

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

SITE ADDRESS: 16 Bridge Street, Caversham RG4 8AA

APPLICATION NUMBER: 182017/OPA

PROPOSAL: Change of use of first floor from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 2 x 1 bed apartments. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

INTRODUCTION

The application site comprises a three storey terraced building on the western side of Bridge Street, Caversham. The building is located in the revised St Peters Conservation Area (as approved by Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport (SEPT) committee 21 November 2018) and the building was last used for B1(a) offices.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks change of use of the first floor office from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 2 x 1-bed flats. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Legal context

Class O allows development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage to Class C3 dwellinghouses (houses or flats) from a Class B1(a) office use.

As set out in Para 0.2 of Class O (as amended), development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the development shall apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the local authority will be required as to:

- (a) transport and highways impacts of the development,
- (b) contamination risks on the site,
- (c) flooding risks on the site, and
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development,

and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) apply in relation to that application.

In assessing these issues, officers must have regard to the NPPF as if the application were a planning application, and also have regard to the Local Development Framework (the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework 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)).

Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy - Adopted January 2008 (Altered 2015)

CS34 Pollution and Water Resources

CS35 Flooding

Sites and Detailed Policies Document - Adopted October 2012 (Altered 2015)

DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters

PLANNING HISTORY

131192 - OPA - Change of use of first and second floors from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise 2 x 1-bed flats and 2 x studio flats. WITHDRAWN 10/10/2013

131668 - OPA - Change of use of first floor from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise 2 x 1 bed flats. REFUSED 21/01/2014

140418 - OPA - Change of use of first floor from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise 2 x 1 bed flats. APPROVED 12/05/2014

RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY (REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED)

A site notice was displayed at the application site from 29 November 2018. The 21 day statutory consultation period ended on 20 December 2018.

One response has been received by the Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA). The response was positive, and commented on the bin storage location, as bin storage location does not fall under the matters which can be considered there is no requirement for the proposal to be accompanied by bin storage detail. An informative is recommended to address these concerns.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Transport: No objections, subject to Informatives.

Environmental Protection: No objection to the proposed development subject to informatives.

APPRAISAL

Development is not permitted by Class O in the following instances (officer comments follow in **bold**):

O.1 Development is not permitted by Class O if—

(a) the building is on article 2(5) land; **COMPLIES**

(b) the building was not used for a use falling within Class B1(a) (offices) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order—

(i) on 29th May 2013, or **COMPLIES** - The application form states that the use of the application site immediately before the 30th May 2013 was as 'B1 (office)'. This is consistent with the application forms and officer reports for applications 140418, which notes the use of the building to be as B1a offices.

(ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use; **N/A**

- (c) the site is, or forms part of, a safety hazard area; **COMPLIES**
- (d) the site is, or forms part of, a military explosives storage area; **COMPLIES**
- (e) the building is a listed building or is within the curtilage of a listed building; or **COMPLIES**
- (f) the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument. **COMPLIES**

Conditions:

O.2.—

(1) Development under Class O is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

- (a) transport and highways impacts of the development,
- (b) contamination risks on the site,
- (c) flooding risks on the site, and
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development,

and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) apply in relation to that application.

(2) Development under Class O is permitted subject to the condition that it must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date

ASSESSMENT OF CONDITIONS O.2

(a) Transport and highways impact of the development

The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. The site is located within walking distance of Caversham Shopping Centre which provides a range of shops and services. This area also contains public car parking spaces.

Bridge Street is a key arterial road which joins Caversham and Reading town centre. The property comprises a ground floor estate agents with offices above. The application is for a change the use of the first floor from Office Use (Class B1(a)) to a Dwellinghouse (Class C3), comprising 2 no 1 bedroom apartments.

The supporting letter submitted by the applicant states that there is a car park of which the applicant leases four car parking spaces on a long term basis. It is unclear whether this arrangement will continue for the residential use. However, it is noted that Bridge Street and the surrounding road network all have parking restrictions preventing on-street parking, therefore, any overflow in parking would not affect the flow of traffic on the classified road network.

Bridge Street does not fall within a Resident's Permit Zone and the residents will not be eligible to apply for a Residents Parking Permit. However, the parking informative should

be placed on the permission to inform the occupants of the flats that they would not be eligible for a resident's parking permit.

In the circumstances it is considered that the proposed change of use would not have a material impact on the character of the traffic in the vicinity of the site. Therefore, there is no Transport objections to prior approval being given for the proposed change of use subject to the informative stated below.

(b) Contamination risks on the site

The site is not identified as being on contaminated land.

(c) Flooding risks on the site

The EA objected to the original proposal (140418) on the basis that the first FRA submitted did not contain evidence that there is a safe access and egress. Further information was submitted by the Keen Partnership on 8 May 2014 to the EA, and on 9 May 2014, the EA confirmed that they had removed their previous objection to the proposal. As the site is located within flood zone 2 (at the time of this application), and minimal changes have occurred since the previous approval it is considered acceptable to utilise the previous flood risk assessment.

(d) Impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development

As the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), restricts assessment to that of transport impacts, contamination risk on site, flooding risks, and impacts from commercial premises on the intended occupiers. The site is located within close proximity to a commercial vehicle workshop and public house, however, no impact is expected from these sources. It is expected that the proximity to Bridge Street (A4155) would present the need to acoustically treat the building for residential amenity. As there is no requirement for this to form part of the assessment, an informative has been included that the acoustic environment be considered for future resident's amenity.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Prior Approval subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. The development permitted must be completed before the expiration of three years from the date of this prior approval.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of paragraph O.2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

2. The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the submitted information and details:

Drawing Number: PR-03 Proposed ground, first and second floor plans

As received: 16/11/2018

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Part Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (As amended).

3. FRA

Informatives

1. The applicant is advised that as an application for prior approval under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended by The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2016, this prior approval notice relates to the change of use of the building from Class B1(a) to C3 (dwellinghouses) only and no other use.
2. This prior approval relates only to the change of use of existing floor space and land. If there are any external alterations or extensions to the building, planning permission is required for these. The grant of prior approval does not make the development lawful.
3. The occupiers of the residential unit(s) will not be automatically entitled to an on-street car parking permit. Current and new occupiers should be informed of this and be advised to find out more about parking permits on the Council's website. There is already a high level of on street car parking in the area and the site is located close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads.
4. i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.
ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.
5. In connection with the implementation of this office prior approval, no noisy construction, demolition and associated activities should take place outside the hours of 0800 to 1800 Mondays to Fridays and 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays. No noisy works shall take place at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays. Please refer to the Council's website for more detailed information:
<http://beta.reading.gov.uk/article/2565/What-noise-is-acceptable-during-construction-and-demolition-work>
6. To minimise the disturbance by noise of future residential occupiers of the flats and its effect on neighbouring residents, residential accommodation must be designed and

constructed or converted so as to achieve the insulation requirements set out in Building Regulations Approved Document E.

7. We commonly receive complaints about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and about smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site of minor developments.
8. It is recommended that the development be undertaken with consideration of the proximity to Bridge Street (A4155). In particular, you are advised to ensure that adequate noise protection is incorporated into the design to minimise disturbance to future occupiers.