

PLANNING COMMITTEE

13th July 2011

PLANNING APPLICATION 2011/126/COU

CHANGE OF USE AT GROUND FLOOR FROM OFFICES TO RESTAURANT AND HOT FOOD TAKE-AWAY; CHANGE OF USE AT FIRST FLOOR FROM OFFICES TO 2 NO. FLATS AND RESTAURANT; MINOR EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO BUILDING

20 UNICORN HILL, REDDITCH

APPLICANT: DR A BANDALLI

EXPIRY DATE: 14TH JULY 2011

WARD: CENTRAL

The author of this report is Steven Edden, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on extension 3206 (e-mail: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

Site Description

This large brick and tile building is located near to the junction of Bates Hill and Unicorn Hill, within the Town Centre. Behind, and to the south-west of the building lies the Royal Enfield bar / restaurant. Due to a difference in ground levels, the building is two storey to its south facing elevation, and three storey to its north facing (Bates Hill) elevation. To avoid confusion, the 'ground and first floor' referred to in this report are those to the south facing (Unicorn Hill) elevation.

Proposal Description

Permission is sought to change the use of the ground floor from offices to a restaurant and hot food take-away and to change the use of a first floor office space to be used firstly as an extension to the restaurant immediately below it, and to use the remaining first floor space to create 2 no. one bed flats. Minor alterations to the south facing ground floor elevation are proposed: the proposed partial removal of brickwork to create a larger glazed area for the restaurant use, together with the creation of a new doorway to serve the proposed hot food take-away.

Relevant Key Policies:

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

www.communities.gov.uk

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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National Planning Policy

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS4	Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
PPG24	Noise

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

CS.7	The Sustainable Location of Development
E(TCR).1	Vitality and Viability of the Town Centre
E(TCR).6	North West Quadrant
E(TCR).12	Class A3, A4 and A5 uses
C(T).12	Parking Standards (Appendix H)
S.1	Designing out crime

SPD	Designing for Community Safety
SPG	Encouraging Good Design

Relevant Site Planning History

1997/104/FUL	Alterations to form two lock up shops and five flats APPROVED: 19th May 1997
2001/568/FUL	Renewal of PA 1997/104/FUL - Alterations to form two lock up shops and five flats APPROVED: 29th May 2002
2005/477/COU	Change of use to A3 and A5 use APPROVED: 12th December 2005
2007/168/FUL	Renewal of PA 2001/568/FUL - Alterations to form two lock up shops and five flats APPROVED: 10th August 2007

Public Consultation responses

Responses in favour

None received

Responses against

None received

Consultee Responses

County Highway Network Control

Comments as follows:

Due to the sustainable location of this development, it is considered that the lack of allocated parking facilities is of no concern as there are considerable parking facilities available within a reasonable walking distance. Therefore no objections are raised in this case.

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health)

Comments awaited

Police Crime Risk Manager

Comments awaited

Severn Trent Water

Comments awaited

Town Centre Co-ordinator

No objection

Procedural matters

All applications for Class A3 (restaurant) and A5 (hot food take-away) use are reported to Planning Committee for determination.

Assessment of Proposal

Principle of Change of Use

National Policy Guidance encourages growth of the evening and night time economy in appropriate areas. The Local Plan policies referred to above also promote Redditch Town Centre as a suitable location for continued commercial development. The site lies within the North West Quadrant Area, which is also within the Town Centre boundary. Within such areas, appropriate mixed use development including retail, leisure and residential uses are promoted since such uses are considered to make a positive contribution to the day time and evening economy. This proposal would not prejudice the possible future comprehensive development of the North West Quadrant area.

Policy CS.7 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 states that uses that attract a lot of people will be directed to the Town Centre. Since the site in question is within the Town Centre, the proposed A3 / A5 use is considered to be in compliance with the above policy and would safeguard / enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre as required under Policy E(TCR).1.

Since the ground and first floor office space is presently vacant, your officers consider that bringing the floor back into beneficial use should be encouraged. The under use of upper floors in commercial buildings such as these can cause a number of problems. Deterioration of the fabric of the building can remain undetected until the floors become unusable. Such decay is detrimental to the overall appearance of the area, and vacant floors also represent a waste of potential resources. Enabling this valuable, vacant town centre space to be brought back into beneficial use would in the consideration of your officers, promote the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.

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Access and parking

No objections have been received from Highway Network Control. Given the Town Centre location, the uses proposed would be highly sustainable. The site is within walking distance of the train and bus station and close to a number of public car parks and bus stops; furthermore there is on-street parking available opposite the site on Bates Hill, which is not a particularly busy road.

Impact upon residential amenity

Policy E(TCR).12 sets out that developments for A3/A5 use in the Town Centre should meet criteria including not having an adverse impact on neighbouring properties by reason of noise, smell and litter. Proposed hours of opening for both the A3 and A5 use would be from 7:00 am until midnight, seven days a week. Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health) have not commented on the application to date. Any comments received will be reported in the Update report. Officers are however satisfied that no harm to amenity caused by noise and smells would result.

External alterations

No objections are raised to this part of the proposal since the changes would not harm the character and appearance of the building or the street-scene.

Other matters

Your officers consider that such applications raise security / anti-social behaviour issues, and as such the Police Crime Risk Manager has been consulted on the application. At the time of writing, no comments have been received. Any comments received will be reported in the Update report.

Conclusion

Having regard to pertinent policies of the development plan, there are considered to be no justifiable reasons to warrant refusal of this application on amenity or any other grounds. The proposal would bring back into re-use a currently vacant unit which would add to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.

Recommendation

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions and informatives as summarised below:-

1. Development to commence within 3 years
2. The proposed A3 and A5 uses shall only be in use between the hours of 7:00 am to midnight daily
3. Odour extraction details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority
4. Approved plans defined

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Informatives

1. Permission does not include the approval of any signage / adverts.
2. Reason for approval: