

PLANNING STATEMENT

The Granary, 1a Patrick Road, Reading, RG4 8DD

Conversion of two Class E offices into two Class C3 residential dwellinghouses

Prior notification application (Part 3, Class MA) for change of use of building from Commercial, Business and Service (Class E) to create 2 x 2-bed self-contained flats (use class C3 - Residential)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This statement accompanies a prior notification application (Part 3, Class MA) for the change of use of a building from Commercial, Business and Service (Class E) to create 2 x 2-bed self-contained flats (use class C3 - Residential) at The Granary, 1a Patrick Road, Reading, RG4 8DD.
- 1.2. This application is made under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Class MA.
- 1.3. The application property is an existing two storey building, situated on the western side of Patrick Road in Caversham.
- 1.4. The property is currently used as Class E office space. The GIA of each office floor is 50m².
- 1.5. No external alterations are proposed to the building as part of this prior notification application.
- 1.6. The building benefits from a contained driveway and access arrangements from Patrick Road. Bins are currently stored on the driveway itself.

2. Planning Analysis

- 2.1. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 permits 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.
- 2.2. Section MA.1 sets out where development is not permitted by Class MA. These are addressed below in relation to this application:

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

Prior to 1st September 2020, the building was in Class A2 use for many years, and has been in Class E since September 2020. The existing landowner and applicant has owned the office building subject to this application since 2014.

1(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;

The land covered by, or within the curtilage of the building does not form part of any of these planning constraints.

1(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;

The building is not located within any of the above areas.

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

The site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy.

1(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

Not applicable.

2.3. Paragraph **(2)** of Section MA.1 sets out the use classes to which sub-paragraph **(1)(b)** refers. The use of the application building falls within sub-paragraph **(2)(b)** in that the building has been in Class E use since 2020.

2.4. Section MA.2 confirms that development under Class MA is permitted subject to the following conditions. 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:

2(a) transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access

The proposal is unlikely to result in any intensification of transport activity at the property, given the existing office is accessed multiple times a day by a number of different staff members. No change is proposed to the existing access arrangements as part of the application. The proposal is therefore unlikely to have any adverse impact on the highway network.

There is ample space on the driveway for two cars, with one allocated space for each flat. Patrick Road has on-street parking available for visitors. Given the sustainability of the

location close to bus routes, Reading train station and the centre of Caversham, this is considered a more than suitable car parking arrangement. The proposed cycle parking provision is shown on the plans.

2(b) *contamination risks in relation to the building*

The change of use from office to residential would not result in any adverse land contamination risks.

2(c) *flooding risks in relation to the building*

The site is shown by the Flood Map for Planning to fall within Flood Zones 2 and 3a. Accordingly, a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted alongside the application.

The existing finished floor levels ensure that the building is above both the 1-in-100 year design event and the 1-in-1000 year flood levels. The finished floor level of the ground floor is therefore at Flood Zone 1 level. The existing ground floor level of 38.40m AOD provides 240mm of freeboard above the design event flood level (1 in 100 year +31%) of 38.16m AOD.

The driveway and footpath outside the site will be subject to flooding in a future 1-in-100 year design event. In regards to safe access and egress, the FRA concludes that even in the peak of a 1-in-100 year event + 31%, the hazards would not present a significant risk to non-disabled adults and certainly would not preclude access by emergency services should it be required. Nevertheless, the FRA recommends that a Flood Emergency Management Plan is produced with a default 'stay put' policy to ensure the occupants are safe from flooding over the development's lifetime.

The site is not considered to be at significant risk from any other source of flooding.

The FRA concludes that the proposed change of use from offices to residential is considered to be policy compliant with regards to flood risk. The development and its users will be safe from flooding for the development's lifetime and the proposals would not result in an increase in flood risk elsewhere.

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

The property is located in an established residential area and there are no commercial premises nearby that create impacts of noise on the intended occupiers of the development.

2(e) *the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area*

The application is not located within a conservation area.

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

Both of the living rooms and all of the bedrooms within the proposed residential dwellings are served by windows providing ample natural light. To the first floor, the kitchen is served by a roof light and the bathroom by an obscure glazed window.

To the ground floor, the kitchen benefits from natural light through the triple window serving the proposed living room, while the shower room benefits from a sun tunnel in the ceiling. All habitable rooms therefore have provision of adequate natural light.

2(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*

Not applicable, the application site is situated in an existing residential area.

2(h) *where the development involves the loss of services provided by (i) a registered nursery, or (ii) a health centre... the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost*

Not applicable, the application does not involve the loss of services provided by a registered nursery or a health centre.

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

The building is not more than 7m or 18 storeys high, therefore it does not satisfy the height condition as set out in paragraph (3), read with paragraph (7), of article 9A (fire statements) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

- 2.5. Section 3, paragraph 9(A) sets out that Schedule 2 does not grant permission for, or authorise any development of, any new dwellinghouse—

(a) *where the gross internal floor area is less than 37 square metres in size;*

Both of the proposed dwellinghouses are more than 37 square metres

(b) *that does not comply with the nationally described space standard issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 27th March 2015.*

Both of the dwellinghouses comply with the nationally described space standards. Dimensions for the bedrooms and storage areas are provided on the floor plans. There are also no head height limitations within either of the proposed dwellings.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. The statement has set out that the prior approval application to convert the office building at The Granary, 1a Patrick Road, complies with both Section MA.1 and MA.2, as well as Section 3, paragraph 9(A) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
- 3.2. The proposed development should therefore be permitted development as it accords with the requirements and conditions, as set out in the legislation.