

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands

App Ref: 221823/FUL

Address: 25 Erleigh Road, Reading, RG1 5LR

Proposals: Single storey extension to standalone building

Case Officer: Beatrice Malama

Applicant: Berkshire NHS foundation Trust

Date received (valid from): 3 January 2023 **Agreed Decision date:** 6 June 2023

Site visit date: 27 February 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is Berkshire Healthcare Clinic located north of Erleigh Road and west of Alexandra Road, at the intersection of Erleigh and Alexandra Roads. The area is primarily residential comprising mainly of two and three storey properties and has a lot of Buildings of Townscape merit. Within the boundaries of the application site are three storey buildings, a single storey outbuilding located in the north-western corner of the site and a number of mature tall trees. There are existing car parking spaces on site.

The building is not Listed however part of the three storey building is classified as a building of townscape merit. The site falls within Alexandra Road Conservation Area.

Site visit photos: image 1 & 2 existing front elevation and open space; Image 3 onsite car parking



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning application is sought for the proposed single storey extension to standalone redbrick building located in the north eastern corner of the site.

Plans considered:

- Drawing No. 22022 P 001 – Location Plan, dated November 2022, received 6 December 2022
- Drawing No. 22022 P 003 – Existing plan and Elevations dated November 2022, received 6 December 2022
- Drawing No. 22022-P- 000 – Rev A – Block Plan dated November 2022, received 3 January 2023
- Drawing No. 22022-P-004 – Rev B – Proposed Plans and Elevations dated November 2022, received 2023
- Drawing No. 22022-P-006 Rev B – New Planting – Garden – dated February 2023 received 6 June 2023
- 25 Erleigh Rd, CAMHS crisis centre - Heritage and Planning Statement dated 3 January 2023, received 3 January 2023
- Application Form dated 1 December 2022, received on 6 December 2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 091602/FUL - External ramp and steps - Application Permitted - 9 February 2010
- 91-00158-GOVT - Change of use of parts of first and second floors from nursing accommodation to consulting rooms and offices. Circular 18/84 - Observation sent - 4 April 1991
- 221462//PRE - Single storey extension to standalone outbuilding - Observation Sent - 21 November 2022

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal Consultation

Natural Environment – No objection subject to conditions

Transport Development Control comment – additional car parking spaces and cycle parking to be provided.

Public Consultation

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

26 Alexandra Road, Reading, RG1 5PD
26a Alexandra Road, Reading, RG1 5PD
23 Erleigh Road, Reading, RG1 5LR

No letters of representation have been received.

Reading CAAC – No comment received

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in

terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
TR3: Access Traffic and Highway-related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking

SPG/SPD and Other Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)
Alexandra Road Conservation Area Appraisal

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle of development
- b) Design and Impact on Heritage Asset
- c) Amenities of neighbouring properties
- d) Transport (Parking)
- e) Natural Environment

a) Principle of development

The proposal seeks to extend the existing outbuilding to be used as part of the existing Clinic (Berkshire Health Care Trust). In principle there are no objections to the proposed extension of the existing outbuilding provided that the relevant policies of the Reading Borough Council are satisfied. Consideration of any proposal would be in terms of design and impact on immediate surrounding area, Amenities of neighbouring properties, Transport and Natural Environment (trees) matters.

b) Design and Impact on Heritage Asset

The proposed development is a single storey front extension to an existing single storey redbrick outbuilding located in the north-western corner of the property. The proposed extension would be full width of the existing outbuilding and approximately 3.3m deep with a raised patio of 3m deep by 4.7m wide. The overall height of the building as extended would increase by approximately 0.15m. The new building would be of redbrick to match the existing and the proposed roof finish to both the existing building and the extension is standing seam copper cladding that should develop a green patina over time and will replace the current corrugated asbestos sheeting that is grey/white in colour.

Given the small scale and location of the proposed development, at the far end corner of the property, the development would unlikely have any adverse impact on the existing building, nearby buildings and the street scene. The existing trees on and offsite would provide some screening and as such the new building would not be very visible from both Erleigh and Alexandra Roads. The proposal therefore is not considered to have any adverse impact on the appearance of the area.

c) Residential Amenity

Policy CC8 states that *Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties.*

The new building would be single storey and there are existing trees on the northern boundary of the site which currently act as a screen between neighbouring properties. Although the overall height of building would increase by approximately 0.15m, this is not considered to materially change the relationship between neighbouring properties as such concerns about loss of privacy and access to natural light or any harm to the living environment of neighbouring properties would not arise. The proposal would therefore comply with the above policy.

d) Transport

The application site is Berkshire Healthcare Clinic located within the Alexandra Road Conservation Area. The site comprises of three storey buildings and a single storey outbuilding (the subject of the current application). There are a number of mature tall trees on and around the site and an existing onsite car park. To the front of the outbuilding is a small garden space. The site is currently used as a clinic [Class E – Commercial, Business and Service (Provision of medical or health services)]

The proposed development is for the extension of an existing single storey outbuilding with a raised and fenced off front patio and other associated works. As extended, the outbuilding would be used to provide medical and health services (use class E) and would consist of the following rooms:

- One interview room (one on one counselling)
- One group meeting room
- one semi ambulant toilet
- A small waiting area with a tea point

Reading Borough Council's Transport Development Control were consulted and recommended that additional car parking and cycle spaces be provided to cater for the additional traffic which would result from the proposed extension.

Given the scale of the proposed extension in relation to the existing three storey buildings on site with extensive footprint and the continued use of the building for medical services, the extension is considered largely immaterial in terms of the overall use of the site and the potential intensity of use. It is considered unlikely that, as a result of the extension, the amount of traffic on or around the site would significantly increase to unacceptable levels so as to impact on safety. In addition, the site is largely built up with only a small area of green space as such any additional parking

space would result in the loss of the existing green space on site. The space is the last visually appealing part of the setting to the building. It contributes positively to the conservation area with glimpses through from Erleigh Road and it provides some relief to the area of predominantly hard surfacing surrounded by parked vehicles. Therefore any loss to the existing green space including the existing trees would adversely harm the general setting of the site. On balance, the benefits of preserving the existing green space to the mental wellbeing of both the staff and visitors and to the environment is considered to outweigh the need to provide additional car parking spaces.

e) Trees

With reference to the New Planting – Garden Drg. No. 22022-P-006 – Rev B, the following are noted:

- Two new trees are proposed in grassed areas, which is positive. Both proposed trees are
- Pink Perfection Cherry Blossom Trees – currently planting Cherry trees is not encouraged as this genus is over-represented in the Borough. The applicant is advised to consider alternative species. Consulting the Tree Strategy will help with choosing agreeable species. This however can be dealt with during the discharge of condition.

As replacement planting is proposed, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of trees and landscaping subject to landscape and Arboricultural method statement conditions.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Application Permitted

Recommended Conditions:

1. Time Limit (Standard)
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials (As Specified)
4. Ancillary Use
5. Landscaping Small Scale (To be approved)
6. Arboricultural Method Statement (To be approved)

No development shall commence on site (including demolition or preparatory works) until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice for all existing trees that are not shown as being removed on the approved drawings, both within and adjacent to the site, has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

REASON: In order to ensure that appropriate protection is given to trees of amenity value within and adjacent to the site in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.