within Flood Zone 2 and it is submitted that development would be carried out within an area which has a lower probability of flooding.

Therefore, it is considered that prior approval should not be required with regards to flood risks on site.



## **Noise impacts**

The legislation makes this clear that this part relates to potential impacts from adjacent or nearby commercial premises. In this case, the site is located within an urban area which has surrounding residential and commercial uses. Within the building there are no noise sources that could affect the flats and in any case the flats would be converted to meet the necessary building control standards. A noise assessment has been conducted which assesses the spaces, any potential issues and solutions.

## **Adequate levels of Daylight**

The proposal has been carefully designed to ensure that every habitable room benefits from at least one full sized window bringing daylight into the space. The units are designed to have large open plan spaces which allow natural light to penetrate through the building. It is clear that any future occupants will be able to enjoy a well-lit natural environment without the reliance on artificial lighting for the habitable rooms. It is considered for these reasons, the scheme is able to meet the light requirements expected for residential developments.

## **Heritage Statement**

The site comprises the ground, first and second floors of Waterbridge Court, a three storey commercial property built in the 1990's, with a period façade that gives the impression of an older property. The second floor is within the roof space and has three dormer windows to the front and five to the rear. The front of the property is rendered white, and the rear facade is brick faced. The interior has been completely modified and modernised as the property has been used as an office space.

The architectural heritage of 50 Spital Street is of Arts and Crafts influence which includes offices over two storeys plus attic with four bays to the right and a projecting bay to the left, topped with a pedimented mannerist gable with a vehicular passage to the ground floor. There are also arched openings to the ground floor, large rectangular windows to its first floor.

The site is located within a Conservation Area and there are a number of listed buildings close by, although the site is not considered to be within their curtilage.

The site is within the defined area of Dartford Town Centre and the surrounding uses are a mix of retail, commercial and residential as you would expect. The site is in a sustainable location, close to local services and benefits from good public transport access being just 7 minutes walk from Dartford Station and a similar distance to the Dartford Central Park.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed development seeks to increase the existing approved planning by one unit and redevelop an under-utilised building in order to provide 9 new residential units for Dartford. It presents the opportunity to bring forward a development which has been positively and proactively designed with modest changes and careful consideration of the building's history, the surroundings and context. The proposed units will be unobtrusive and give no adverse effect on neighbouring properties. The units provide spacious living accommodation suitable for local professionals and young families. It is therefore respectfully requested that confirmation is received that full planning is granted for the proposed residential development.

Yours faithfully,

Marc Alexander Turnier  
ARB RIBA BA (Hons) MArch (dist.) PG Dip (dist.)

Managing Director  
Arcvelop Ltd.