

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: 10 Arkwright Road

Application No: 191465/FUL

Proposal: Application for temporary change of use from B1/B8 to Sui Generis Retail Warehouse Club for part of the premises (retrospective)

Applicant: Mr David Parsons

Date received (valid from): 11/09/19

Target Decision date: 18/11/19

EOT: 04/12/19

Case officer: Connie Davis

1. Site description and Surrounding Area

The application site is a commercial unit located on the western side of Arkwright Road. Its current lawful use is B1/ B8. The surrounding area is of similar buildings used for commercial purposes. The site lies within EM2e (Core Employment Area).

The site is owned by Paragon Design Joinery Pension Fund and is leased to Paragon Design Joinery Ltd. However the latter has sufficient office space for their business. As such, part of the building has been leased to Zest Trading UK Ltd to operate their Retail Warehouse Club (Sui Generis Use). Zest Trading UK is run by volunteers and is a charity.

The site is not listed, nor in a Conservation Area.

2. The Proposal

Full planning permission is sought for the retrospective and continued temporary use of a portion of 10 Arkwright Road as a Sui Generis Retail Warehouse Club. The approximate floor space of the building is 600 sqm, with 355 sqm of the building remaining as B1/B8 and 245 sqm of the building changing use to Sui Generis. This change of use occurred in 2013, and planning permission is sought to regularise what has occurred continue this partial change of use of the building for a period of 5 years (temporary permission).

3. Consultation

Internal Consultees

Transport

No objections.

External Consultation

A site notice was displayed from 3rd -24th October 2019

In addition, the following addresses were formally consulted via letter on 25th September 2019:

8 and 12 Arkwright Road

No responses were received.

4. Plans and Documents Considered

AR103 C - Site Plan

Received 23rd September 2019

Location Plan
Planning and Supporting Statement

Received 10th September 2019

5. Relevant Planning History

991364 Erection of a single storey side extension to provide storage facilities, and a first floor extension at the front to provide offices and display areas - Application Permitted

920400 Erection of first floor extension - Application Permitted

6. 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.

7. Discussion with applicant/ agent

None.

8. Relevant Planning 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 Local Development Framework 'Core Strategy' 2008 (Altered 2015) and 'Sites and Detailed Policies Document' 2012 (Altered 2015).

The 'National Planning Policy framework' ('NPPF') 2012 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 Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) 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). Accordingly, the 'NPPF' and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

9. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Policy Guidance;

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

EM3 Loss of Employment Land
TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters

10. Appraisal

The main issues are considered to be:

- 1) Principle of change of use
- 2) Impact on the surrounding area
- 3) Impact on parking/highways

APPRAISAL

1) Principle of the change of use

Justifying the loss of the B1/B8 use

It is acknowledged that the site lies within a Core Employment Area where employment generating activities should aim to be retained. However it is not considered that this temporary relatively small square meterage loss will be detrimental on the surrounding area, or Core Employment Area. The majority of the unit would still remain in B1/B8 use. In addition, the permission will only grant the change of use for a period of 5 years. Therefore, in time, the site will return back to B1/ B8 use. The area of the site proposing to not be in B1 use is also relatively small and is not considered to result in a significant reduction in employment generating activity.

Given the above, although contrary to policy EM3, this specific proposal is, on balance, considered acceptable given its temporary nature.

Justifying the acceptability of the Sui Generis use

The Sui Generis use is considered acceptable given the above. Although not a traditional employment use in the sense of B1/ B8, the space is being used by volunteers of a charity and therefore is a form of employment.

2) Impact on the surrounding area

The part change of use from B1/ B8 to Sui Generis is not considered out of keeping with the surrounding area. From the street scene, the premise does not look out of keeping in a commercial area. The change of use of part of the building is also not considered to adversely impact or affect surrounding units. The Retail Club

Warehouse has been operating since 2013, and to the LPAs knowledge there have not been any complaints from those in the surrounding area. No representations were received as part of the public consultation period.

3) Impact on parking/highways

The RBC Transport Officer reviewed the application. Within the supporting letter, it states that almost half the customer visits occur outside business hours when Arkwright Road is not busy and, therefore, the proposals would not increase the number of vehicle movements during typical office hours.

The site is located on the Zone 2/Zone 3 border of the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted standards, the existing office and warehouse use would require a total of 6 parking spaces. The warehouse would be retained for its current use requiring a total of 3 parking spaces.

There are no adopted parking standards for proposed charitable use. However, based on the small scale of the proposals it is considered that the existing parking provision within the site is sufficient to meet the demands from both uses on the site.

As such, there are no objections.

Other Matters

CIL

The proposal is not CIL liable due to being a temporary change of use.

Recommendation: **GRANT** planning permission

Conditions:

1) When either the premises cease to be occupied by Zest Trading UK Ltd or on 3rd December 2024 i.e. at the end of 5 years from the date of permission), whichever shall first occur, the use hereby permitted shall cease (and all materials and equipment brought on to the premises in connection with the use shall be removed).

REASON: The unrestricted occupation of the premises on a permanent basis would be contrary to the proper planning of the area, however, the present, particular circumstances of the case are considered sufficient to justify planning permission in this case on a restricted basis. In accordance with Policy EM3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing No:

AR103 C - Site Plan

Received 23rd September 2019

Location Plan

Received 10th September 2019

REASON: because permission is granted in respect of the development as detailed in the approved plans only.

Informatives

- 1) No external works are approved. A separate planning application would be required for these.
- 2) Other statutory consents may be required, for instance under The Building Regulations or the Licensing Acts.
- 3) The local planning authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the prescribed target or agreed extended timescale for the decision to be issued.
- 4) For the avoidance of doubt, only the area illustrated in blue on drawing AR103 C - Site Plan is permitted as Sui Generis. The remainder of the building is to be retained as B1 at all times unless a separate planning application is approved stating otherwise.