



PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

11 DECEMBER 2019

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision		3 - 4
7. 191088/FUL - CROWNE PLAZA READING, RICHFIELD AVENUE	Decision	ABBEY	5 - 6
8. 190760/FUL & 190929/FUL - 76 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD	Decision	CHURCH	7 - 10
9. 191677/REG3 - MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS, UPPER WOODCOTE ROAD, CAVERSHAM	Decision	MAPLEDURHAM	11 - 12

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Reading Borough Council

Applications for Committee Determination since previous Committee Report

Printed: 6th December 2019

Ward: Abbey

Application reference: 191792

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: 71-73, Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8JA

Proposal: Demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a new part 1, part 5, part 7 storey mixed-use building comprising 44 residential units, 239 sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class A1) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping.

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

Ward: Abbey

Application reference: 191841

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: House Of Fraser, The Oracle, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2AS

Proposal: Subdivision of three-storey retail unit (Class A1) and change of use to form: 1x flexible retail/restaurant/bar unit (Class A1/A3/A4), 1x flexible retail/restaurant unit (Class A1/A3) and 1x assembly and leisure unit (Class D2) at Riverside level; 1x retail unit (Class A1) and 1x assembly and leisure unit (Class D2) at lower ground level; 1x retail unit (Class A1) at upper ground level, together with alterations to the Riverside frontage and associated plant, car parking and external alterations at car park levels.

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

Ward: Abbey

Application reference: 191848

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: Greyfriars Church, Friar Street, Reading

Proposal: Demolish Existing Church Centre, Construct New Three Storey Church Centre with Plant Enclosure on Roof and Single Storey Glazed Link at Ground Floor Level. Associated hard and Soft Landscaping and External Works

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

Ward: Abbey

Application reference: 191825

Application type: Variation of Condition

Site address: St Johns Primary School, 121-147 Orts Road, Reading, RG1 3JN

Proposal: Application for variation of condition 2 following grant of planning permission 111030, to raise the height of the sports rebound ball fence from 4 metres (Approved) to 6 metres.

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

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UPDATE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 7

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: December 11th 2019

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 191088

Address: Crowne Plaza Reading, Richfield Avenue, Reading, RG1 8BD

Proposal: Redevelopment of former Crowne Plaza Hotel car park and construction of new 132-bed hotel (Use Class C1), with associated access, car parking and landscaping.

Applicant: RBH Hospitality Management

Deadline: 02/10/2019

Extended Deadline: 13/12/2019

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 1/1/2020

RECOMMENDATION:

Amended refusal reasons (changed underlined):

- 1) The layout does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of vehicle parking. This could result in on-street parking/reversing movements on Caversham Road, Richfield Avenue, Thames Side Promenade, and the roads within the industrial areas off Richfield Avenue, adversely affecting road safety and the flow of traffic, in conflict with Reading Borough Local Plan Policies TR5 and TR3.
- 4) The design is not considered to be of a sufficiently high quality which responds positively to the context, and would not maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Its massing, height and appearance would be detrimental to the designated Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature (MLF), by virtue of being a dominant feature within that local landscape, especially with regard to the resultant cumulative effect with existing adjacent buildings, the impact on the setting of the Grade II listed registered park and garden of Caversham Court Gardens, and the views across the MLF, in particular from the north, especially from the St. Peter's Conservation Area, contrary to policy CC7, EN5, EN7, EN11 and EN13.

1. AMENDED INFORMATION

Conservation Consultant's Comments

- 1.1 Comments from the Council's Conservation Consultant have been received and are consistent with the officer views and that of CADRA, i.e. that the site "is an important riverside location and the proposals are considered to harm the setting of the Caversham Court Gardens, which is a Grade II listed registered park and garden, and views from the recently extended St. Peter's Conservation Area along Caversham Bridge." This supports the recommended refusal reason no.4 from the main report, which has been amended slightly as above.

