

Planning Department
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge St
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 2LU

Our ref: 23-E126-002
App ref: 230898

22nd January 2024

Dear Reading Borough Council Planning Department,

4 CROWN PLACE, READING, RG1 5AE

I write to you as a BREEAM Assessor (assessor number: BAUD0649) & Accredited Professional (certification number: BREEAMAP0356) and sustainability professional with over 25 years' experience. I have been asked to look at the conditions for the following proposal in regards to BREEAM certification; with consideration of the scale of development and potential implications for financial viability.

a. Background

Planning permission has been applied for the following proposal on the 27/06/2023:

Creation of new external structure to provide communal community space.

It is understood that this new amenity hub building will be used by students in the adjacent Kendrick Hall student accommodation. Existing buildings forming part of the student complex are configured to create a series of landscaped courtyards, with the site located within one of these courtyards at the centre of the complex.

Feedback has been received from the council officers regarding assessment against BREEAM. It is acknowledged that the local planning policy (Policy CC2 - Sustainable Design and Construction) requires a 'Very Good' rating under the assessment methodology.

Whilst policy requirements are acknowledged, given the size of the proposed hub, this requirement is not considered viable for such a small scheme of circa 160m². This letter aims to outline the reasoning behind this conclusion.

b. BREEAM Viability Review

Typically, planning policies that request BREEAM assessment apply to buildings with a minimum size of 1,000m²; and whilst it is recognised that planning policy in Reading Borough does not include this limit, it is a relevant factor that as buildings become smaller, technical constraints and financial viability considerations become more significant.

Certification to BREEAM New Construction (as with other BREEAM schemes) requires the employment of various advisors that would not otherwise be required; simply for the purpose of

generating the necessary evidence. A BREEAM Assessor would also need to be employed and the BRE audit costs covered. All of which would add a level of additional cost and management to the construction, which in this case, would be disproportionate to the scale of development. For a development of this scale, an individual amenity hub, BREEAM is not considered financially viable.

I have provided a summary of the expected costs for the scheme associated with a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good', in line planning policy.

Issue	Credit	Predicted Cost Uplift
Management		
Man 02	Life cycle cost and service life planning	£3,000
Man 03	Responsible construction practices	£3,000
Man 04	Commissioning and handover	£7,000
Man 05	Aftercare	£5,000
Health and Wellbeing		
Hea 01	Visual comfort	£10,000
Hea 02	Indoor air quality	£0
Hea 06	Security	£2,000
Hea 07	Safe and healthy surroundings	£1,000
Energy		
Ene 01	Reduction of energy use and carbon emissions	£6,000
Ene 02	Energy monitoring	£3,000
Ene 03	External lighting	£3,000
Ene 04	Low carbon design	£1,500
Transport		
Tra 01	Transport assessment and travel plan	£2,500
Tra 02	Sustainable transport measures	£5,000
Water		
Wat 01	Water consumption	£0
Wat 02	Water monitoring	£5,000
Wat 03	Water leak detection	£10,000
Wat 04	Water efficient equipment	£1,000
Materials		
Mat 01	Environmental impact from construction products	£5,000
Mat 02	Environmental impacts from construction	£0
Mat 03	Responsible sourcing of construction products	£0
Mat 05	Designing for durability and resilience	£1,000
Waste		
Wst 01	Construction waste management	£0
Wst 03	Operational Waste	£2,000
Wst 05	Adaptation to climate change	£1,500
Wst 06	Design for disassembly and adaptability	£2,000
Land Use and Ecology		
Le 01	Site selection	£1,500
Le 02	Ecological risks and opportunities	£2,000
Le 03	Managing impacts on ecology	£0
Le 04	Ecological change and enhancement	£0
Le 05	Long term ecological management and maintenance	£1,000
Pollution		
Pol 01	Impact of refrigerants	£0
Pol 02	Local air quality	£0
Pol 03	Flood and surface water management	£4,000

Pol 04	Reduction of night time light pollution	£5,000
Pol 05	Reduction of noise pollution	£1,500
Total:		£95,500

c. Conclusions

The above table shows the predicted costs for carrying out BREAAAM credit requirements would be £95,500. In addition to this, it is mandatory to involve a qualified BREEAM Assessor at an expected cost of £18,000 and BRE fees would likely come to over £2,200. All this considered, the total cost to achieve a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' for the scheme would amount to circa £115,700. Furthermore, it is not possible achieve some early action credits at this stage of the project, further increasing costs.

The costs associated with the BREEAM assessment are considered disproportionate in the context of the scale of the development (i.e. relative to the total construction cost), and therefore potentially making the project unviable.

I trust the above is sufficiently informative for your purposes.

Yours faithfully



Pete Jeavons
DIRECTOR