

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Application No: 230485/FUL

Address: 1017 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6TL

Proposal: Change of use from C1 (Hotel) to C2 (Children's residential care home). (Resubmission 221497).

Case Officer: David Brett

Applicant: Duckquiff Ltd

Received on (valid from): 13/04/2023

Target Date: 06/09/2023, extension of time on decision agreed with agent from 08/06/2023

Site Description and Surrounding Area

The proposal site is located within the west of Reading along Oxford Road, which is a busy highway. The surrounding area is considered predominantly residential to the south side of Oxford Road. Opposite the proposal site is an unoccupied commercial unit (formerly a car showroom). Oxford Road is a Classified Road that links the west part of the borough to the town centre. 1017 Oxford Road is located within walking distance (4 minutes) of Tilehurst Train Station and is along a bus and cycle route.

1017 Oxford Road is a two-storey building (residential in appearance), with a large area of hardstanding to the front for on-site vehicle parking. The use of the building has most recently been as a hotel.

The proposal site is not within a Conservation Area or Listed.



Fig 1. Front of 1017 Oxford Road. Photo taken by case officer on 06/02/2023

Proposal

This application for full planning permission seeks the following:

- The change of use of 1017 Oxford Road from a hotel use to a children's residential care home. Providing respite care for up to 8 children with severe learning disabilities.
- Centralisation of the existing access to provide 9 total car parking spaces (8 standard, 1 disabled car parking space).

Plans/Documents Considered

The following plans and documents have been supplied for this application:

- Technical Note - 23133-RLL-23-XX-TN-D-5001 Rev P02
- Design & Access and Planning Statement - AGM 2023 027
- Location Plan Existing - 926.22.7 E/L01 Rev D
- Existing Plans - 926.22.7 E/001
- ~~- Proposed Front of Site Plan - 926.22.7 P/S01 Rev B~~
- ~~- Proposed Block Plan - 926.22.7 P/B01 Rev E~~
- Existing Block Plan - 926.22.7 E/Bo1 Rev E

Received on 13/04/2023

- ~~- Proposed Front of Site Plan - 926.22.7 P/S01 Rev C~~
- ~~- Proposed Block Plan - 926.22.7 P/B01 Rev F~~

Received on 20/06/2023

- Proposed Bicycle/Waste Enclosure - 926.22.7 P/201 Rev A
- Proposed Front of Site Plan - 926.22.7 P/S01 Rev D
- Proposed Block Plan - 926.22.7 P/B01 Rev I

Received on 07/07/2023

- Technical Note - 23133-RLL-23-XX-TN-D-5002 Rev P01

Received on 22/08/2023

Relevant Planning History

1017 Oxford Road (Proposal Site)

221497/FUL - Change of use from C1 (Hotel) to C2 (Children's residential care home) - Application Withdrawn on 21/02/2023

050654/OUT - Change of Use from Hotel to Residential Care Home (Class C2) - Application Withdrawn on 17/03/2006

031149/FUL - Change of use from hotel/guest house to childrens day-care nursery. Private residential accommodation retained on second and third floors. - Application Refused on 25/11/2003

020174/FUL - Extension to guest house to form additional owners accommodation and bedrooms. - Application Withdrawn on 23/12/2002

010933/FUL - Two storey rear extension. - Application Refused on 26/02/2002

940704/ADV - Brick pedestal supporting a steel post with hanging sign - Application Permitted on 08/08/1994

891310/FUL - Erection of a temporary Steel Fire Escape, existing window opening deepened to provide doorway - Application Permitted on 18/01/1990

891272/FUL - Two storey rear extension. - Application Permitted on 18/01/1990

890425/FUL - Two storey rear extension. - Application Refused on 10/10/1989

1019 Oxford Road

172040/FUL - Change of Use from C4 (small House in Multiple Occupation) to C2 (residential institution) - Application Permitted on 08/05/2018

Internal Consultations

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Response received on 12/06/2023

- Insufficient information has been provided within the Transport Statement to determine whether this application is acceptable from a Transport and Highways position.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Final response received on 23/08/2023, upon consideration of additional information.

- Having reviewed the application and the parking provision that the original use of a 14-bedroom C1 use would have required, it is clear that the C1 site did not provide the amount of parking required in accordance with the Councils current standards. The current site still proposes a short fall of parking; however, the proposal would be better than the existing situation in terms of number of parking spaces. Given the new use of the site at least 1 space should be provided for visitor/drop offs.
- Upon further review, deliveries would likely to have historically taken place on site therefore it will be a similar arrangement as per the previous use.

