

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Church

App Ref: 230904/FUL

Address: 260 Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 8HG

Proposals: Full planning application for the proposed change of use from existing ground floor store room to self-contained flat with secure cycle shed and bin store.

Case Officer: Mr Anthony Scholes

Date received (valid from): 29 June 2023 Target Decision date: 9 May 2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

Site visit date: 20/07/2023

Site visit photos:



The application site comprises a two storey detached building, located within Shinfield Road District Centre. A long single storey extension projects to the rear. The ground floor is in active retail use. Storage for the retail use is located within the rear extension. The upper floor comprises a three bed flat with independent access from the side of the building. To the front of the site is a forecourt, with four parking spaces attributed to the retail use. A narrow access between the side elevations of no's. 260 & 258, leads to a rear yard. The surrounding area comprises a mix of commercial and residential uses. The site straddles the boundary with Wokingham Borough Council.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is for the conversion of part of the ground floor from storage attributed to the retail use, to a one bed flat (approximately 68sqm). Elevational alterations including the installation of windows and doors are proposed to facilitate the conversion. The rear yard would be partially landscaped, and two vehicle parking spaces provided.

Plans considered

Drawing No: BC/3 - Site Location and Block Plan

Drawing No: BC/1 - Existing Floor Plans

Drawing No: BC/4 - Existing Elevations

Drawing No: BC/5A - Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Drawing No: BC/2A - Proposed Elevations

As Received 29 June 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

092032/PRE - Change of use from retail to veterinary surgery. Erection of single storey rear extension following demolition of existing - Withdrawn 12/03/09

201333/ADJ - Change of use of ground floor store room to self-contained flat, with bicycle shed and bin store - Observations sent 13/10/20

210585/FUL - Conversion of store to 1x1 bed flat, with various elevational alterations and associated hard and soft landscaping Refused 21/04/2022

The site straddles the boundary with Wokingham Borough Council. Planning permission has been granted for the development subject of this application, by Wokingham Borough Council under their application ref: 231537.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

256 Shinfield Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 8EY

262 Shinfield Road, Reading

1 Whitley Wood Road, Reading, RG2 8HX

3 Whitley Wood Road, Reading, RG2 8HX

2 Lacewood Gardens, Reading, RG2 8JW

5 Whitley Wood Road, Reading, RG2 8HX

Flat 1, 258 Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 8EY

Flat 6, 258 Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 8EY

Flat 5, 258 Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 8EY

Flat 4, 258 Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 8EY

No letters of representation have been received by neighbours.

The following responses were received by consultees.

RBC Environmental Health

No objection subject to conditions.

RBC Natural Environment

No objection subject to conditions.

RBC Transport

No objection subject to conditions.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. 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'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

CC6: ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

EN15: AIR QUALITY

H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING

H2: DENSITY AND MIX

H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING

H7: PROTECTING THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

H8: RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS

H9: HOUSE EXTENSIONS AND ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION

H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE

TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

TR4: CYCLE ROUTES AND FACILITIES

TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

RL1: NETWORK AND HIERARCHY OF CENTRES

RL3: VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF SMALLER CENTRES

SPG/SPD

Affordable Housing (2021)

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Residential Conversions (2013)

Planning Obligations Under S106 (2015)

Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

APPRAISAL

Principle of development

The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) and seeks that all housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The general principle of provision of new housing in this location would align with the broad objectives of Policy H1.

The loss of storage space attributed with the retail use at the front of the building, to facilitate the proposal must also be considered. While the site is located within a District Centre, the loss of this storage space would not compromise the ongoing, viable use of the retail unit, with the vitality of the District Centre being maintained. The broad principle for the residential development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policies CC6, H1 and RL1. The overall acceptability of the proposals will be dependent on other policy consideration, as discussed below.

Affordable housing

Policy H3 of the Local Plan requires residential development to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing. The policy states that on sites of 1-4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough. The Applicant has entered into an agreement to provide a policy compliant contribution in this instance.

Design and impact on the character of the area

To facilitate the proposed conversion, minor elevational alterations are proposed. These include rendering external brickwork and the replacement/addition of fenestration appropriate for a residential use. The alterations are deemed to be acceptable, with no harm caused to the character and appearance of the building in accordance with Policy CC7.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

While the proposal would result in a more intensive use of the site, this is not considered to cause significant harm to neighbouring residential amenities. While some of the proposed fenestration would be located to the side elevation facing no. 262, it would be at the ground floor and largely obscured by existing close-boarded boundary fencing.

Amenity of future occupiers

The proposal would provide a good sized flat, which accords with the space standards as set out in Policy H5. While each habitable room would have an external window, concerns were raised during the course of the application with regard to the outlook from the bedroom window in close proximity to the existing boundary fence. While the outlook from this window would be limited, no harm significant to warrant a reason for refusal has been identified. Adequate outdoor amenity space would also be provided.

Transport and landscaping matters

Two vehicle parking spaces, bicycle and bin storage and an area of soft landscaping has been proposed to the rear of the site, which accords with the broad policy objectives. Approval has been granted by Wokingham Borough Council, and it appears that access via the side of the site, though narrow, would allow for vehicles to access the proposed parking.

Conclusion

The proposals is considered acceptable and is recommended to be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve