

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham

App Ref: 240672/FUL

Address: 6 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JG

Proposals: Proposed alterations and extension to the existing restaurant (Spitiko Greek Restaurant) to increase the seating capacity by the reuse of the first floor area, the extension of the kitchen on the ground floor, and the construction of enlarged toilet facilities above, and the formation of a new window opening to the front elevation, first floor.

Case Officer: Mr Anthony Scholes

Date received (valid from): 24 May 2024 **Target Decision date:** 19 July 2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

Site visit date: 24/05/2024

Site visit photos:

The application site is a restaurant with a relatively small frontage within the Caversham District Centre. It fronts Prospect Street a key route north and north-west out of Reading. The frontage is approximately 5.3m in width and is a neatly presented restaurant with glazing and stall risers. The site is long and narrow, similar to all other premises in the vicinity. There is not outdoor space associated with this business, and the rear access is provided via the Chester Street Carpark, where waste collection occurs for the businesses on this strip of the District Centre.



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed development, is for a 2-storey rear extension of the existing Class E (b) restaurant use. The extension will also facilitate the enlargement of the kitchen and provision of improved upstairs dining, and facilities.

Plans considered

Dwg No. SR/PL/02 Rev A - Existing and Proposed Plans (including floor plans, elevations and site plan).

As received 4 July 2024

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

231730/FUL - Proposed rear extension to the existing restaurant to facilitate various internal alterations, alongside additional first-floor window to the principal elevation. WITHDRAWN 24/1/2024

010672/FUL (01-01146-FUL) - Change of use from A1 to A3. Greek restaurant-no takeaway. PERMITTED 12/11/2001

990042/FUL (00-00921-FUL) - Change of use of ground floor from A1 (shop) to A2 (financial and professional services) and change of use of 1st floor from ancillary storage to flat (C3) REFUSED 6/12/2000

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

4,8,8a,10 Prospect Street, Caversham.

One letter of objection was received, and is summarised below:

- Concerns that a dwelling exists above shop and residents would be displaced;
- Concerns over improper waste management

Environmental Health

No concerns based on the vent/flue not being moved.

Transport

No objections, construction management plan required.

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 2023

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN6: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT

EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

EN17: NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT

TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

RL1: NETWORK AND HIERARCHY OF CENTRES

RL3: VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF SMALLER CENTRES

OU5: SHOPFRONTS AND CASH MACHINES

SPG/SPD

Design Guide to Shopfronts (2022)

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Site Specific

Historic England - List Entry 1113562 - Caversham Baptist Free Church

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APPRAISAL

Proposed Use

The application is for extensions and alterations to an existing restaurant. The proposal would expand the Class E (b) unit, with additional seating upstairs, and additional kitchen space. The change of use would likely increase demand, including increase trips toward this location. The site is well positioned for this, with high frequency bus routes and good pedestrian links, including cycling links. The District Centre is also served by the carpark to the rear. The expansion of the existing business upward is considered positive and would contribute to the District Centres vitality and viability.

One comment was received, which stated that persons lived above the shop and would be displaced by the proposed development. Policy H7 - Protecting the Existing Housing Stock would generally limit the opportunity to remove housing within the borough. The site does not appear to have any permission for a flat above, with an application for such a unit being refused in December 2000. The address and Council records also do not indicate that this is the case. The site does not appear to have any independent access from the front or rear for a separate unit. As such, it does not appear that the site could reasonable have a dwelling at first floor, nor do Council records suggest there is.

Amenity Considerations

The proposal includes the expansion of a kitchen within the rear of the site. An existing vent and flue are to be used as part of this kitchen expansion, and Environmental Health Officers have confirmed that this is acceptable as is and does not require additional acoustic, or odour assessments. The closest neighbour, no. 8a Prospect Street, Caversham, which is accessed by the rear is not affected more so than the existing situation.

The proposed extension would increase the depth of the two-storey element within the site. The existing site is almost completely filled with single storey buildings however. The nearest dwelling (no.8a Prospect Street) has two windows in close proximity to the proposal. A rear facing window, and a side facing window. Due to the extension not encroaching closer than it is to the existing boundary, and extending to the rear only, it is not considered to impact upon this dwelling negatively in terms of outlook, daylight/sunlight, or result in privacy concerns. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy CC8.

The proposed development would likely increase the waste generated from the property, waste storage was not a condition applied to the latest permission for the use. Hours of operation were applied, as ventilation/odour control measures. The current application does not seek to amend, and conditions will continue for hours of operation. Waste operation details will be further required to ensure that up to date measures for the control of pests are secured.

Design Considerations

Opposite the site, is a Grade II listed church building. Given the proximity, design changes may have some effect on that building. The proposal would include one additional window, of a similar size to the existing first floor window. This respects the spacing and size of architectural detailing on the existing building, and surrounding building, and is considered acceptable with regard to policy CC7, and EN1.

The proposal also includes the extension at first floor. The extension would increase the depth of the existing building, though further than the adjoining building at no.8, not as far

as the existing building at no. 4. The proposal would continue the existing mono-pitched roof, and include two side facing, high level opaque windows, and a door to the rear for roof maintenance. The scale and design is considered appropriate in the context, and is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan 2019. A condition will be applied to ensure the flat roof section is not used for outdoor seating or the another purpose.

Transport

Due to the scale and extent of the works, it is considered reasonable to apply a condition requiring details of construction management to be approved. This will include storage of materials, waste, and deliveries/parking. The non-provision of parking, as above, is considered acceptable. Waste collection, storage, and management will be secured by condition, including hours thereof.

Conclusion

The proposed development would contribute to the vitality and viability of the District Centre by ensuring that the business can expand in its current location. The development could cause disturbance to neighbours by way of increase noise during construction, which is proposed to be managed through condition. The kitchen extraction is unchanged and therefore would not impact residents nearby to a greater degree than currently experienced. The development is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve