

Development Management
Reading Borough Council
Planning Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

10th October 2018

RE: The Gardeners Arms, 48 Surley Row, Caversham, RG4 8NA “The Property”

The subject Property, originally comprising a public house and associated outbuildings is the subject of a planning application for the erection of 8 dwellings following the demolition of the existing building and ancillary outbuilding.

This statement has been written to provide further detail in respect of Section 6 (Paragraph 6.9) of the Planning, Design and Access Statement and should be read in conjunction with this document.

1.0 The Property

- 1.1 The Gardeners Arms is a two-storey detached building located within a large site measuring approximately 0.32 hectares. The property is located off Surley Row, near Caversham, north of Reading. It is a purpose built early 20th century building constructed in a mock tudor style. The property replaced the public house that was operating from No.46 Surley Row; a small two storey timber framed building with circa 17th or early 18th century origins.
- 1.2 The property is set back the road with a trade garden to its immediate front and large car park laid in tarmacdan and marked out to accommodate 23 parking spaces to its side (south) between the main building and No.46. A small brick outbuilding is located within the car park adjacent to the boundary with No.46.
- 1.3 To the rear of the car park is a trade garden laid to lawn. Beyond an area of scrubland can be found. To the rear of the main building is a purpose built detached, single storey building which was used a skittle alley.
- 1.4 The site has two access points, one serving the aforementioned customer car park and second, less well used access which runs along the site's northern boundary. This serves a private parking area to the side (north) of the pub building.
- 1.5 The property has a principal point of access via a centrally located lobby. The ground floor has an open plan trading area with two bar serverys. Two sets of customer toilets can be found. The back of house area comprises a kitchen, a drystore and above ground cellar



The property is under is Greene King franchise operated under the “Meet and Eat” Pub and Grill brand. The pub offers a range of food and drink and shows live sport on tv. It also benefits from a pool table and darts board. Free wifi is provided. We understand that the business is open from 11am to 11.30pm Monday to Thursday, 11am – 12midnight on Friday and Saturday and 12midday to 11pm on Sundays. The skittle alley is no longer in use.

2.0 Planning Policy

- 2.1 The principal planning policy specifically relating to the loss of public houses is Policy DM15 of the Site and Detailed Policies Document adopted October 2012 with alterations adopted 27th January 2015. The Policy is hereby set out in full.

DM15: PROTECTION OF LEISURE FACILITIES AND PUBLIC HOUSES

Developments that would result in the loss of a leisure facility or a public house outside the Central Area will be assessed against the following criteria:

(i) Within a defined district, major local or local centre, development involving the loss of a leisure facility or public house will not be permitted where it is the only facility of that type in the centre;

(ii) Development involving the loss of leisure facilities or a public house not covered in (i), will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- a. There is no need for this type of facility in this area; or*
- b. The function of the facility can be adequately fulfilled by an existing facility, or a facility proposed as part of the development, where that facility would be at least as accessible to the same catchment; or*
- c. The impacts on amenity of residents of retaining the facility could not be dealt with through other measures, and would be so severe as to outweigh the benefits to the wider community of retaining the facility.*

- 2.2 The supporting text of the Policy states that the policy aims to ensure that development does not reduce the accessibility of Reading’s communities to vital leisure uses and public houses.

3.0 Relevant Considerations

- 3.1 The established use of the property is as a public house falling within use class A4 of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended.

- 3.2 Having regard to Policy DM15, Criteria (i) is not considered applicable in this instance as the property is not located within a defined district, major local or local centre. Turning to criteria (ii), the policy lays out three separate ways in which the policy can be met. These are labelled a, b, c.
- 3.3 The Policy clearly provides an applicant with an option to opt for and address either parts (a), (b) or (c) within the Policy wording itself in order to satisfy the Policy as a whole. Therefore, in opting for part (b) of criteria (ii), the point to be considered by the applicant is whether there is a range of pubs in the locality (of the Gardeners Arms) that can continue to meet the needs of the community as required by the Policy.
- 3.4 The supporting text of the Policy states that any alternative facilities identified to comply with (b) must have sufficient capacity to adequately serve the existing catchment, and must be at least as accessible by public transport, foot and cycle to the majority of the catchment as the facility to be lost.

