

Ward: Norcot

App Ref: 200030/FUL

Address: 533 Oxford Road, Reading

Proposals: Conversion of existing club house (Sui Generis) into 3X 2-bed C3 flats.

Case Officer: Anthony Scholes

Applicant: Yousaf Bhatti

Date received (valid from): 14 February 2020

Target Decision date (extension of time): 30 October 2020

INTRODUCTION

The application site is a mid-terraced three storey property with two front facing gable end windows. The site is located within the Oxford Road West centre as defined on the proposals maps. The ground floor is currently occupied by “Peri-Peri Original” a restaurant (Class E) and is vacant at first floor. On visiting the site, the second floor was occupied as a flat and has been for some time as per Council records.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a change of use of the first floor from a Sui Generis use (club house) to two flats (2 x 1 bedroom, 1 x 2 bedroom). The proposed development would also include the removal of an informally constructed 2nd floor roof terrace, and inclusion of a number of roof lights.

The application has been submitted with the following plans and documents:

Document	Title	Drawing Number	Date Received
Location Plan	Location Plan	N/A	9 January 2020
Plans	Proposed and existing second floor plan	Bhatti/Plan/003	9 January 2020
Plans	Existing and proposed ground floor plan	Bhatti/Plan/001	9 January 2020
Plans	Existing and proposed first floor plan	Bhatti/Plan/002	9 January 2020
Document	Design and access statement	N/A	9 January 2020
Document	CIL forms	N/A	9 January 2020
Plans	Block plan	N/A	9 January 2020
Document	Application forms	N/A	9 January 2020
Document	Planning Statement	N/A	21 February 2020
Document	Valuations	N/A	21 February 2020
Document	Revised CIL form	N/A	21 February 2020

Document	BREEAM pre-assessment indicator	BREEAM/PLAN/BHATTI, dated 28 January 2020	21 February 2020
Document	Affordable housing statement	N/A	21 February 2020
Document	Acoustic assessment	391920, dated 10 February 2020	21 February 2020
Plans	Amended existing and proposed first floor plan	Bhatti/Plan/002/Rev-A	6 March 2020
Document	Odour assessment	J0400/2/F1, dated 12 March 2020	12 March 2020
Document	Air quality assessment	J0400/1/F1, dated 12 March 2020	12 March 2020
Plans	Proposed side elevation 1	Bhatti/Plan/005	16 April 2020
Plans	Proposed side elevation 2	Bhatti/Plan/007	16 April 2020
Plans	Existing side elevation 2	Bhatti/Plan/006	16 April 2020
Plans	Existing side elevation 1	Bhatti/Plan/004	16 April 2020
Plans	Revised existing and proposed second floor plans	Bhatti/Plan/003	16 April 2020
Plans	Existing and proposed rear elevations	Bhatti/Plan/008	16 April 2020

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

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'. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)) 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). The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents are also material planning considerations.

Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019) (hereafter "the local plan"):

CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CC2: Sustainable design and construction

CC3: Adaption to climate change
CC5: Waste minimisation and storage
CC6: Accessibility and The Intensity of Development
CC7: Design and The Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EN10: Access to open space
EN15: Air quality
EN16: Pollution and water resources
H1: Provision of Housing
H2: Density and Mix
H3: Affordable Housing
H5: Standards for New Housing
H10: Private And Communal Outdoor Space
TR3: Access, Traffic And Highway-Related Matters
TR5: Car And Cycle Parking And Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPG - Planning Obligations under s.106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (2013)

SPD - Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

SPD - Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

SPD - Affordable Housing Provision (adopted 2013)

RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY (REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED)

Letters were sent to neighbouring residents, and a site notice was displayed on site.

No representations have been received at the time of writing.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Environmental Protection: No objection subject to conditions.

Transport: No objection subject to conditions.

PLANNING HISTORY

None applicable.

APPRAISAL

The main issues raised by the application are:

1. Principle of development
2. Residential amenity
3. Transport matters
4. Affordable housing
5. Sustainability
6. Other matters

1. Principle of development

The NPPF (Para. 61) states that “*the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies*”, it also encourage efficient use of land taking into account: identified need for housing, local market conditions, the availability and capacity of

infrastructure, the desirability of maintaining the existing character of the area, and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive, and healthy places. The Local Plan supports the provision of additional dwelling units to meet the requirement for additional dwelling per annum.

