

Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Bluebird Engineering to support a planning application at 56 Christchurch Road, Reading, for the change of use of the vacant former Shop (Ea) on the ground floor to a takeaway (A5,Sui generis). Changes to the shop front kitchen extract equipment on rear.

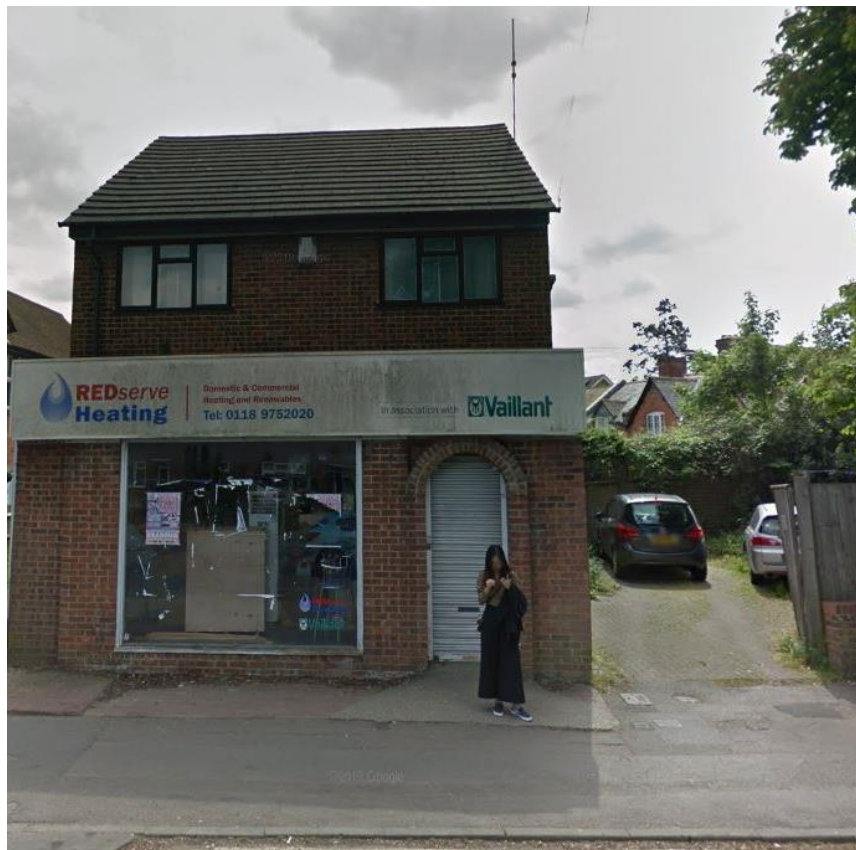


Image 1 Frontage to 56 Christchurch Road

This statement considers the site, surroundings, and the sites planning history, assesses the proposal against the relevant local and the national planning policy frameworks.

The proposal considers national policies with emphasis on the function of the Christchurch road as local centre by sustaining and enhancing its viability and sustainability for future.

Background Information

Current Lease holder took over the premises 15 years ago prior to that Speedy Hire used the premises (Tool Hire)

Speedy Hire vacated the premises as a result of complaint to the Local Authority by the residents due to noise and heavy traffic movements that their business generated. The council's point of view at the time was akin to the premises being used as B1 (old class use) rather than A1(old class use) .

The front part of the premises has been vacant for the last 15 years. Initially it was fitted out as a boiler showroom in combination with Solar Panels, but the project was never completed due to lack of resources.

The rear of the premises has been used as private offices (Ea). The alternative uses offered by prospective tenants have either jeopardised the other business on the parade or would have been unsustainable in the long term, or have been uses that would have been detrimental to the neighbourhood, such as car wash, motorcycle store, or betting shop. All these offers have politely been declined.

With this background information on going we feel the current application is most sustainable for this site.

Site and Surroundings

The application property is part of a two-storey detached building at the end of Christchurch road (A327). The ground floor of the building was previously used as a shop (Ea class) but has been vacant since for the past 15 years. The upper floor has been used as residential and will continue to be used in the same manner but will remain outside this planning application.

