

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 211197/FUL

Address: 14 Milestone Way Precinct, Caversham, Berkshire, RG4 8XW

Proposals: Retrospective application to Sub Divide Existing Floor Area to create a Barber's Shop with minor alteration to shop front to create new entrance door.

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

Applicant: Aderyn Building Consultancy

Date received (valid from): 20 July 2021 Extended Target Decision date: 5 October 2021

Proposals: The proposal is a retrospective application to divide the existing floor area of the ground floor Post Office in the corner of the unit 4.2m by 6.8m to create a Barber's shop and alter the existing Shop Front to create a new entrance door. The application site comprises the end (easternmost) retail unit in parade of shops at Emmer Green District Centre in a green link area. The ground floor unit is occupied by a Post Office and the units above are residential accommodation.

Due to unforeseen circumstances a site visit cannot be undertaken however the applicant provided photographs of the site.



EXISTING SHOPFRONT VIEW



PROPOSED SHOPFRONT VIEW

Plans Submitted:

The agent supplied the following plans and drawings:

SQS215-10-101 Location and site plans

CIL

As received on 20 July 2021

Relevant Planning History:

- 200819 - Notification of Prior Approval for a Change Of Use from Retail, betting office or pay day loan shop or casino (Class A1 (shops) or Class A2 (financial and professional services)) to restaurant or cafe (Class A3). Prior Notification under Class C, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. - Application withdrawn on 26/06/2020
- 120756 - Signage to ATM. - Application permitted on 27/02/2013
- 120755 - Installation of a new Bank of Ireland ATM. - Application permitted on 27/02/2013

Consultation Responses:

Four neighbouring properties have been consulted; no letters of representations have been received.

- Development Control - Transport raised no objections.
- A site notice was displayed on 17 August 2021 for the requisite period.

Summary of discussions with applicant/agent:

The agent provided photos of the interior of the post office.

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 and Legal Context

The following local and development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant to this application:

- CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC7 Design and the Public Realm
- CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
- EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network
- RL1 Network and Hierarchy of Centres
- RL3 Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres
- OU5 Shopfronts and Cash Machines

Appraisal

The proposal involves the separation of a larger unit into 2 units, with a smaller sized barber shop.

In line with Reading Borough Local Plan policy, the proposal will be assed against the following:

- A) Impact on Emmer Green Local Centre
- B) New Shopfront

- C) Impact on neighbours
 - D) Impact on Green Links, Biodiversity and the Green Network EN12
- A) Impact on Emmer Green District Centre

Emmer Green Local Centre is protected under policies RL1 and RL3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019).

Under policy RL1, the parade of shops at Milestone Way Precinct has been designated as Emmer Green District Centre. Policy RL1 seeks to ensure that any development taking place at this district centre maintains or enhances the vitality and viability of the local centre. Improvements that are considered acceptable at this local district include:

- Accessibility and transport improvements;
- Broadening range of facilities;
- Residential use of upper Floors; and
- Environmental enhancements

The proposal to create a barber shop within the existing retail space at 14 Milestone Way Precinct is considered to broaden the range of facilities at the district centre. The last 'A1 Frontage Monitoring' of regional, district major local and local centres was performed between December 2019 and January 2020. At the time of the study, a barber shop was not operating at Emmer Green District Centre. It is not considered likely that there would be any issues regarding transport or accessibility.

Policy RL3 seeks to maintain a 50% A1 or A2 (now Class E) centre use across all units at Emmer Green District Centre. The proposed barber shop falls within the same use class as the existing Class E use class post office at the 14 Milestone Way Precinct. Emmer Green District Centre consisted of 60% A1 or A2 frontages according to the latest 'A1 Frontage Monitoring' survey. The current use classes were last updated on 1 September 2020 and both A1 and A2 uses are now both within Class E use. The proposal is considered compliant with local plan policy RL3.

It should also be noted that from 1st September 2020 the use class for shops changed from A1 to E (commercial, business and service uses). As 14 Milestone Way Precinct will remain in Class E use, a change of use application is not required.

B) New Shopfront

The small scale changes to the shopfront are considered acceptable and in keeping with the character and appearance of the Emmer Green District Centre and the surrounding area. The plans illustrate that there is suitable access to, into and within its facility and materials match the existing shopfront. CC7: Design and the Public Realm. The features proposed on the plans comply with policy OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines to respect the character of the area, however if any additional changes are proposed or illuminated signage, further planning permission or advertisement consent may be required.

C) Impact on neighbouring residents

The changes of use is permitted development, however existing hours of opening for the barbers shop should be conditioned to reduce the impact on any neighbouring residential properties in terms of noise or disturbance.

D) Impact on Green Links, Biodiversity and the Green Network EN12

14 Milestone Way Precinct falls within the existing Green Link as demonstrated on the proposals maps accompanying the Reading Borough Local Plan. Proposals within the existing Green Link are subject to policy EN12. The small scale changes to a unit that was already build are not

considered have an impact on the biodiversity, natural environment or green link corridor at the site.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal is acceptable for the reasons set out in this report. The internal alterations proposed are not subject to planning, however, your attention is drawn to the possible separate requirement for submission of a Building Regulations application for all aspects of the proposed development, including internal alterations.

Recommendation Grant permission

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Approved Plans
2. Opening hours

Informatives relating to:

1. Building Regs
2. Terms and conditions
3. Construction
4. Positive and proactive
5. Advertisement consent required