Reading Borough Council, Environmental Protection - Response received on 23/05/2023

- Please can the applicant provide some information on how the garden will be used as part of the proposed change of use, and how noise from use of the garden will be managed.

Reading Borough Council, Ecology - Response received on 25/05/2023

- The application is very similar to planning application 221487 which was withdrawn for reasons unrelated to ecology. Our comments remain the same and as the works are mainly internal with the exterior works only affecting the windows and doors, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will impact upon bats or other protected species. As such, there are no objections to this application on ecology grounds.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - No response received.

External Consultees

The following addresses were consulted in writing for this application:

1015 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6TL - No response received.

1019 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6TL - Response received on 20/06/2023 (Support)

1021 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6TL - No response received.

22 Clevedon Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6RL - Response received on 29/05/2023 (Object)

24 Clevedon Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6RL - No response received.

26 Clevedon Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6RL - No response received.

30 Clevedon Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6RL - No response received.

A site notice was displayed by the applicant for a period of 21 days, commencing on 11/05/2023, expiring on 01/06/2023. 7 letters of support were received.

The details of the comments received to this application are as follows:

Observation

- Concerns with noise arising from the proposed use within the rear garden to 1017 Oxford Road.
- Details of boundary treatment have not been provided.

Support

- Respite care is in short supply in the area, with the proposed use fulfilling a need.
- Disagrees that the proposed parking provision is unacceptable given the informal existing arrangement.

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.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

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. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted November 2019).

The 'National Planning Policy Framework' ('NPPF') 2021 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given).

Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework 2021;
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards;

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding amenity
CC9: Securing infrastructure
EN15: Air quality
TR1: Achieving the transport strategy
TR3: Access, traffic and highway-related matters
TR5: Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging
OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

Other documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Appraisal

The main issues considered for these three separate applications are as follows:

- a) Land Use Principles
- b) Safeguarding Amenity
- c) Transport
- d) Air Quality

- a) Land Use Principles

This application seeks a change of use with no external alterations. The assessment is therefore based on the impact that the change of use would have on the character of the surrounding area. The last use of the property was as a hotel - a non-residential use within a predominantly residential area. Therefore, the change of use from a non-residential use to a non-residential use is acceptable.

Paragraph 4.7.2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) states that the term 'community facility' can encompass a number of uses including health facilities, education and training facilities (at all levels), youth and community centres and meeting places, libraries, places of worship, civic and administrative facilities and recycling facilities and civic amenity sites. In this instance, as the proposed use would serve education and health a children's residential care home is considered against the requirements of Policy OU1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

With regards to the Policy OU1, the proposed development is considered to have a reasonable choice in terms of travel. The proposal site is located along the R52 cycle route, the 143 bus route (and close to the 16 bus route, and is a 4 minute walk from Tilehurst Train Station. Despite the location of the proposal site within a suburban area, the site does benefit from good travel options and links to Reading Town Centre.

The proposed use as a children's residential care home is considered acceptable provided the development is in accordance with the requirements of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

- b) Safeguarding 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):

- Noise and disturbance

Concerns by the Council's Environmental Protection Team have been raised regarding noise and disturbance arising from the proposed use and the impact that this may have on the living conditions of those within the surrounding area.

As explained within the Design & Access and Planning Statement submitted for this application, the intensity of the use of the garden by the children will be relatively low. Each child will also receive 1:1 support (and in some cases 2:1 support), ensuring that any excessive noise is dealt with quickly. This description of the management of the garden space to the rear of 1017 Oxford Road is considered acceptable. It is also considered likely

that any noise generated from the garden use would at worst be comparable to a large family home.

The proposal was further considered against the criteria specified within Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The proposed development would not harm the amenity of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

c) Transport

During the course of the application, discussions took place between the Council's Transport Development Control Team, the agent, and the applicant's Transport Planner. Concerns were originally raised regarding the proposed level of vehicle parking for the proposed use. The Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD does not provide details of parking provision requirements for the use as a children's residential care home. Uses under the C2 Use Class such as Halls or Residence, Hospitals, and Nursing homes are prescribed maximum parking standards within the SPD. In this instance, the Transport Development Control team have used the Nursing Home requirements to consider the acceptability of the proposed vehicle parking provision for the proposed children's residential care home use.

The parking standard applied in this case is as follows:

- 1 per FTE staff;
- 1 per 4 residents

Therefore, a total of 9 on site vehicle parking spaces are required for staff, with 2 spaces required for residents. As a result, the development proposes a shortfall of on-site vehicle parking of 2 spaces.

