

10 December 2021

Delivered by email

Planning Development
Havant Borough Council
Public Service Plaza
Civic Centre Road
Havant, Hampshire
PO9 2AX

Dear Sir / Madam

DOBBIES GARDEN CENTRE, HAVANT – CHANGE OF USE TO VETERINARY PRACTICE

On behalf of CVS UK Ltd, I am pleased to submit a full planning application for the change of use of part of the existing Dobbies Garden Centre, Havant to a Veterinary Practice.

The description of development is as follows:

“Change of use to Veterinary Practice and external alterations”.

This application was submitted via the Planning Portal on 10 December 2021 (PP-10407214) and in addition to this covering letter comprises the following documents:

- Planning Application Form;
- Site Location Plan (ref. 07002, Rev P02);
- Site Plan (ref. 07001, Rev P02);
- Existing General Arrangement Plan (ref. 07003, Rev P01); and,
- Proposed General Arrangement Plan (ref. 07004, Rev P01).

The requisite application fee of £462 (on the basis the application constitutes other material change of use of a building) was paid via the Planning Portal.

Site Context

The application site comprises part of the ground floor within the existing Dobbies Garden Centre, Havant. It is situated within the south west portion of the building and the Gross Internal Area [GIA] extends to 289sqm. There is a service yard to the west of the site. The total site area, including this external area extends to 358sqm. The floorspace is currently occupied by Pets Corner. It is understood the last use of this part of the garden centre was

40 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4QP

T 0117 989 7000 turley.co.uk

for retail purposes, as part of the wider Garden Centre operation. The site's location is shown on the accompanying Location Plan (ref. 07002, Rev P01).

The main entrance to the existing Garden Centre is on the northern elevation. There is an extensive area of existing car parking to the north of the Garden Centre building. Vehicular and pedestrian and service access to the site is off Bartons Road, to the north. Public transport is available with bus services operating along Bartons Road, with the nearest bus stops located approximately 0.4km north west of the site.

The building is unlisted and is not located in a Conservation Area. There is a Grade II listed building within the Northern part of the Garden Centre site (known as Barn, ref. 1340184). The site is within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding.

Planning History

The existing Garden Centre was granted planning permission in October 1999 (ref. 98/59333/003). There have been a number of subsequent applications to vary permission 98/59333/003. An application for the relocation of restaurant/coffee shop into main building and use of barn for retail sales in connection with the garden centre use was permitted in June 2000 (ref. 00/59333/008). An application for the alteration of the external storage/display of goods area, retrospective amendments to elevations, parking, landscaping and finished levels throughout the site was granted in July 2000 (ref. 99/59333/005). From reviewing the Council's online planning register, there is no other relevant planning history on the site.

Development Proposals

The proposal consists of a change of use of floorspace within the existing Dobbies Garden Centre to a Veterinary Practice. CVS Group owns and operates over 500 veterinary surgeries throughout the UK, Netherlands and Republic of Ireland. The Veterinary Practice would typically operate Monday – Sunday between 8.30am and 7pm. The Practice would also provide 24hour emergency only access with Vets on call.

The proposed internal works to facilitate the proposed use are shown on the proposed General Arrangement Plan (ref. 07004, Rev P01). There will be a client entrance from inside the existing Garden Centre. A staff entrance will be located along the western elevation. It is also intended that a client emergency out of hours access be provided along the western elevation.

It is intended that the proposed practice will offer a range of facilities including:

- 3 consulting rooms;
- 1 Central Surgical room;
- 1 Pharmacy;
- 1 Laboratory;
- 1 X-Ray room;
- 1 Dog Ward;
- 1 Dental Suite;
- 1 Theatre; and,
- 1 Feline Ward.

A range of supporting facilities are also proposed, including:

- Staff Canteen/Lockers;
- A Changing Room;
- An Admin Office;
- 2 Staff Toilets; and,
- 1 Customer Toilet.

As part of the proposals, the existing service yard to the west of the building will provide an area for bin storage, and external plant and oxygen storage.

No specific allocated car parking is provided as part of the application proposals, but customers and other visitors will have access to the extensive area of car parking that currently exists at the front of the building and serves the Garden Centre, the wider demise of the Garden Centre site is shown by a blue line on the submitted Site Location Plan. Deliveries and servicing will predominantly be small scale occur via the main reception desk / front entrance of the building and couriers will make use of the parking available in the main car park.

Once fully operational, the Veterinary Practice will support a number of full and part time jobs, as well as requiring various local labour inputs during the fit-out works and construction process.

Planning Policy Context

In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this application is considered against the Development Plan for the area. For Havant Council, this includes the Local Plan (Core Strategy) (March 2011) and the Local Plan (Allocations) (July 2014). The adopted Local Plan allocates the wider Garden Centre site for housing development via Policy UE43. Policy UE43 sets out the site-specific development requirements if the site is brought forward for housing.

The site also lies within the defined urban area. As such, Core Strategy Policy CS 17 is also relevant which states:

“Development will be permitted that makes the most effective use of land in the borough by granting planning permission that:

- 1. Concentrates new housing, employment, retail, leisure and other development within the five urban areas of Havant, Leigh Park, Waterlooville, Emsworth and Hayling Island, as shown on the Proposals Map.*
- 2. Prioritises development on previously developed land, including redundant, derelict or underused land and buildings within the urban area.*
- 3. Broadly distributes the new housing and employment development in the five areas of the borough”.*

The Framework makes clear that the Government is committed to building a strong and competitive economy in order to create jobs and prosperity. This is reflected in both the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the overarching objects which are set out in paragraph 11 and paragraph 8 of the Framework respectively.

Main Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

The site lies within an allocated area for housing within the Local Plan. Policy UE43 sets out the site-specific development requirements if the site is brought forward for housing. We have not been made aware of any aspiration to redevelopment the site for housing in accordance with this existing policy allocation.

The site also lies within the defined urban area. The proposed use will be employment generating and align with the wider commercial use of the site. The proposals will not significantly affect the overall predominance of commercial and retail uses within this area. The proposed development will not threaten the economic, social or environmental condition of the area; indeed the change of use application seeks an alternate use of part of the Garden Centre premises, which is appropriate and which will complement other nearby uses in the vicinity. The proposed minor external alterations to allow additional entrances on the western elevation will be in-keeping with the finishes of the existing Garden Centre.

National planning policy confirms that investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations and planning policies should also be flexible enough to accommodate needs. The development will deliver significant benefits that direct the grant of planning permission in accordance with the Framework and its presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Conclusions

The proposals relate to a type and form of development appropriate to the site's locality and as such accords with relevant policies within the Local Plan. The submission demonstrates that the development proposals would deliver economic and social benefits. Indeed, it will facilitate employment within the site. It will also provide social benefits, in that additional veterinary facilities will be available in the local area.

On this basis, the proposals are considered to be compliant with the Development Plan, as required by Paragraph 38(6) of the 2004 Act and the Framework. This indicates that planning permission should be granted without delay. I trust you have all the information necessary to register the applications, however if any issues arise please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

F.LENNON

Frances Lennon
Planner

frances.lennon@turley.co.uk