

## UPDATE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 11<sup>th</sup> 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.

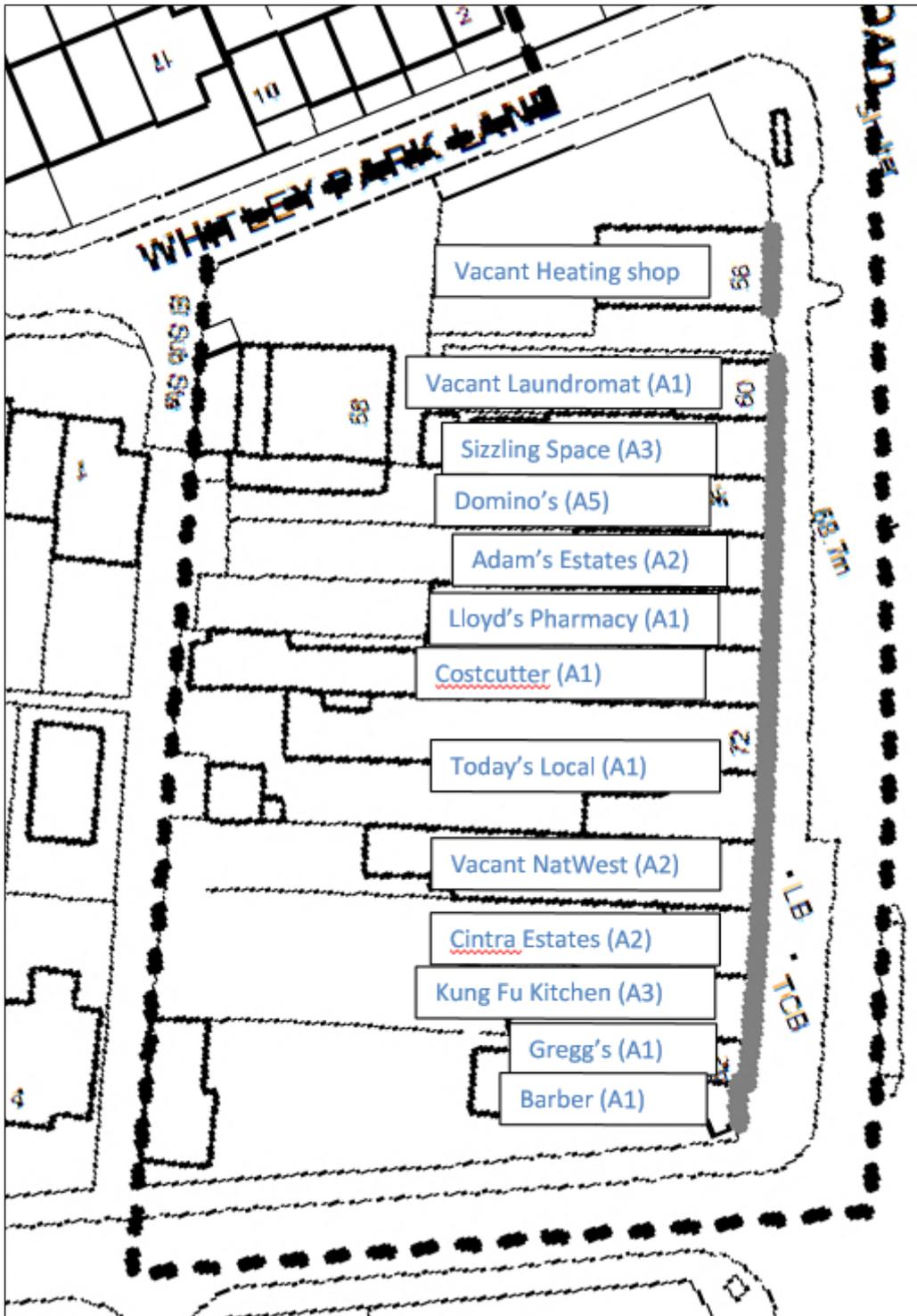


Figure 1 - Updated Frontage plan