Policy RL3 states that within key centres there should not be a loss of retail uses at ground floor. The policy accepts that above ground floor, a mix of uses is acceptable, and as such the proposal to change the first floor to 2 x flats is acceptable in principle subject to considerations as below.

2. Residential Amenity

Notwithstanding section 1 above, the local plan includes a number of policies which seek to ensure that all new developments will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties.

Specifically, Policy CC8 states that new development should consider:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;
- Smell;
- Crime and safety; or
- Wind, where the proposals involve new development of more than 8 storeys.

In addition, policy H5 states that:

“New build housing should be built to the following standards, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable:

a. All new build housing outside the Central Area as defined on the Proposals Map will comply with the nationally-described space standard ...”

As such, it is clear that all new dwellings should comply with the above mentioned standards/requirements.

Floor space requirements

Policy H5 requires all development to comply with internal space standards as outlined within the local plan. The two proposed flats provide sufficient floor space in line with policy H5 and are therefore acceptable.

Amenity issues

Stacking

Policy CC8 above, also includes comment on the stacking of rooms within residential uses and the effect on amenity. In this instance, the existing second floor flat would be predominantly above the lounge and bathroom of the 2-bed flat. The lounge of this flat would be partially above one bedroom. It is unlikely that this will result in a significant amenity impact, and the removal of the roof terrace will also remove opportunity for noise transmission. Appropriate insulation

between flats is required under Building Regulation and an informative will be attached.

Noise and disturbance

The dwellings are proposed above an E class use (restaurant) which would be subject to a degree of noise penetration between the uses, and from kitchen extraction in terms both noise, odour. It would also be subject to traffic noise and pollution due to the location (along the busy Oxford Road). Policies EN15, EN16, and CC8 as above seek to protect residential uses from such pollution and disturbance.

The applicant has provided an acoustic assessment, odour assessment, and air quality assessment to support this application. These have been reviewed by the Council's Environmental Protection Team, and require a condition to ensure the fine filtration system as recommended in the report be installed prior to occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, and that the other recommendations of the report be implemented.

In relation to daylight/sunlight, and outlook, the proposal includes lounge/kitchen/dining rooms at the front and rear of the property. The main rooms (lounge/kitchen/dining) would be both provided with sufficient outlook and access to natural light. The provision of a number of roof lights would also provide sufficient daylight/sunlight to bedrooms removing the need for artificial lighting.

With regard to privacy, the rear facing windows of the 3-bed flats lounge/kitchen/dining room would be located some 17m from the rear windows of the two-storey extension along Richmond Road, and 20m from the rear wall of the main dwelling. Although closer than the recommended distance of 20m, it is not considered that this would result in any significant harm to privacy of the existing or proposed dwelling.

As such, the proposal is considered to provide sufficiently sized flats which would benefit from a good level of amenity in accordance with policies CC8, EN15, and EN16.

3. Transport matters

The proposed development would be a car free development. In line with the Council's adopted parking SPD, the on-site provision of cycle parking is considered acceptable. Bin storage is to the rear and access is given to both flats. Residents would be responsible for stationing the bins on the street for collection days. No details have been provided, and as such details of bin storage for separate residential and commercial bin storage will be secured by condition. The proposal complies with policy CC5, TR3, and TR5.

4. Affordable Housing

In accordance with the Local plan policy H3, the development is required to contribute toward off-site affordable housing. A section 106 agreement will accompany any approval.

5. Sustainability

In accordance with policy CC2 the development will be required to meet a BREEAM 'Very Good' standard. The applicant has submitted a pre-assessment indicator which states this can be achieved. A condition will be attached for a post-construction certification.

6. Other matters

External design

No changes are proposed to the front façade, the changes to the rear of the building are minimal and as such the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of policy CC7.

CIL

The proposed development would be CIL liable. The current use of the building has been discontinued for some time and as such there would be no existing use which could subtract from the liability.

S106

The applicant has agreed the required financial contribution for affordable housing, which would be compliant with policy H3.

Equalities Act

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission.