

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	24 JUNE 2020		
TITLE:	OUTCOME FOR APPLICATIONS THAT PREVIOUSLY MIGHT HAVE COME TO COMMITTEE BUT WERE DETERMINED BY OFFICERS UNDER NEW DELEGATED AUTHORITY		
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1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the outcome for those applications that, following the agreement at Policy Committee on 27 April 2020 to extend the delegated authority to the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport & Regulatory Services to determine applications and to manage “called in” applications, have now been decided by officers.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note the report and the decisions made.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A report was presented at Policy Committee held on 27 April to explain that Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and ‘The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020’ enables Council meetings to take place online during the current Covid-19 pandemic. The report provided revised protocols for running meetings to help manage online events and included a proposal to extend the delegated authority for making decisions on planning applications to reduce the work handled by Planning Applications Committee.
- 3.2 Policy Committee agreed that the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services delegated authority to determine planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders should be extended to help reduce the number of reports coming to the meeting.
- 3.3 Councillors can ask for an application that is delegated to officers to determine to be considered by Planning Applications Committee instead - known as “calling in” an application. This ability remains but councillors are now requested to seek advice from the Planning Manager and Chair of Planning when considering a “call in” so that a judgement can be made on the merits of bringing the application to Committee. For example; if the application is clearly failing a number of policies and having a debate about it at committee is not going to change that it would be more efficient for the officer to be left to press on and refuse the application within the target timescale than to delay the decision by having to bring a committee report to this meeting.
- 3.4 It was agreed at Policy Committee that a schedule of those applications affected by the change in delegations be presented to each Planning Applications Committee for

information. Officers have also included in the list those applications that had been called in but then agreed by the relevant councillors could be decided by officers.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The Planning Service contributes to the Council's strategic aims in terms of:
- Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active."
 - Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing homes for those in most need."
 - Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing infrastructure to support the economy."

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2 The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. As a team we work hard to reduce the amount of resources (paper and printing) we use to carry out our work so reducing the number of committee reports produced will also help.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The changes to delegations do not change the need for statutory and non-statutory consultation on all planning applications.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Where appropriate the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 7.2 There are no direct implications arising from the proposals.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None arising from this Report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no financial implications as a result of adopting these arrangements for determining applications.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

27th April 2020 Policy Committee Minutes

Table 1 - Applications decided since 21st May 2020

Application type	Application reference number	Called in or extended delegation	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Decision Date	Decision
Full Planning Approval	200123	Extended delegation	Dental Surgery, Mulberry House, 1a Eldon Road, Reading, RG1 4DJ	Redlands	Erection of a 3 to 5 storey building and semi-open basement providing 11 (5x1bed, 3x2bed and 3x3 bed) residential units (Use Class C3), 10 parking spaces, landscaping and associated works.	27/01/2020	09/06/2020	Application Refused
Full Planning Approval	200069	Called in	14 Zinzan Street	Abbey	Rear dormer	16/01/2020	21/04/2020	Application Refused