

396 – Development of 4 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading

Conversion and extension to convert
former residential care home (C2)
into 9 residential dwellings (C3), including
parking, bin & cycle store and landscaping

Business and operation statement to justify the Care Home change of use application

On behalf of Peter Byfield

Rev 1

Date: August 2019

1.0 Proposed development & existing building

1.1. The proposed development is to extend and convert the former residential care home (C2) into 9 residential dwellings (C3), including parking, bin & cycle store and landscaping

1.2. The building is located on the eastern side of Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading.
About a 10 minute walk from Caversham centre to the south.

1.3. The existing building, formally a single dwelling, has operated for many years as a 13 bed (15 occupant) care home. The building is split into three floors, with a total gross internal area of 371m². It is positioned within generous grounds which offers visitor and staff parking to the front and amenity space for residents to the rear.



1.4. Planning & building use history:-

13686 – Day school – refused 27.5.66

88TP711 – Change of use of dwelling house to rest home for 15 elderly residents.

Granted 22.9.88

95/0948/FD – Erection of 8 new bedroom units in rear garden and extension of existing
rest home for the elderly. Refused 25.4.96

02/00218/FUL – Extension to residential care home. Granted Conditionally 10.4.02

06/01462/FUL – Extension to residential care home. Granted Conditionally 24.7.07

10/00655/FUL – Extension to residential care home. Granted conditionally 2.9.10.

10/01846/OUT - Outline application for the erection of three dwellings with new access
road (Access and Layout only) -Land To The Rear Of 2A 4 And 6 Kidmore Road
Caversham Reading RG4 7LU

12/01555/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. Withdrawn December 2012

13/1164 – Proposed two storey side and single storey rear extensions to the existing nursing home
and the erection of a new dementia care unit. – refused

2.0 The closure of the care home

2.1. The care home ceased operations in August 17, the owner occupier has since then resided at the residence with family and a lodger.

2.2. There are number of reasons why the care home closed, some personal to the owner, others relate to the building and its capacity to support the care home operation.

2.3 Although the maximum occupancy of the home is 13 beds/rooms the following levels of occupation were achieved, which illustrates a declining trend prior to closure.

2013 – Fully occupation (all 13 beds)

2014 – Fully occupation (all 13 beds)

2015 – 12 beds

2016 – 10 beds

2017 – 7 beds

2018 – 0 beds

2019 – 0 beds

Essentially as residents left, the owner struggled to attract new occupants to fill bedspace vacancies. It is considered that the inability to fill these spaces was mainly due to the occupational and market competition issues which is explained in more detail in section 3 of this statement.

2.4 With a declining business, the owner took the decision to retire which was the catalyst for this eventual application. In the years preceding retirement the owners explored many options to keep the care home in operation through other ownerships.

2.4 In 2013 the owner appointed three agents (Christie & Co, Black & Redwoods, and Dowling Kerr) to market the care home going concern. At this time 2 parties expressed an interest to take on the venture. There were conditional offers, subject to a dementia care facility being added to the building to make the operation commercially viable. This facility would require a purpose-built extension to the building, over one level, with a minimum of 6 further bed spaces and supporting staff & ancillary information.

2.5 Application 13/1164 was submitted for the “Proposed two storey side and single storey rear extensions to the existing nursing home” This was later refused planning consent by

Reading Borough Council, which then voided the sale to the interested care homes providers.



2.6 The care home was then re-marketed but no further offer from care homes providers came forward and the operation continued until August 17 when it official closed

2.7 All remaining residents and staff were given 6 months notice and were all successfully rehoused and employed within 3 months to one of the following other local care homes:-

- St Luke's, Emmer Green
- Abbeyfield, Southcote
- The Combe, Streatley
- Lakeside, Earley
- The Grange, Goring
- Lyndhurst, Goring

2.8 All these other Care home operations are within a 2 mile radius and continue to have capacity, illustrating adequate provision in the wider borough for care home places.

