

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

SITE ADDRESS: Queens Arms Public House, 24 Great Knollys Street, Reading
APPLICATION NUMBER: 171349
PROPOSAL: Temporary change of use of ground floor from A4 to A3 (with ancillary A1) for registered charity 1172967.

INTRODUCTION

The application site is the Queens Arms Public House on Great Knollys Street, which is not currently trading as a drinking establishment. The building is two storey, with an associated 'pub garden' and vehicle spaces. The site is bounded by commercial premises, with a public car park directly to the east.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a temporary change of use of the ground floor from A4 (drinking establishment) to A3 (restaurants and café) with an ancillary A1 (retail) use, for the charity 'New Beginnings Reading' (charity number 1172967). This is a registered charity that seeks to provide food to the homeless and those in need; and provide low cost clothing and school uniform. The project has been advertised as an 'alcohol free pub' but in order to regularise the proposed use a planning application has been submitted for A3 use (with an element of A1).

The application has been submitted with the following plans and documents.

Plans: received 4th August 2017

Site Location Plan	SLP01
Block Plan	BP01
Existing Ground Floor	E01
Existing elevations	E03
Existing elevations	E04
Existing roof Plan	E02
Proposed Ground Floor Plan	P01

Amended Parking Plan received 11.10.2017

Flood Risk Assessment dated 10.10.2017

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Legal and Planning Policy Context

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. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12). In this regard, 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).

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents are also material planning considerations.

Reading Borough LDF: Core Strategy (2008)

- CS1 Sustainable design and construction
- CS4 Accessibility and the intensity of development
- CS5 Inclusive Access
- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS17 Protecting the Existing Housing stock
- CS20 Implementation of Reading Transport Strategy
- CS24 Car/Cycle parking
- CS31 Additional and Existing Community facilities
- CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- CS34 Pollution and water resources
- CS35 Flooding

Relevant Reading Borough LDF: Reading Central Area Action plan (RCAAP) policies:

- RC5 Design in the Centre
- RC7 Leisure, Culture and Tourism in the Centre
- RC8 Drinking Establishments
- RC9 Living in the Centre

Reading Borough LDF: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)

- SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM1 Adaptation to Climate Change
- DM3 Infrastructure Planning
- DM4 Safeguarding Amenity
- DM6 Affordable Housing
- DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters
- DM15 Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPD - Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

SPD - Affordable Housing Provision (adopted 2013)

RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY (REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED)

Letters were sent to the adjacent commercial premises and a site notice was erected for public interest.

Councillor query in relation to the existing residential element of the building, which the applicant has confirmed is to be retained.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Due to the nature of the development LPA to refer to Environment Agency's Standing advice.

RBC Transport Strategy: No objection, subject to amended parking plan and suggested conditions.

RBC Environmental Protection: No objection subject to conditions, however works for ventilation and extraction may require the submission of a separate application.

Legal advice : The current position is that the whole site has the benefit of an A4 planning permission with ancillary Landlord/Manager's residential accommodation. If temporary planning permission is granted (albeit on the ground floor only) no planning permission is required for the resumption of the previous normal use, in this case the A4 Use (See Section 57(2)).

PLANNING HISTORY

Permissions for minor extension works.

121544) Demolition of existing public house and erection of a single block of 13 apartments with parking below. WITHDRAWN 8/3/2013.

APPRAISAL

1. Principle of Development

The proposed change of use to A3 with ancillary A1 is sought to be temporary but is still required to be assessed against relevant planning policies. Policy DM15 extends significant protection to the use of pubs, recognising their social/community importance, but this policy does not apply in the Reading central area, where the site is located. The loss of an A4 pub use is therefore acceptable in principle in this location.

The building also currently includes ancillary residential accommodation, which the applicant has confirmed is to be retained (e-mail 10.10.17) and the application seeks change of use of the ground floor only; therefore no conflict with Policy CS17 is identified.

The A1 element of the scheme is considered to be ancillary and therefore a Retail Sequential Test is not required to be assessed as part of this application. The proposal on behalf of the New Beginnings registered charity can also be considered to retain a community use at the site in line with Policy CS31. The proposed use is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to other planning considerations set out below.

2. Flooding

The site is within Flood Zone 2, at a Medium probability of flooding. The proposal would involve the change use of the site, taking it from a 'more vulnerable use' (with an ancillary residential element) to a 'less vulnerable use' and therefore does not require a sequential test and exceptions test in relation to flooding.

A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application. The content with regards to drainage; access and evacuation; and floor levels with associated resistance and resilience measures are considered to be acceptable. The proposed use is therefore not considered to have a detrimental impact in relation to flooding matters and accords with Policy CS35.

3. Transport matters

The site is located within Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs. The development site is adjacent to Reading Buses Depot and to a public car park. Parking and loading restrictions are in place directly outside the existing public house preventing on street parking.

The proposed change of use will not worsen the current situation for car parking and the amended parking plan showing a parking layout; and bin and cycle storage is considered to be acceptable. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy CS24 and DM12.

4. Other matters:

Residential Amenity

In relation to the residential amenity of any occupants of the existing first floor accommodation, the use as an A3 café with ancillary A1 retail is considered to have no worse impact than the existing A4 use at the site. The site is in an area of poor air quality and surrounded by commercial uses and therefore any additional residential use of the site would have to be considered on this basis under a separate application.

In relation to the suggested conditions by Environmental Health the current commercial kitchen is to be utilised and no additional equipment other than the existing is required. Therefore it is not considered necessary to impose the suggested odour control condition; and there is considered to be no additional noise impact from the proposed development. Any future new equipment can be subject to a further application. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy DM4.

Visual appearance

The proposal does not show any alterations to the exterior of the building. Any future signage would be subject to a separate Advertisement Consent application. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policy CS7.

CIL

The proposal as a change of use would not be a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable development.

Equalities Act

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions