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8th August 2018

Alison Amoah
Planning Development Management
Reading Borough Council

By email to: Alison.Amoah@reading.gov.uk

Dear Alison

Application 180698/FUL- 448a Basingstoke Road.

You have asked for responses to specific questions, and my answers are set out below.

Do you have a breakdown/ description of the role of the 60 no. full/time employees identified on the application form?

At capacity, we anticipate:

- around 40 workstations on the Front first floor (small business lets)
- 10 - 12 people employed by the Church (Church leadership and management, buildings facilities manager, caretaker, administrator, graphic designer, youth worker, kids worker, events manager, 2x interns, group leaders and trainers)
- Approximately 2-3 in coffee shop/kitchens
- Best estimate: a total of 60 staff on site.

Do you have any commentary on Sustainable Design and Construction? All schemes, including changes of use (refurbishment) should demonstrate measures to incorporate sustainable design and construction features in accordance with Policy CS1.

This is an existing building from the 1980s built to a high standard at the time. As the applicants refurbish areas of the building it will be brought up to modern standards. The building is already double glazed and has adequate insulation in the walls and roof.

The new owners will be

- replacing inefficient boilers and heating systems with modern low energy equivalents.
- Deconditioning the old R22 air conditioning system as per legal requirements.
- Where possible installing Air Source Heat Pumps for heating and cooling office areas.
- Installing building management systems (BMS) to control heating and lighting in the occupied areas of the building and prevent wasted energy in unoccupied areas.
- Replacing the old fluorescent light fittings with highly efficient LED lighting, using PIRs to control lights in occupied areas.
- New systems to reduce water usage in the urinals and installation of small local hot water heaters to reduce long hot water pipe runs and the risk of waterborne disease.

The overall outcome will reduce the buildings' carbon footprint significantly.

Transport related:

The maximum number of participants/users for each of the intended uses at the proposed site

A timetable for the proposed use to determine the number of users on-site at any one time

Detailed responses to both of the above have been provided in the schedule previously submitted as an email attachment (*Numbers on site.pdf* file)

Details of how the users would travel to the church i.e, walk, cycle, public transport, private car

I have provided you with supplementary information on likely travel modes (in the above schedule) and additionally submitted the the Travel Plan advice which will be advertised on the facility website and to all occupiers and visitors. The site lies in a location with excellent accessibility to non-car options, and the staff currently on site have enthusiastically taken up the cycling option. (*Transport Plan 008.pdf*)

Information regarding the additional overflow parking – para 4.05 of Design, Access and Planning Statement refers to a plan being available on demand – Please could this be provided.

I attach the plan which is appended to the Draft agreed licence, securing convenient off site additional parking for the first 5 years after implementation. [*Carpark licence plan(1)*]. The licence is to be completed once planning permission is secured.

The on site provision available (50 car spaces plus cycle parking) appears to me to meet the adopted parking standards for all uses in this accessible location. My clients acknowledge however that as the facility grows in attraction for Church and community events, additional off site parking for large events would be beneficial.

It is not possible to secure this overflow space as a permanent adjunct at this time. However, given the availability of unused weekend parking space in the area, it is not anticipated that securing access to alternatives will be a problem.

My clients would be prepared if essential to be bound by a requirement that large events (e.g. more than 200 persons attending) should not be held on the site unless off site additional parking is available at these times. They would then have to make such future arrangements as are considered reasonable, including advising RBC that these arrangements are in place.

Please can we discuss the potential form of such a restriction.

What hours of use is proposed for each type of use? – Para 6.19 refers to a number of factors which would prevent nuisance to local residents – hours of use being limited to social hours – what would these be?

Again the submitted schedule (Numbers on site.pdf file) outlines the pattern of use daily and weekly. The office suites will be in use Monday- Friday normal office hours, with the community hall used for Church activities (childrens play group etc) for a few hours during this period, while classes/job/social support groups will be under way in the ground floor(front) part of the building. The café use is likely to be only operating within hours when the rest of the building is in use.

Overall hours of use of the building 0700- 2300 at maximum, with early use limited to small prayer groups, late use on occasion at weekends subject to the nature of lettings for the community hall. I assume that the halls capacity will be controlled by fire licensing legislation.

The Council's EH officer confirms that separation distance from nearest residential properties will prevent anti-social nuisance from noise. The applicant (who will remain the site manager for all users) will ensure that all car park users are mindful of the need to vacate the site without delay after an event. The site has gates which will be locked at night to prevent misuse out of hours. No community activities are proposed within the external areas.

Is there any intention to enhance the existing landscaping on site?

The existing external area is largely in use as parking space, with the original landscaping remaining in a few beds. Due to meeting modern requirements for larger vehicles, individual parking spaces have been increased in size. Additional cycle parking space and bin storage areas have also been allocated.

There is therefore no opportunity for additional landscaping, but this site will remain in character with its surroundings with continued maintenance of existing planting. It does of course benefit from an intervening wide green corridor separating it from prominent views along the Basingstoke Road. Where opportunities are available, small improvements to encourage birds and insects will be added.

You referred to the church having an evacuation strategy. Could I see this?

I have previously submitted this by email [*Fire evacuation Plan 448a Basingstoke Road.pdf file*]. A strategy has been developed which addresses all potential circumstances on the site, to ensure safe evacuation of both fit and vulnerable users, with specific responsibilities identified.

In response to the comments from the Highway Officer which you kindly forwarded to me, please see the attached annotated memo and statement on parking provision.

I look forward to discussing any outstanding matters with you very shortly.

Yours sincerely

Deirdre Wells DipTP MRTPI
Red Kite Development Consultancy