

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Park Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0818 Prior approval Part 3 Class MA: Commercial, business and service uses to dwellinghouses

Address: DENTAL SURGERY, 268 WOKINGHAM ROAD, READING, RG6 1JS

Proposal: Part change of use of part of the ground floor from Class E (dentist) to C3 (residential) to comprise 1 x 1 bedroom flat). Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Applicant: Mr Rajdeep Sandher

Received date: 04/06/2025

Target Decision date: 30/07/2025

Case Officer: Gary Miles

Introduction

The application site forms a small part of a large, detached property located on the western side of Wokingham Road near the southernmost Reading Borough Council borough boundary. The existing use of the building is a dentist (Class E).

The site falls within the Park/Redlands/Katesgrove Article 4 Direction Area which control change of use from C3 – C4 small HMO.

The property is not listed, nor does it fall within a conservation area.

Proposal

Prior approval is sought for change of use of part of the ground floor from Class E (dentist) to C3 (residential) to comprise 1 x 1 bedroom flat). Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Information Submitted

- Drawing no. MA213.00.01 – Proposed Plans (Existing Plans & Block Plan) dated June 24
- Drawing no. MA213.00.02 – Proposed Plans (Existing & Proposed Elevations) dated June 24
- Drawing ref. MA213.00.03 – Proposed Plans (Existing & Proposed Floor Plans) dated June 24
- Prior Approval Compliance Statement (J Butterworth Planning Limited) dated March 25

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th June 2025.

Relevant Planning History

PL/04/0427 - Conversion of a disused outbuilding into a one-bedroom residential unit with the existing single storey rear store to be demolished – Approved April 2004

PL/96/0300 – Use of ground and first floors for a dental practice – Approved October 1996

PL/93/0095 – Single storey extension at rear – Approved November 1993

Consultations

RBC Environment Protection Officer

The applicant should submit further information regarding the impact of commercial noise on this proposed residential dwelling. They state that the remaining dentist use is not noisy, but I do not agree with that. There may be external plant such as air conditioning, and there is noisy machinery in use within a dental surgery.

They need to provide further details on the standard of insulation between the uses, and on whether there is external mechanical plant. Depending on the information that is forthcoming, a more detailed noise assessment may be required.

Summary of agents' response:

No external plant equipment is located anywhere near the proposed residential unit. The rooms of the main building in closest proximity to the proposed residential unit are used as a boiler room which contains a self-contained compressor to supply air to the dentist drills. An X-ray room, which contains a small self-contained x-ray machine which is not considered noisy apart from a low-level beeping infrequently, and a small waiting room. The separating wall between the dentist building and proposed residential unit is the original exterior wall of the original residential property constructed from brick and block with a cavity.

Planning Officer comments:

Whilst the proposed residential unit could be affected by commercial noise; following discussions with the agent to ascertain the use of the adjacent rooms, discussions with the Environmental Protection Officer and Principal Planner, it is agreed that the low-level commercial noise will not be detrimental to the proposed residential unit.

Transport matters

Parking provision is provided on the private driveway (section 3.2.9 of the Prior Approval Compliance Statement) located to the front of the proposed residential unit; the driveway provides off-street parking for 2 vehicles. If vehicles were to park elsewhere it is not considered the parking would put increased parking pressures on the existing permit parking schemes in the area. 1 cycle storage space is a requirement; this is discussed in (section 3.2.12 of the Prior Approval Compliance Statement).

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 are no Transport objections to prior approval being given for the proposed change of use subject to the informatives. Cycle storage should be provided in accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards and Design SPD, however under GPD we would not comment on this.

In principle Transport do not have any objections to this application the site is in a highly sustainable location and unauthorised parking can be managed via restrictions in place.

Planning Officer comments:

The information submitted to support the application are considered acceptable in terms of Transport matters. Documents demonstrate there is sufficient space for cycle storage if required.

RBC Natural Environment Officer (Trees)

Due to the type of application, the natural environment officer was consulted. No objections (see planning officer comments).

Planning Officer comments:

After having discussions with the natural environment officers, it were noted that the application includes no work to the external parts, or any new building works are to take place at the rear or within the vicinity of trees – the Natural Environment officer confirmed no objections.

Waste matters

The proposed residential unit to be located at 268 Wokingham Road would have sufficient off-street space for refuse storage (as stated in section 1.2.3 of the Prior Approval Compliance Statement) space is required for 1 x 140L general waste bin, 1 x 240L recycling bin and 1 x 23L food waste bin. These bins would need to be stored on the private property for the development and must not be stored on the pavement as they would cause an obstruction.

Please note Reading Borough Council Waste Team ask that they are given at least 6 weeks' notice prior to a development being occupied so they can ensure bins can be purchased, delivered and collections scheduled in with the crews. Bins would need to be purchased by the developer in advance of residents moving into the property – it is not the responsibility of the residents to purchase the necessary bins.

Planning Officer comments:

The plans and documents submitted show there is ample space to the front of the property (off-street) for refuse and recycling bins. The applicant is responsible for contacting Reading Borough Council waste recycling team to arrange refuse and recycling bins and collections.

Public Consultation

A site notice was displayed at the application site on 12th June 2025 and left in place for 21 days for the statutory public consultation period. No letters of representation have been received.

Legal and Planning Policy context

The application has been submitted to determine whether prior approval is required in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Class MA involves development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class E (commercial, business and service) of Schedule 2 to the Use Classes Order to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to that Order.

