

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham

App Ref: 220898/FUL

Address: 4 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LU

Proposals: Retrospective change of use from Residential Care Home (C2) and owners accommodation to a single dwellinghouse (C3). Single storey rear extension.

Case Officer: David Brett

Applicant: Mr Colin Robbins

Date received (valid from): 8 September 2022 **Target Decision date:** 3 February 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located within the established low-density residential neighbourhood of Caversham towards the north of the borough. The immediate area is characterised by a mixture of large dwellings fronting the street with landscaped rear gardens which are largely free from development.

The site, comprising of 4 Kidmore Road and curtilage, was formerly in use as a care home. To the front (western) end of the site is the main house, a well-built and well-proportioned Edwardian property (originally constructed as a single dwelling). To the rear is a large lawn garden and further east is an extensive unused wooded area. The site is subject to Tree Preservation Order 147/01 (confirmed June 2002). Two of the trees, a Scots Pine and a London Plane, are located adjacent to the front boundary of the site. The remainder are located in the rear garden area, including a Larch and a Lime to the northern boundary and a group of Sycamore and Horse Chestnuts located more centrally in the plot.

The front of the site is at street level with a sharp drop down to the garden lawn area at the rear of the building of around half a metre. The land then slopes gently downward to the east beyond the lawn towards the wooded area and the distant rear boundary with properties on Blenheim Road.

Site visit date: 03/11/2022



Fig 1. Rear of 4 Kidmore Road looking out towards 6 Kidmore Road



Fig 2. Rear of 4 Kidmore Road looking out towards 2A Kidmore Road



Fig 3. Rear of 4 Kidmore Road.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Retrospective change of use from Residential Care Home (C2) and owners accommodation to a single dwellinghouse (C3). Single storey rear extension.

Plans considered

- Site Location Plan As Existing - 396a 02-00 Rev P
- Block Plan As Existing - 396a 02-01 Rev P
- Roof Plan As Existing - 396a 01-03 Rev P
- ~~- Block Plan As Proposed - 396a 02-10 Rev P~~
- Proposed Block Plan - 396a 02-20 Rev P
- Ground Floor Plan As Existing - 396a 01-00 Rev P
- First Floor Plan As Existing - 396a 01-01 Rev P
- Second Floor Plan As Existing - 396a 01-02 Rev P
- Proposed GF Plan - 396a 03-20 Rev P
- Proposed FF Plan - 396a 03-21 Rev P
- Proposed SF Plan - 396a 03-22 Rev P
- Proposed 3F Plan - 396a 03-23 Rev P
- Elevations As Existing - 396a 01-04 Rev P
- Elevations & Section As Existing - 396a 01-05 Rev P
- Elevations As Proposed Sheet 1 of 2 - 396a 05-10 Rev P
- Elevations As Proposed Sheet 2 of 2 - 396a 05-11 Rev P

Received on 17/06/2022

- Application Statement

Received on 20/06/2022

- Planning Policy Statement
- Affordable Housing Statement - 396/AFHS/Issue 1

Received on 06/09/2022

Received on 19/12/2022

- Preliminary Roost Assessment (December 2022) - 4653

Received on 20/12/2022

- Block Plan As Proposed - 396a 02-10 Rev P1

Received on 20/01/2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

88/TP/0711 - Change of use from dwelling house to rest home for 15 elderly residents. - Application Permitted on 22/09/1988

090837/FUL - Erection of 8 new bedroom units in rear garden and extension of existing rest home for the elderly. - Application Refused on 25/04/1996

090369/FUL - Two storey side extension and single storey rear extensions to existing rest home for the elderly. - Application Permitted on 06/02/1997

021140/FUL - Extension to Residential Care Home - Application Permitted on 10/04/2002

061360/FUL - Extension to residential care home - Application Permitted on 24/07/2007

100433/FUL - Extension to residential care home - Application Permitted on 02/09/2010

101903/OUT - Outline application for the erection of three dwellings with new access road (Access and Layout only). - Application Refused on 13/12/2010

121497/FUL - Two storey side extension, single storey side and rear extensions, and a single storey rear extension to form a 9-bedroom dementia care unit joined by a walkway, with associated parking. - Application Withdrawn on 17/12/2012

131164/FUL - Proposed two storey side and single storey side and rear extensions to the existing nursing home building and the erection of a new single storey dementia care unit in rear garden area with walkway link. - Application Refused on 16/12/2013. Appeal Dismissed on 01/06/2015

190467/FUL - Conversion and extension to convert former residential care home (C2) into 8 residential dwellings (C3), including parking, bin & cycle store and landscaping. - Application Permitted on 11/12/2020

210118/VAR - Variation of condition 2 approved planning permission 190467 - conversion and extension to convert former residential care home (C2) into 8 residential dwellings (C3), including parking, bin & cycle store and landscaping to amend the approved plans. - Application Refused on 06/05/2021

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

2a Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7LU - No comments received.

15 Blenheim Road, Reading, RG1 5NG - No comments received.

6 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LU - No comments received.

17 Blenheim Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RT - No comments received.

9 Blenheim Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RT - No comments received.

7 Blenheim Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RT - No comments received.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Response received on 26/09/2022

- No objection.
- Concerns raised regarding any changes proposed to the access. No changes to the access are proposed within this application.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Response received on 23/01/2023

- The details provided within the amended proposed Block Plan are acceptable.
- The details of a small soft landscaping scheme should be secured via condition to any approval.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Response received on 28/09/2022

- There are no Transport objections to this application subject to conditions.

