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Our Ref: SMD/KAU/29/1
Your Ref: PP-06398012
Date: 25 September 2017

Dear Sirs

RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION– 1 UPPER REDLANDS ROAD, READING, RG1 5JJ SUPPORTING STATEMENT

We act for Mr Ajay Kaura and ANS Property Investments Limited of which Mr Kaura is a director. The company is the owner of 1 Upper Redlands Road, Reading, RG1 5JJ.

Retrospective Planning permission is sought for a change of use of the property from what the Council accepts is an existing small House in Multiple Occupation ("HMO") (C4) into a large HMO with 9 bedrooms.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING AREA

The property comprises a three storey end of terrace property containing 9 bedrooms. The property contains a front and rear garden. The site borders the University and is located in an Article 4 area where permitted development rights have been removed therefore any changes to a HMO require express consent. The property has been a HMO since before the article 4 direction.

PLANNING HISTORY

As can be noted from our client's detailed response to the Planning Contravention Notice submitted in August it is clear that for many years the property has comprised bed-sitting rooms and been used as a large HMO. Rather than submit an application for a CLEUD for which there is good evidence our client has decided to respect the advice of the planning

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enforcement officer and submit this application. A copy of the relevant email from Boja Petkovic dated 25 August 2017 is attached.

A retrospective application for a ground floor extension to the kitchen/communal areas has recently been submitted (ref 171561) as advised in the email. The extension was undertaken last year under the mistaken belief that it benefitted from permitted development rights.

The property is the subject of the HMO licence with a start date of 19 May 2017 a copy of which is attached.

POLICY APPRAISAL

Along with the adopted local planning policies, the Residential Conversions SPD (2013) establishes a number of criteria against which HMO applications such as this should be assessed. Although not all the checklist items are relevant to this application to be helpful we have dealt with each of them as follows:

Checklist 1: (CS18, DM8): Any external alterations must be carried out sympathetically, respecting the physical character of the area.

- The property contains 9 bedrooms. No further external alterations are proposed (other than the extension mentioned above).

Checklist 2 (DM4, DM9, DM10): Extensions must achieve acceptable residential amenity for existing and new occupiers plus respect the character of the existing house and area ensuring outside amenity space is not unacceptably reduced.

- There is no reduction in outside space. The internal floor areas have been designed to provide acceptable amenity to occupiers. The property is licenced.

Checklist 3 (DM8): Any residential conversion must contribute to achieving an appropriately mixed and sustainable community by providing an acceptable housing mix, ensuring that, as appropriate, single family housing remains the dominant form of dwelling in the vicinity of the application and ensuring there is not a detrimental impact on the physical character of the area.

- The property currently has an established HMO use (C4). Para 4.3 of the SPD states that the threshold limit (applicable to properties within an Article 4 area) will not be triggered if a HMO use has already been established. Nevertheless, an assessment of the surrounding area regarding the presence of HMOs nearby has been undertaken using the Council's HMO register list. There are currently 4 other HMOs registered by Reading Borough Council within 50 m of the property whilst the number of

residential properties is 20 plus a further 5 of the 10 dwellings permitted within the University ownership immediately to the rear of the site which are also within the 50m radius. The proposal is therefore within the threshold.

Checklist 4 (DM10): An appropriate level of private outdoor space will be expected.

- Private outdoor space is provided in the garden.

Checklist 5 (DM4, DM8): Issues such as those below need to be taken into account in any residential conversions application: • privacy and overlooking, • access to sunlight and daylight, • visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development, • noise and disturbance, • crime and safety.

- The proposal does not raise any issues in relation to the above considerations.

Checklist 6 (DM8): The property to be converted to a flat or large HMO should have four or more bedrooms or measure more than 120 square metres gross. When calculating the floor area of the property the measurement should be based on the external dimensions as at 1st July 1948 or when built (whichever is the later).

- Not applicable.

Checklist 7 The Local Planning Authority will consider applications for house conversions including both HMOs and flats against the Council's adopted minimum internal floorspace standards as set out at Appendix 1.

- The internal standards are met.

Checklist 8 (DM4, DM8): It will be necessary to ensure appropriate sound insulation between proposed and neighbouring units before a converted property is occupied.

- Appropriate sound insulation has been installed.

Checklist 9 (DM4, DM8): Proposed layouts should avoid locating living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens next to, above, or below proposed and neighbouring bedrooms. Instead, the 'stacking' of rooms of a similar type is preferable.

