

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

13th July 2016

Planning Application 2016/141/COU

Change of use of the First and Second Floors from offices (A2) to Assembly and Leisure (D2) to facilitate escape games

8 - 10 Unicorn Hill, Town Centre, Redditch, B97 4QR.

**Applicant: Mr Craig Dixon
Expiry Date: 28th July 2016
Ward: ABBEY**

(Site Plan attached)

The author of this report is David Kelly, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881345 Email: d.kelly@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

The application site relates to the first and second floors Nos. 8 -10, located on the north side of Unicorn Hill within the Town Centre Conservation Area. The ground floor is occupied by Coral Bookmakers. The property adjoins The Fisherman's Catch (to the west) and TSB Bank to the east.

Proposal Description

Permission is sought to change the use of the first and second floors of this property from an office use to a Leisure and Assembly (Class D2) use. The application intends to use the floors for escape games which typically involve customers attempting to solve puzzles to collect codes and keys. If permission were to be granted, unless there were any specific reasons for applying a restriction, the consent would allow other assembly and leisure uses to occupy the premises without first having to apply for planning permission.

Relevant Policies:

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3:

BBE13 Qualities of Good Design
ETCR01 Vitality and Viability of the Town Centre

Emerging Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4

Policy 31: Regeneration for Town Centre

Others:

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

Consultations

Community Safety Officer

No objection.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

13th July 2016

Conservation Advisor

No objection.

Highway Network Control

No objection.

Town Centre Co-ordinator

No objection.

Public Consultation Response

No comments received.

Assessment of Proposal

The proposal relates to a change of use from offices (B1 Use) to assembly and leisure (D2 Use) on the first and second floors to facilitate live escape games. There are no alterations proposed to the internal arrangement of the rooms and no external changes proposed. The access to the premises would be via a separate door onto Unicorn Hill adjoining the recruitment consultants. The applicant has provided supporting information to explain how the escape games would work, the rooms would contain clocks, shelves, desks and other furniture and problems are solved using a series of clues.

The site is currently vacant and is located within the Redditch Town Centre designated by Policy E(TCR).1 of Adopted Local Plan No.3 and Policy 31 of Emerging Local Plan No.4. It is considered that local policies are compatible with the NPPF, which promotes the vitality and viability of town centres. The views of the Town Centre Coordinator are noted and therefore the principle of the change of use at this location is considered acceptable, having regard to the planning policy framework. There are no external changes proposed and therefore there would be no impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

Other issues

No objections have been raised from any consultee and the site is in a sustainable location close to the bus and train station and town centre facilities.

RECOMMENDATION:

that having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

13th July 2016

Conditions

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason:- In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans:

Site Location Plan@1:1250,
Proposed First and Second Flooplans
Q3 of application form and supporting information

Reason: To accurately define the permission for the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance in order to safeguard the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy B(BE).13 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.

Informatives

- 1) The Local Planning Authority have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner to seek solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with this planning application through pre-application advice and discussion.

Procedural matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the application relates to a change of use to Assembly and Leisure (D2) and as such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.