Reading Borough Council, Ecology - First response received on 05/10/2022

- *The building may host roosting bats and to confirm whether this is the case, and if so how bats will be affected by the proposals, an updated bat survey will need to be carried out. The survey will need to be carried out prior to determination of the application or the application would need to be refused on the grounds that insufficient evidence had been provided to determine the likely impacts of the proposals on bats (which are a protected species and a material consideration in the planning process).*

Reading Borough Council, Ecology - First response received on 20/12/2022

- *The updated Bat Survey (Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd, December 2022) has been undertaken to the appropriate standard and concludes that one of the buildings (the single storey extension) has been used by roosting bats previously (droppings were found in the roof void) and the roof has a number of features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats.*
- *However, as the report and plans show that the extension will not be affected by the proposals, the works are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species and there would be no objections to this application on ecological grounds.*

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:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

OU1 (New and Existing Community Facilities)

SPG/SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (2021)

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011).

6. APPRAISAL

Principle of Use

Policy OU1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that; “Proposals involving the redevelopment of existing community facilities for non-community uses will not be permitted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need to retain that facility.”

The development seeks retrospective planning permission for the conversion of a Care Home (C2 Use Class) to a single dwellinghouse (C3 Use Class). The Planning Statement submitted for this application states that the Care Home at the proposal site closed in 2017. It is further explained within the submission that the applicant was living at the premises during its use as a Care Home within the “Owner’s Accommodation” at 4 Kidmore Road. Upon visiting the site on 03/11/2022, the site was considered to be in use as a single residential dwelling. Historic imagery of the site from Google Maps also appears to indicate that the site was not in use as a Care Home in May 2019, October 2020 or September 2021. Council Tax records also indicate that 4 Kidmore Road was registered as a non-mixed use property on 01/04/2018.

In order for the principle of the use to be considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy OU1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, it must be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need to retain that facility, in this case a Care Home.

The change of use of 4 Kidmore Road from residential to a Care Home received planning permission on 22/09/1988 under application reference 88/TP/0711.

As detailed within the Planning History section of this report, there is a recent permission at the site for the conversion of the building to 8 residential units, facilitated by significant two storey rear and side extensions. The delegated report for application 190467 discusses the proposed changes of use from Community Facility to residential for 4 Kidmore Road and provides useful context for this application. The officer concluded that there was no longer a need to retain the existing community facility, and as such the change use to residential is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy OU1. It was concluded that it was unclear as to whether it would be viable to reinstate the use of 4 Kidmore Road as a Care Home without significant financial investment in the property. It was therefore concluded that it would be reasonable for the Council to accept the position that there is no realistic prospect of an alternative community facility being provided on site.

Given how recently the assessment of the use of 4 Kidmore Road as Care Home was undertaken in relation to application 190467, it is considered that the conclusions drawn with that assessment are still applicable to application 220898. Therefore, the retrospective change of use is considered in accordance with Policy OU1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. It should also be noted that planning permission 190467 could have been implemented, with principle of the change of use of 4 Kidmore Road back to residential use already established.

Character and Appearance

Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires all development to be of high-quality design and maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding area. In this specific case, this concerns the following components:

- Layout
- Landscape
- Density and mix
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

Policy H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that; “An extension to a house or other householder development will be acceptable where it:

- Respects the character and appearance of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design;
- Respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and appearance of the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and any important existing building line;
- Does not present an overbearing impact on neighbours or a large blank façade to public areas; and
- Does not result in a loss of biodiversity within gardens.”

The proposed single storey rear extension has a width of 12.3m and has a depth of 4m from the rear wall of the existing building. The depth of the rear extension is staggered in the middle to reflect the design of the rear of the existing building at 4 Kidmore Road. The rear extension features a flat roof, with a roof light serving the proposed Breakfast Room. The maximum height of the rear extension is 3.7m.

The materials proposed to the rear extension have been specified as red brick to match the existing building, with black metal capping to match the mock-Tudor beams to the rear of 4 Kidmore Road. The windows and doors are to be white aluminium, with the brick headers and cills to match the existing building.

In accordance with Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, the proposed rear extension is considered appropriate in terms of scale, architectural detailing and materials.

Residential Amenity

This proposal has also been assessed against Reading Borough Local Plan policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity, which states that proposals are acceptable where they will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties with regard to various factors, including (amongst others):

- Privacy and overlooking
- Access to sunlight and daylight
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of development
- Noise and disturbance
- Dust and fumes

Due to the size and scale of the proposed single storey rear extension, it is not considered that the external alterations proposed would result in harm to the living conditions of 2a and 6 Kidmore Road. The retrospective change of use to residential is considered characteristic of the surrounding area with the use not giving rise to harmful levels of noise and disturbance. The

proposed development is therefore considered in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Natural Environment

The proposed rear extension is outside of the root protection areas of high value trees within the site. There are no Natural Environment objections to the proposed single storey rear extension.

It was unclear, however, as to the extent of works proposed to the front of 4 Kidmore Road in order to facilitate the proposed vehicle parking arrangement. This is of a particular concern given the presence of a TPO to the front of the property. It has been confirmed that the existing access is to remain and that the works proposed within the site to facilitate the proposed vehicle parking would not harm the TPO. Therefore, the proposed development is considered in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Ecology

As per the response from Ecology, concerns were raised regarding the proposed external alterations and the impact that this could have on protected species. A bat survey has been carried out with the subsequent report submitted and considered by officers. The report concludes that the development would not harm bats or protected species and that no further surveys or mitigation is required. The conclusion of the bat survey report has been agreed by Reading Borough Council's Ecology Consultant. Therefore, the proposed development is considered in accordance with Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Transport

The development proposes a vehicle parking for three vehicle parking spaces in line with the requirements of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011). The existing driveway and access is considered capable of accommodating the required vehicle parking in line with the requirements of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011) if left unaltered. Conditions have been suggested by Transport Development Control for

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:

Time Limit
Approved Plans
Materials (To match)
Restrict Roof Use
Landscaping