Transport

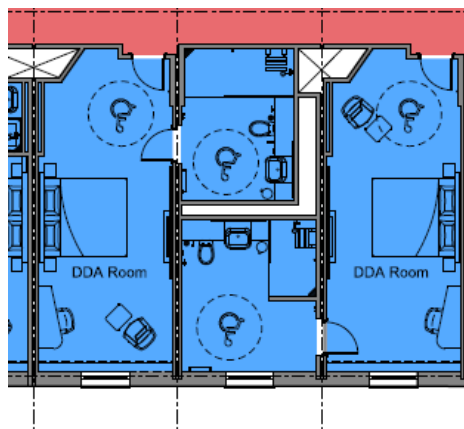
- 1.2 Paragraph 6.49 of the main report states that the submission documents conclude that development would result in a negligible increase in total person trips undertaken during the local transport network peak hour, which the applicant considers would not result in a significant impact on the operation of the local highway network nor impact severely on the capacity of the public transport network. RBC Transport Strategy has now clarified that the applicant's assessment in fact shows that there would be an increase in trips on an already congested network which would be material; and also that the applicant has not assessed the development accurately and therefore further assessment is required. This concern is however, considered to be sufficiently covered by the recommended reason for refusal 2 as set out in the main Agenda report.
- 1.3 With regard to the overspill parking concern, recommended refusal reason one has been amended, as above, to clarify that the roads affected would include Caversham Road, and the industrial area south of Richfield Avenue.

Section 106

- 1.4 Transport Strategy has confirmed that the requested contribution for an enhanced pedestrian crossing on Richfield Avenue (were the application to be otherwise considered supportable) would be £80,000.

Equalities Impact

- 1.5 Having further reviewed the floor plans, officers advise that there are 2x no. proposed disabled compliant (Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) accessible) rooms per floor, which would total 8 out of 132 or 6%, which is considered to be an acceptable level of provision. Therefore, the proposed scheme would comply with Policy CC7 and the layout would not have a detrimental effect on the key equalities protected characteristics. (Extract from floor plan below.)



Conclusion

- 1.6 The application is recommended for refusal for the reasons set out in the main report as amended above.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

UPDATE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 11th December 2019

Ward: Church

App No: 190760/FUL & 190929/FUL

Address: 76 Christchurch Road, Reading

190760/FUL Proposal: Change of use ground, first and second floor of A2 (Bank) to A5 on the ground floor, and on first and second floor from A2 to C4 HMO. Part-retrospective application for flat roof rear dormer.

190929/FUL Proposal: Change of use of 1st and 2nd floors from bank (Class A2) to C4 HMO. Part-retrospective application for flat roof rear dormer.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant, as per the main agenda report with an additional condition for a litter management strategy (for application 190760 - ground floor change of use from A2 to A5).

1. ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONS MADE

1.1 Further to the committee report, an additional objection has been received by Officers. One additional letter has also been received by Councillors.

1.2 Comments received in both representations have been previously received and addressed in the previous reports.

1.3 The letter received by Councillors includes a number of issues which should be considered by members, although some matters do not fall within the scope of 'material planning considerations' that would weigh against the application.

1.4 Specifically, the following matters would fall outside of the scope of material planning considerations:

- Irrelevance of 'need' for the proposed development by any specific resident (*Office note: The LPA is not responsible for controlling the market, or profitability of businesses*);
- Licensing requirements or restrictions, including licensing policy (*Officer note: licensing regulation sit outside of planning and as such planning cannot condition or consider elements controlled by separate legislation*);
- Target market for any given unit (*Officer note: the market generally controls what facilitates are proposed for area*)

1.5 Additionally, the letter has raised a number of matters which are yet to be determined. For instance, the visual dominance of any future ventilation arrangements is yet to be known, and conditions which require further approval can be determined at a future PAC. The proposed development, would within its limited scope remove some of the visual clutter by way of

the partial demolition of the outbuilding. The points raised in relation to greenery being lost, are pertinent and as far as practicable, the hardstanding condition can ensure appropriate treatment of paved areas (i.e. permeable surfacing). The rear of the premises are that of the rear of a row of shops similar to any local centre and its context is important to consider. Officers consider that the proposed treatments are characteristic to the area, and would not be an unusual feature for a row of shops.