Before development can be carried out under Class MA, the developer must submit a Prior Notification to determine if 'Prior Approval' of the Local Planning Authority is required in respect of a number of matters as set out in the 'matters requiring prior approval' section below ((a) to (i)).

Class MA requires development to be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date. Any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.

If the Local Planning Authority determine that Prior Approval is required, Paragraph W of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) states that the Local Planning Authority should, when determining an application, have regard to the National Planning

Policy Framework (NPPF), 'so far as relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval, as if the application were a planning application' (Paragraph W, para 10b).

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

The proposal comprises part change of use of part of the ground floor from Class E (dentist) to C3 (residential) to comprise 1 x 1 bedroom flat). The proposal is required to be considered against the criteria and conditions contained within Part 3, of Class G. (1) (a)-(d), of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

In addition, in order to qualify for assessment under Class G, all applications submitted under this class from 6th April 2021 must comply with Department for Communities and Local Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards, minimum space standards. The proposed flat would comply with these minimum space standards as illustrated in the accompanying plans and stated in the Prior Approval Compliance Statement.

MA. Development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class E (commercial, business and service) of Schedule 2 to the Use Classes Order to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to that Order.

Complies. The lawful use and last use of the building have been in Class E with a dentist occupying all of the ground floor space.

Development not permitted

MA.1.—(1) Development is not permitted by Class MA—

F2(a).

(b)unless the use of the building fell within one or more of the classes specified in sub-paragraph (2) for a continuous period of at least 2 years prior to the date of the application for prior approval;

Complies. A dentist has been operating from the address for more than two years.

F3(c).

(d)if land covered by, or within the curtilage of, the building—

(i)is or forms part of a site of special scientific interest;

(ii)is or forms part of a listed building or land within its curtilage;

(iii)is or forms part of a scheduled monument or land within its curtilage;

(iv) is or forms part of a safety hazard area; or

(v) is or forms part of a military explosives storage area;

(e) if the building is within—

(i) an area of outstanding natural beauty;

(ii) an area specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 41(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;

(iii) the Broads;

(iv) a National Park; or

(v) a World Heritage Site;

Complies

(f) if the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained; or

(g) before 1 August 2022, if—

(i) the proposed development is of a description falling within Class O of this Part as that Class had effect immediately before 1st August 2021; and

(ii) the development would not have been permitted under Class O immediately before 1st August 2021 by virtue of the operation of a direction under article 4(1) of this Order which has not since been cancelled in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3.

(2) The classes mentioned in sub-paragraph (1)(b) are the following classes of the Use Classes Order—

(a) the following classes of the Schedule as it had effect before 1st September 2020—

(i) Class A1 (shops);

(ii) Class A2 (financial and professional services);

(iii) Class A3 (food and drink);

(iv) Class B1 (business);

(v) Class D1(a) (non-residential institutions – medical or health services);

(vi) Class D1(b) (non-residential institutions – crèche, day nursery or day centre);

(vii) Class D2(e) (assembly and leisure – indoor and outdoor sports), other than use as an indoor swimming pool or skating rink;

(b) on or after 1st September 2020, Class E (commercial, business and service) of Schedule 2.

Complies.

Conditions

MA.2.—(1) Development under Class MA is permitted subject to the following conditions.

(2) Before beginning development under Class MA, 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 impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access;

Complies.

(b) contamination risks in relation to the building;

Complies. No contaminated land nearby.

(c) flooding risks in relation to the building;

Complies. Not within Flood Zone 2 or 3.

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

Complies.

(e) where—

(i) the building is located in a conservation area, and

(ii) the development involves a change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor,

the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;

(f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses;

N/A

(g) the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses; F4...

N/A

(h) where the development involves the loss of services provided by—

(i) a registered nursery, or

(ii) a health centre maintained under section 2 or 3 of the National Health Service Act 2006,

the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost [F5; and

(i) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building]

N/A

(3) An application for prior approval for development under Class MA may not be made before 1 August 2021.

Complies.

(4) The provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to an application under this paragraph [F6as if—

(a)for paragraph (e) of sub-paragraph (2) there were substituted—

“(e)where—

(i)sub-paragraph (6) requires the Environment Agency to be consulted, a site-specific flood risk assessment;

N/A

(ii)sub-paragraph (6A) requires the Health and Safety Executive to be consulted, a statement about the fire safety design principles, concepts and standards that have been applied to the development,”;

Complies.

(b)in the introductory words in sub-paragraph (5), for “and highways impacts of the development” there were substituted “impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access”;

(c)after sub-paragraph (6) there were inserted—

“(6A) Where the application relates to prior approval as to fire safety impacts, on receipt of the application, the local planning authority must consult the Health and Safety Executive.”;

(d)in sub-paragraph (7) for “(5) and (6)” there were substituted “(5), (6) and (6A)”;

(5) Development must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date.

(6) Any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.

MA.3. Development meets the fire risk condition referred to in paragraph MA.2(2)(i) if the development relates to a building which will—

(a)contain two or more dwellinghouses; and

(b)satisfy the height condition in paragraph (3), read with paragraph (7), of article 9A (fire statements) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.]



Complies. Application is only for 1 dwellinghouse.

Conclusion

In accordance with the above, the proposed part change of use of the ground floor from Class E (dentist) to C3 (residential) to comprise 1 x 1 bedroom flat) complies with the requirements of the Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Prior Approval Given.