3.0 Operational & market issue with the existing building

3.1. Over the years various adjustments have been made to the building to maintain its capacity to operate as a care home, these include: -

- A lift,
- Fire rating improvements to the structure and building compartments,
- Side / rear extensions to house the staff and catering,
- External ramps to allow wheelchair access.

3.2. Despite these improvements, the build struggles with inherent building fabric, layout and quality issues that modern care homes facilities do not. As a result, this impedes the buildings ability to offer the quality of care that is available on the market, making it a less attractive care home offer, thus placing the business at a distinct disadvantage.

3.3 The CQC (Care Quality Commission) regulation 15 requires care homes to meet the following criteria in respect to quality and condition of the:-

15(1)(c) suitable for the purpose for which they are being used,

Premises must be fit for purpose in line with statutory requirements and should take account of national best practice.

Premises must be suitable for the service provided, including the layout, and be big enough to accommodate the potential number of people using the service at any one time. There must be sufficient equipment to provide the service.

Adequate support facilities and amenities must be provided where relevant to the service being provided. This includes sufficient toilets and bathrooms for the number of people using the service, adequate storage space, adequate seating and waiting space.

People's needs must be taken into account when premises are designed, built, maintained, renovated or adapted. Their views should also be taken into account when possible.

People should be able to easily enter and exit premises and find their way around easily and independently. If they can't, providers must make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and other current legislation and guidance.

Any alterations to the premises or the equipment that is used to deliver care and treatment must be made in line with current legislation and guidance. Where the guidance cannot

be met, the provider should have appropriate contingency plans and arrangements to mitigate the risks to people using the service.

The premises and equipment used to deliver care and treatment must meet people's needs and, where possible, their preferences. This includes making sure that privacy, dignity and confidentiality are not compromised.

Reasonable adjustments must be made when providing equipment to meet the needs of people with disabilities, in line with requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

3.3 In a number of situations the existing building fails to meet some of the guidance criteria set out above, these issues include:-

- Tired & unhygienic decorations and finishes (paint, flooring, bathrooms), which require replacement with modern and hygienic finishes (vinyl flooring to wet rooms, full tiling & wipe down surfaces)
- Steep staircase access, potential fall issue
- Accommodation split over three floors makes supervision difficult and staffing more costly
- Pitch roof / skiling to the second floor is not ideal for care accommodation as it is difficult to hang equipment and presents a potential head collision issue
- Stepped access to the front and rear of the property

3.4 The building is also of old building stock and as a result the building fabric is not efficient or cost effective to run and maintain:-

- The existing building in traditional non-cavity masonry and single glazed, this generates high running costs
- Damp problems due to poor ventilation and heating
- Dated heating & hot water system
- The entire building requires insulating and dry-lining
- General decoration is tired and out dated
- Provision of care home facilities & services (alarms, medical fit-out & security system) to be installed

- Catering facilities inadequate
- Common areas (lounge/dining) requires a re-fit
- The lift requires overhauling, possible replacement

3.5 A cost appraisal of the level of work required to bring this accommodation up to a recommended standard has been advised at £75.00sq/ft. Which over the 371sqm (3,991sqft), would equate to around £300k of work.

4.0 Financial business case

4.1 In the years 2012 – 2016, when the building had reasonable levels of occupation, the turnover for the business was 447k, with a profit of £88k and running costs of £359. Roughly £22k a year or 5% ROT. A provider might be looking for 15 to 20% profit.

4.2 The current bedroom rate is £600 per month, about 75% of the local norm £700/800, this reduced rate has been offered as the quality of accommodation is so low and this was the only way to attract residents.

4.3 Staff costs were the highest expense at £277k, circa 62%, made proportionally higher by the inefficient building, low resident numbers and reduced room rate.

4.4 The care home is not a viable going concern without significant investment

5.0 Summary

5.1 As the building currently stands, it is not a viable business venture as a care home, the turnover does not justify the level of investment required to bring just the building to a suitable operating standard.

5.2 Attempt have been made to market this property, but investors would require extensive alterations, which planning approval that cannot be sought for.

5.3 The building has been marketed to find a new user for around 2 years

5.4 It is clear that this building has become unviable to remain as a residential care home and other uses should be considered.