- 1.6 As per the supporting reports, conditions can be attached to sufficiently control dust, fumes and smell generated from the development, although residents would contend that the proposal would be harmful in this regard, conditions are recommended to ensure appropriateness of future systems. Environmental Protection colleagues will scrutinise the details submitted to confirm if acceptable.
- 1.7 In addition to conditions above, a condition is recommended for future approval for a delivery and servicing plan. As such, the delivery vehicles and waste vehicle for the proposed uses can be managed and secured by this condition.
- 1.8 The letter finally comments on the HMO use proposed at first and second floor. In addition to the policy requirements outlined in the main report, the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO), would allow the applicant, to apply for the prior approval of the Council to convert these parts of the building to C3 use, with only a limited assessment as outlined in the GPDO. Additionally, as the site is not within an Article 4 area, the C3 use would have the ability to interchange itself to a C4 (HMO) use. Lastly, as outlined in the report, the HMO policies generally relate to the loss of single family homes, and as stated, the mix of the residential uses would not be materially affected as a result of this conversion.
- 1.9 The HMO calculation and count as in the main report has been re-visited due to concerns by residents and significant differences in the numbers provided. It is not clear what properties the representation have included, and Officers are content that all properties on the Council's record (discounting commercial units) have now been included.
- 1.10 The previous calculation included some of the ground floor shops in error. These have now been removed, and the calculation undertaken again. Following this, the number of properties within a 50m radius from the front door to the HMO is 25, with 8 being clearly identified as HMO uses. This is in fact 29% of the properties, whereas the previous calculation stated 22%. This would mean the approval of the HMO in this location would raise the percentage of HMO's to 33%. Notwithstanding this increase, it must be recognised that the existing property is not currently in C3 use as a single dwelling house but as an A2 (financial and professional, and any change of use would not result in a loss of an existing family dwelling or consequently any reduction in the number of single family dwellings in the area, which the policy seeks to prevent.
- 1.10 The statement goes on to discuss Policy RL3 and the impact of the proposed use on the centre. As a detailed assessment has been carried out in accordance with this policy, no further comments are required within this update.

2. MATTERS FOR CLARIFICATION

2.1 The map attached to the previous report erroneously omitted Kung Fu Kitchen (A3 use) which sits between Gregg's and Cintra Estates. As noted in section 4 of the report, the table shows that all units have been counted and included in the calculation methodology. For clarity, the infographic has been updated below.