The application originally proposed to overcome the shortfall by entering into a formal arrangement with the SsangYong car dealership opposite 1017 Oxford Road. This proposed arrangement was considered impractical by officers mainly due to the lack of pedestrian footway to the south side of Oxford Road in front of the property. This would have resulted in pedestrians having to cross the road directly into the vehicular access for 1017 Oxford Road. This option was discarded during the course of the application as the SsangYong car dealership ceased trading at the site.

To demonstrate the suitability of the provision, TRICS examples from Maidstone were provide. These examples were not considered comparable, however, as the uses of the site specified in the examples were not comparable to the use proposed under this application as a Children's Residential Care Home.

Ultimately, given the existing informal nature of the vehicle parking arrangements at the site, whereby there were no vehicle parking restrictions for the existing use of the site as a hotel. As discussed above, the sustainability of the site in terms of options for alternative methods of transport is considered to weigh in favour of the development.

Therefore, in spite of the shortfall in on site vehicle parking, the proposal in terms of its impact on highway safety and vehicle parking is considered acceptable. The benefits that the site has in terms of sustainable transport links and the benefits of providing a use to support vulnerable children is considered to weigh heavily in favour of the proposal.

Nevertheless, it is considered reasonable to secure details of how the car park will be managed via condition. This is to ensure that site is managed is far as practically possible despite the accepted shortfall of vehicle parking spaces, and for details of visitor drop off

to be provided. It is also considered necessary to restrict the number of children at the proposed residential care home use. This is to avoid the number of children at the residential care home going above the proposed occupancy level of 8, which would put further strain on vehicle parking demand at the site because an increased number of children would require an increased number of staff.

Subject to conditions, the development is considered in accordance with Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

d) Air Quality

This proposal has been considered against Reading Borough Local Plan policy EN15, as the proposal site is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). As demonstrated in the policy, this proposal does not meet the requirements for an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) and is considered not enough of a detrimental impact air quality.

Conclusion

The development has been assessed and the works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and planning permission can be granted.

Recommendation

GRANT

Conditions

TL1: Time Limit (Standard)

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

AP1: Approved Plans

- Location Plan Existing - 926.22.7 E/L01 Rev D

Received on 13/04/2023

- Proposed Bicycle/Waste Enclosure - 926.22.7 P/201 Rev A
- Proposed Front of Site Plan - 926.22.7 P/S01 Rev D
- Proposed Block Plan - 926.22.7 P/B01 Rev I

Received on 07/07/2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

Maximum Number of Children

The number of children attending the premises for the Childrens Residential Care Home use hereby permitted shall not exceed 8 at any time.

REASON: In order to protect local residents from unreasonable disturbance arising from the use and to ensure that there is sufficient on-site parking during the drop-off/pick-up times, in accordance with Policies CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

DC17: Car Parking Management Plan

The change of use hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a Car Parking Management Plan (CPMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include full details of how the allocation of the car parking spaces for staff and visitors has been calculated and provided, with at least 1 space provided for visitor/drop offs. Thereafter the approved CPMP shall be implemented in full and for the lifetime of the development.

REASON: In the interest of the safety and convenience of all highway users in accordance with TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

DC1: Vehicle Parking (As Specified)

The change of use hereby permitted shall not be occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

DC5: Cycle Parking (As Specified)

The change of use hereby permitted shall be occupied until the bicycle parking facility for that use has been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The facility shall be kept available for bicycle parking at all times thereafter.

REASON: To encourage travel by sustainable alternatives to driving a motorcar in accordance with Policy TR1 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

DC8 Refuse and Recycling (As Specified)

The change of use hereby permitted shall be occupied until the refuse and recycling storage facility has been provided in accordance with those details shown on the approved plans and thereafter retained for use by occupiers of the dwelling/building at all times.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that bins can be easily accessed when required in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

DC15: Visibility Splays (As Specified)

No building shall be occupied until all the visibility splays shown on Technical Note - 23133-RLL-23-XX-TN-D-5002 Rev P01 as received on 22/08/2023 have been provided. All areas shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions to visibility over a height of 0.6 metres above the carriageway level and maintained as such.

REASON: In the interests of road safety in accordance with Policy TR1 and TR3 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

Informatives

IF1: Positive and Proactive Working - approval

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the agreed timescale for the decision to be issued.

IF3: Highways

- i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.
- ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.

IF5: Terms

Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

I29/22: Access construction

The Council's Highways section should be contacted at 19 Bennet Road, Reading, RG2 0QX, telephone: 0118 937 2138, to agree the access construction details and to grant a licence before any work is carried out within the highway. A formal application should be made allowing at least 4 week's notice to obtain details of underground services on the applicants' behalf.