- The proposal is compliant with the above.

Checklist 10 (DM4, DM8): Habitable rooms, such as living rooms and bedrooms, should benefit from an external window. The provision of natural light and ventilation is a legal requirement under Environmental Health legislation.

- All the habitable rooms benefit from external windows.

Checklist 11 (DM4, DM8): Proposals for self-contained units, solely within a basement, will normally be permitted where this unit would benefit from dual aspect*, an acceptable outlook** and sufficient headroom***.

- Not applicable

Checklist 12 (DM8): Proposals which seek to convert attic/ loft space will normally be permitted where the attic/loft space would benefit from sufficient headroom and is incorporated into a self-contained unit which is split over two floors of accommodation.

- Not applicable

Checklist 13 (CS18, CS24): Parking standards for all residential conversions should be in accordance with the Council's adopted 'Revised Parking Standards and Design' (2011) SPD.

- There are no parking spaces.

Checklist 14 HMOs located within a street where a residents' parking permit scheme operates will not be entitled to on-street car parking permits. The same restrictions may apply to new flats in such streets, see the 'Revised Parking Standards and Design' SPD.

- Noted.

Checklist 15 (CS7, CS18, DM8, DM9): Removal of boundary treatment to accommodate parking or access to parking will not be permitted where it makes a valuable contribution to the character of the area.

- No alteration to the boundary treatment is proposed.

Checklist 16 (CS24, DM4, DM8): The provision of outdoor cycle storage should have a secure, covered and convenient location. The storage area should be lockable with provision to secure bicycles within it.

- Any proposed cycle storage will be provided in accordance with the above.

Checklist 17 (CS18, DM8): Sufficient and suitable refuse containers should be provided within the curtilage of the application building which are easily accessible for all occupants of the

house and the refuse collectors and ensuring they are sympathetically located with regard to their visual impact.

- Sufficient and suitable refuse containers are provided within the curtilage of the building.

Checklist 18 (CS5): Where possible, a level access from the public highway to the building's principal entrance should be provided or retained.

- The existing access arrangements will be retained

Checklist 19 (CS9, CS16, CS20, CS29, DM3, DM6): Developers should compensate for loss or damage created by a development and mitigate any impact caused. A planning obligation to secure a financial or other contribution towards physical or social infrastructure improvements may be sought. 6 Residential Conversions Supplementary Planning Document, Adopted November 2013

- This property is already an existing HMO licence.

Checklist 20 The Council can serve an Enforcement Notice where conversion works have been carried out without planning permission. This action can result in the unauthorised works being removed (or the unauthorised use discontinued) and the building/ use being reinstated. Non-compliance with the provisions of an enforcement notice constitutes a criminal offence.

- Noted

Checklist 21 Early discussions with a Building Control Officer will improve the internal layout of the scheme and may avoid the need for external fire-escapes (which may require planning permission in their own right).

- Noted – the Licence has already been issued.

Checklist 22 The HMO team should be contacted about Environmental Health matters.

- Noted – as above.

Checklist 23 (DM8): At least one unit of accommodation created should be suitable for family occupation with a minimum of two bedrooms.

- This advice applies to conversions to flats. In any event the HMO licence has been issued on the basis of the current layout.

Checklist 24 Where a proposal incorporates a family sized unit, that unit should have direct access to a useable area of private, rather than communal, garden space.

- None is proposed.

Checklist 25 (DM8): A standard of one communal room for every 4-6 bedrooms (depending on the size of the bedroom) will be provided, which will have acceptable amenity standards and appropriate access for all residents. Checklist 26 (DM8): A proper agreement may be required to ensure acceptable management of all communal parts of the HMO.

- A satisfactory standard of amenity has been provided by the provision of a communal lounge/sitting room. All rooms share the ground floor kitchen . All occupants share the utility/ laundry room. The provision is acceptable to the HMO team.

CONCLUSION

This property provides residential accommodation with good facilities and comfortable rooms in excess of minimum standards. The property already benefits from an established HMO use and is fully licenced as a HMO. Having regard to the fact that the building is already in multiple occupation, the current (proposed) HMO use does not raise significant concerns and would accord with the objectives of the SPD and other relevant Policies. We trust therefore that the application will be granted.

If you have any queries or if we can assist in any way please contact either Jyoti Mehta or Simon Dimmick who will be very happy to help you.

Yours faithfully

Blandy & Blandy LLP