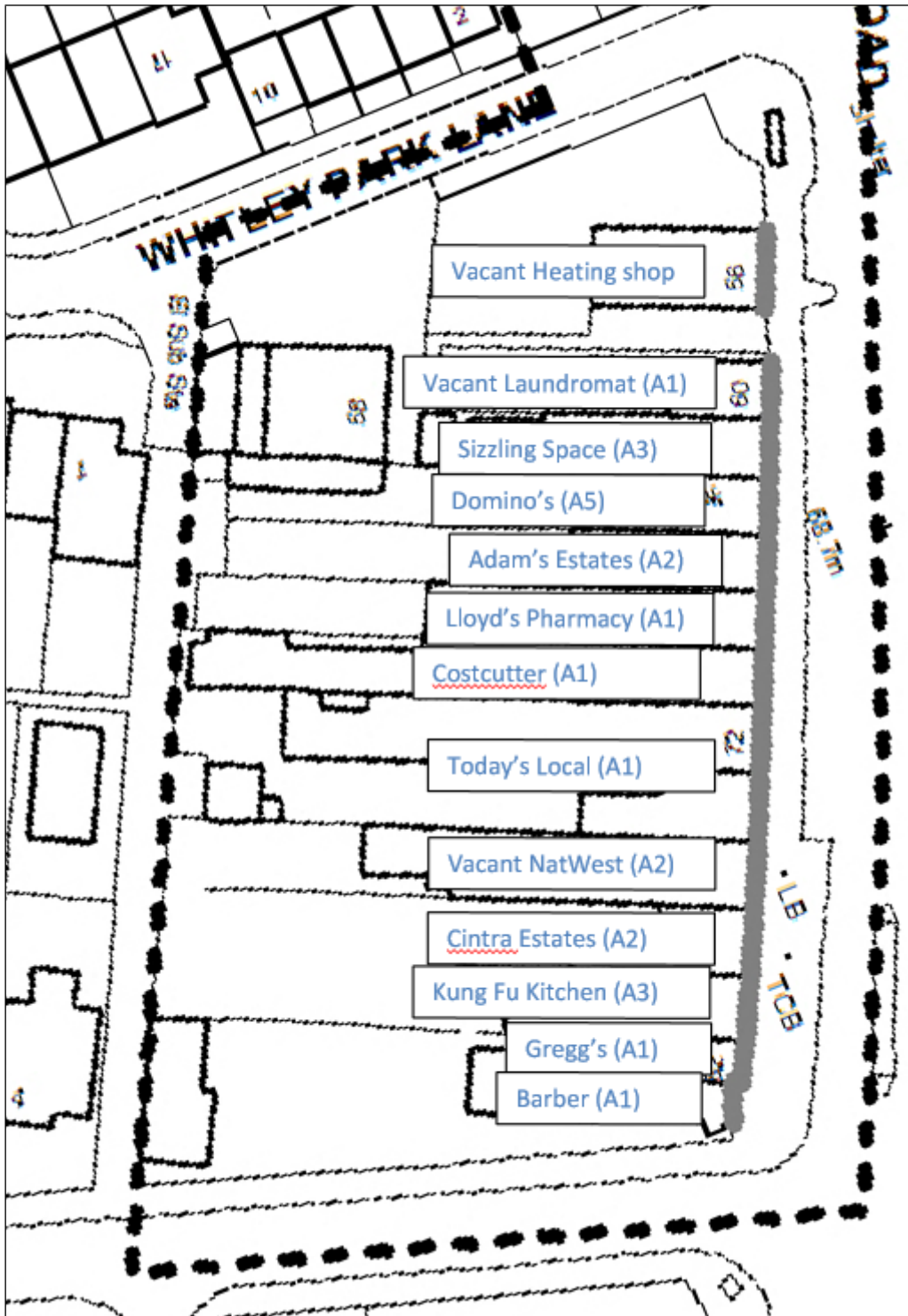


Figure 1 - Updated Frontage plan

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UPDATE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 11th December 2019

ITEM NO.

Ward: Mapledurham
App No.: 191677/FUL
Address: Mapledurham Playing Fields. Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham
Proposal: Refurbishment and single storey front rear and side extensions to the pavilion building
Applicant: Reading Borough Council
Target decision date: 13th December 2019

RECOMMENDATION:

As per main agenda report

Additional condition:

10. Pre-occupation provision of proposed energy enhancements

1. Transport

1.1 Consultation comments on the application from Transport Development Control have now been received.

1.2 The comments set out that the site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area as identified in the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities. The pavilion is served by an existing car park accessed via Upper Woodcote Road. The proposed refurbishment works will re-provide the existing facilities within the pavilion. It is not proposed to provide significant additional facilities or capacity that would result in an intensification of the use of the building. Therefore, there are no transport objections to the proposed development and the car parking within the existing car park is considered adequate to serve the refurbished pavilion. There are no changes to the access point currently serving the site.

1.3 No additional conditions above those set out within the main agenda report are recommended.

2. Public Consultation

2.1 The closing date for comments on the application was 3rd December 2019. No letters of public representation have been received.

3. Sustainability

- 3.1 The main Agenda report advises that further information has been sought from the applicant on the reasons why the usual sustainability requirements are not achievable. The applicant advises that the existing pavilion building has minimal insulation to both the walls and the roof and what insulation there is as has been damaged over the years to further reduce thermal performance. Existing lighting within the building is also predominantly inefficient fluorescent tube lights whilst a hot water and heating is supplied by a dated gas boiler.
- 3.2 The proposed refurbishment works would provide significant improvements to the thermal performance of the building with new insulation to be added to all walls and roof sections. The building will also be made 'air tight' with draft sealant to be added to all external doors and windows to reduce heat loss. All existing lighting is to be replaced with LED lights and panels which have a longer life span than the existing fluorescent lighting. The existing gas boiler is also be replaced with a more efficient electric heating and water system which will provide greater control in terms of timings as to when the heating and hot water are turned on and will also incorporate water-saving technology.
- 3.3 As set out in paragraph 6.22 of the main agenda report, minor scale non-residential developments are required to meet a BREEAM standard of 'very good'. The application does not include information which demonstrates it would meet this level; however, given the relatively modest nature of the proposed extensions and the proposed improvements above the existing thermal and water use efficiency of the building as set out above, officers are satisfied that the proposals would enhance the sustainability of the building considerably above existing and adequately take into account the effects of climate change. Furthermore, it should be noted that the internal refurbishments -which form a significant part of the works - could be carried out without the need for planning permission. In summary, whilst the application is technically contrary to the new sustainability policy, there are considered to be several mitigating factors in this instance and so in this context, securing a BREEAM level of 'very good' to the modest extension areas would impractical to achieve. Officers therefore recommend that the above works are suitable and an additional condition setting out the nature of energy improvement works to be secured is attached to any permission.

4. Typographical Correction

- 4.1 Paragraph 6.25 of the main agenda report incorrectly refers to Policy CC6 in relation to disabled persons' access. The correct policy with regard the accessibility is CC7 (Design and the Public Realm).

Case Officer: Matt Burns