4.0 Existing Provision/Competition

- 4.1 In order to satisfy the aforementioned Planning Policy, it is relevant to consider the level of existing pub provision in the locality. A map showing the public houses in relation to the subject Property can be found within the Planning, Design and Access Statement. The named premises are listed below:
- 1) The White Horse
 - 2) The Black Horse
 - 3) Prince of Wales
 - 4) Caversham Rose
 - 5) Baron Cadogan
- 4.2 Based on the number of public houses and bars located within the vicinity of the Gardeners Arms, it is clear that this is not an under-pubbed locality and the conclusion can be drawn that the existing level of provision would be sufficient in providing a number of alternatives for the local community to use.
- 4.3 A site visit and survey was undertaken over the lunchtime period and early afternoon of Wednesday 1st August 2018. This particular time was chosen in order to truly reflect the pub economy within the vicinity of the Gardeners Arms on an average day. The purpose was to identify whether the range of pubs identified in Paragraph 4.1 are indeed diverse in their operation and fulfil the functions that would be lost at the Gardeners Arms. The premises numbered 1 – 5 were visited. The White Horse, Black Horse, Caversham Rose and Baron Cadogan were open at the time of the visit. The operations of each are detailed below.



The White Horse
9 Kidmore End Rd,
Reading
RG4 8SD
0.6 miles

This pub is a Greene King pub operating under the Pub and Flame Grill brand. This historic property, built of brick and flint is adjacent to the village centre and village green. The pub's marketing material promotes itself as "A classic village pub with real ale, cocktails and flame-grilled fare, plus TV sports and a garden". The pub has an extensive food menu, a large car park (circa 29 spaces, fruit machines and trade patio. Live sport is shown including Football and Rugby and free wifi is provided to customers. The pub is open from 11am to 11pm every day. Food served from 12midday to 9pm every day.



The Black Horse
16 Kidmore End
Rd, Reading
RG4 8SE
0.6 miles

Located opposite the White Horse, this property overlooks the village green. The pub is primarily a drinking pub (no food is served) and has two bars; a public bar and lounge bar. The pub has a pool table, darts board, fruit machines and plays live sport. The pub has trade patio to the front and rear. There is no parking. The pub is open from 12midday to 11pm every day.



Prince of Wales
76 Prospect St,
Reading
RG4 8JN
0.8 miles

A Brakspear tenanted pub, the pub considers itself "a cosy traditional style Pub with a modern twist". The pub's unique selling point is its gin range (over 100 varieties and sells its own distilled gin "Caversham Gin"). Its freshly made pizzas and paninis which are available to eat in or take away are also an attraction. The pub has a large car park (circa

22 spaces) and has both a trade garden and trade patio. Food is served from 3pm to 9pm Monday to Saturday and 12midday to 8pm Sunday. Opening times are Mon – Thurs: 3pm - 11pm, Friday - Saturday: 12pm - 12am Sunday: 12pm - 10.30pm. The pub has a large social media presence and well-maintained website. It also offers live sport and pub games such as darts.



Caversham Rose
109 Kidmore Rd,
Reading
RG4 7NH
1 mile

A Mitchells and Butlers pub with a strong food offering, attracting destination trade with large car park (circa 58 spaces). The pub is primarily food orientated and serves a vegan menu and cocktails and has brands itself as “a stylish pub for relaxed drinking and dining”. The pub offers private dining and events and has recently launched a food delivery service. Open from 11am to 11pm Monday to Saturday and 11am to 10pm on Sunday.



Baron Cadogan
22-24 Prospect St,
Reading
RG4 8JG
0.9 miles

A J D Wetherspoons operation which offers food and drink all day. This pub broadcasts live news, has free wifi and has recently introduced the ability to order food and drink from a phone app. Open from 8am to 11pm Monday to Thursday, 8am to 12midnight Friday and Saturday and 8am to 10.30pm on Sunday.

- 4.4 Further pubs, bars and restaurants are available within Caversham. These are centred around Gosbrook Road and Church Street and can be accessed using a direct public bus route from the Property. Slightly further afield, Reading provides the amenities and facilities including pubs that is expected of a regional centre.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The presence of a number of premises available within the locality of the subject Property demonstrates that a sufficient number of alternative pubs are easily accessible and available. The list demonstrates that this area has a wide range of public houses that operate across the hospitality spectrum. The public houses available range from small drinking led pubs to nationally recognised chain pubs.
- 5.2 These outlets provide a range of facilities that are comparable to or offer more than the Gardeners Arms. A diverse range of public house provision therefore does exist within the locality and would be sufficient to meet the day to day requirements of the local community in terms of both the number of facilities available and the type of offering.
- 5.3 The survey has revealed that a number of these premises are diverse in their operation, offering a wide range of pub and bar facilities. The premises listed at Paragraph 4.3 have a range of unique selling points such as the serving of self-distilled gin, food focus and others providing more traditional pub games such as darts and pool.
- 5.4 The local community would therefore not be disadvantaged by the loss of the Gardeners Arms for the majority of the alternative premises have standout qualities and features that are far superior to the subject Property. The existing range of premises in the locality can therefore collectively continue to meet the needs of the local community.

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