

UPDATE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7th February 2018

ITEM NO. 12
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Ward: Norcot

App No.: 171086/FUL

Address: Grovelands Baptist Church, 553 Oxford Road, Reading

Proposal: Demolition of existing church buildings and redevelopment of the site to provide a four storey mixed use development comprised of community halls and ancillary accommodation at ground floor level, car parking and 2x one bedroom flats and 10 x two bedroom flats at the upper levels.

Applicant: The Trustees of Reading Community Church (now known as 'The Gate')

Date application valid: 11th July 2017

Major Application 13 week target: 10th October 2017

Extended deadline: 28th February 2018

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 9th January 2018

RECOMMENDATION

171086

REFUSE Full Planning Permission for the following reasons:

Amended Reason:

3. The raised terraces at upper floors to the rear would cause overlooking and the perception of overlooking, and loss of privacy, for surrounding residential properties, and would introduce amenity space at a height uncharacteristic in this area contrary to policy DM4.

Remove reason 4

1.0 ADDITIONAL/ UPDATED INFORMATION

- 1.1 Following the publication of the main committee report the applicant has submitted amended plans seeking to secure removal of certain recommended reasons for refusal.
- 1.2 With regard to recommended reason 3, which relates to balconies and terraces at the upper floors to the rear, the amended plan removes the rear balconies to unit 5 (first floor) and unit 10 (second floor). This partially addresses this reason for refusal, so an amended reason is included in the recommendation above, which deletes reference to the balconies, but retains reference to the terrace.
- 1.3 With regard to recommended reason 4, which relates to rear facing windows, the amended plan shows windows on the rear elevation of units 1 (first floor), and unit 6 (second floor) with oriel windows, so that the line of view is towards Wilson Road. This is considered acceptable and it is recommended therefore that reason 4 be removed.

- 1.4 In terms of reason 6 which relates to the lack of a completed Section 106 agreement, the applicant has requested that it be made clear that their linked application at Wilson Road would provide some of the parking and all the affordable housing for the church site. The Wilson Road site could be supported, but there would need to be a clause linking the two sites together. Therefore the reason for refusal is included at this time. However, this reason would be likely to fall away should the Wilson Road site secure approval.
- 1.5 The applicant has stated *"...the wording states a failure to meet policy whereas, in reality, policy will be met when the Wilson Road site is determined and when the church and council legal teams become engaged, IF the committee is minded to grant approval. The church is committed to working collaboratively in this regard to meet any required contributions, albeit we reiterate our request, as stated in the planning application, that the council is mindful of the applicant's charitable status and the wider context of their aim to maximise proceeds from the development for the benefit of the Reading community..."*.
- 1.6 The applicant has therefore requested that the wording of the recommended reason be amended so that *"it more clearly reflects the context and the intended positive determination of the Wilson Road scheme"*. However, it is the officer's view that at present, although it is likely that an agreement could be reached on Section 106 obligations, at present there is no such agreement, so the reason needs to be included at this time.

Amended plans received 4th February 2018

- Proposed Elevations North and West - Document no: 160C
- Proposed Elevations South and East - Document no: 161B
- First Floor Plan as Proposed - Drawing no: 151B
- Second Floor Plan as Proposed - Drawing no: 152B
- Third Floor Plan as Proposed - Drawing no: 153B



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 SECOND FLOOR PLAN AS PROPOSED

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