The property is located within Christchurch Road is approximately 1km southeast of Reading Town Centre. The Reading University and its associated buildings are approximately 250m on the opposite side of the road from application site.

There are Short stay on street parking available along Christchurch road in front of the commercial units and nearby side streets also serve the centre. To the rear of the property there is small car park that can be used by the staff and delivery of materials.

Under this planning application a bin and cycle store is proposed within the application site

The property is not listed nor does lie within a conservation area. It is not located within a flood risk zone.

Relevant Planning History

Although various Change of use has been discussed with the local Authority none has been taken to the decision point.

The proposal (Design & Access)

Under this planning application it is proposed to change the use of the existing ground floor unit, from Ea.(class) to A5 Sui Generis (class). The unit would sell hot and cold food take away, with offer of food delivery on bikes.

The proposed takeaway would benefit from a new shop front as shown on the proposed elevations a new kitchen (cooking facility) with WC be located to the rear of the property

New mechanical Services equipment (ducts) will be required to support the class A5 Sui Generis and its proposed exhaust air location will be to the rear wall on the ground floor as shown on proposed ground floor plan.

The proposed depth of the ground floor takeaway is 15.770 metres making the ground floor total area 102.34 sqm .

Existing Car park will serve the entire A5 Sui Generis on the ground floor .First floor residential flat has its own parking

The unit's location ensures easy access for a wide customer base by foot, bicycle and public transport. There is short stay parking, in front of commercial unit along Christchurch Road including dedicated disabled bays and a bus stop located to the right of the unit.

Access to the unit will remain unchanged from a well-maintained walkway.

Neighbouring properties have at least 5 and 10m gap on either side to the application site and will not be affected . To the rear of the application site is a car tyre changing unit with a gap of 28m.

Planning Policy and Government Guidance

The development plan

The planning application will consider national guidelines.

Recent national planning policies states that permission should be given positive responses , unless material considerations (including the NPPF) indicate otherwise.

Planning policies and decisions to a positive approach to town centre and local economy growth, management and adaptation in order to ensure their vitality. They should be allowed to diversity , in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries.

Planning Assessment

Change of Use on the ground floor

It is proposed to change the use of the vacant ground floor of 56 Christchurch Road from A1 Ea(class) s A5 Sui Generis (class) takeaway. The national planning policy framework promotes sustainable economic development through focussing a mix of main town centre uses in existing centres. The national guidelines places substantial weight on reusing sustainably located building and land, securing economic growth and creating jobs and prosperity through the planning system. The proposed development would support these aims to Christchurch Road Local Centre and providing local employment, given that the unit has been empty for well over a year .

As the unit is located with Christchurch Road Local Centre Key frontage and a change of use to take away from class Ea to A5(Sui Generis) is proposed,

Under this planning application a new shop front to be installed

Operational Considerations

The unit`s location ensures easy access on, by cycle and on public transport for both staff and customers in accordance with Policy, the takeaway will offer home delivery . Access is via an existing front entrance. There are allocated parking`s associated with the site to the rear. There are on street car parking within walking distance of the unit.

The proposed opening hours are **5pm to 10pm**, consistent with opening hours of existing neighbouring ground floor uses. Refuse and recycling will be stored at the rear of the building. The refuse collection will be either by local authority / or private company from the rear of property .The proposed use would have no adverse impact on the safety and convenience of the highway and makes adequate provision for waste in accordance with policies CS5 CS24 and DM12.

New ventilation and extract equipment will be required to support the new use and acoustic assessment has therefore been carried out to measure its impact. The assessment confirms that providing its recommendations are followed, the equipment can accord with the requirements of Reading Borough Council and it will not be detrimental to the amenity of nearby noise sensitive properties in accordance with Policy DM4. The equipment will be sensitively located to the rear of the wall facing away from the building. It would not be visible from the street scene.

Conclusion

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of a vacant class Ea unit to provide a Class A5 Sui Generis takeaway ground floor and a new shop front.

There is an existing first floor residential usage to continue as previously.

It is intended to bring the vacant commercial unit back into use and freshen up the frontage within a local centre fully in accordance with the aims of the government, and the Councils emerging and up to date policies. It provides employment opportunities for local people. The use would have no adverse impact on neighbouring uses.