

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Whitley

App Ref: 221866/FUL

Address: 400 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UH

Proposals: External works to improve security of the existing office building (Use Class E(g)), including alterations to external doors and landscaping works.

Case Officer: Gary Miles

Applicant: C/O Agent

Date received (valid from): 13 December 2022 **Target Decision date:** 7 February 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a commercial office unit, located at 400 Brook Drive within the Green Park development. The adjacent units are of similar size, scale and character. The property is not listed nor in a conservation area. It is located in Flood Zone 2.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

External works to improve security of the existing office building (Use Class E(g)), including alterations to external doors and landscaping works consisting of the following:

- PAS 68 bollards and planters to the 2 main elevations, front and partly to the car park side
- 1mtr high fence to encircle the rest of the building with appropriate gates for means of escape which have been coordinated with the BCO
- 3mtr high fence to the base of the spiral escape stairs with a higher security rating and appropriate escape door to the base
- To the river elevation there are proposals to extend the existing Berms with additional planting to match the existing
- Bollards around the newly installed substation (installed under permitted development rights by the statutory undertaker)
- Additional bollards and Armco along the line of the car park, and bollards adjacent to the up car park ramp
- Raising wedge across the road to restrict access to the side of the building
- To the rear there is a proposal for a 1.8mtr high fence to enclose the courtyard, this is for privacy and again will have appropriate fire exit doors
- A new door to be installed into the staircase adjacent to the passenger lifts and this staircase is being uprated to be a means of escape. Details approved through the BCO
- 2 doors on the perimeter façade (metal) to be enlarged by approximately 200mm, doors to be painted to match the existing new doors provided to the shower enclosure provided by the landlord.

There are no physical changes and no changes to the floorspace. The fit out will compromise open plan seating, meeting rooms, kitchenettes on each floor with a café on the ground floor. There will be some enhanced security provisions within the building as well as externally.

Plans considered

Drawing no: 5019746 - rev B - Site Location Plan - dated 13/10/22

Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Existing Site Plan - dated 07/10/22

Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Proposed Site Plan - dated 07/10/22
Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Block Plan - dated 13/10/22
Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Existing Front & LHS Elevation - dated 07/10/22
Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Existing Rear & RHS Elevation - dated 07/10/22
Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Proposed Front & LHS Elevation - dated 07/10/22
Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Proposed Rear & RHS Elevation - dated 07/10/22
Drawing no: 5019746 - rev A - Proposed Bicycle Layout - dated 13/10/22
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 13th December 2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application No. 96/091607/FUL dated November 2009

Change of use and refurbishment of existing cabins from D1 to B1/ B8 use, erection of three new containers (B1/B8) engineering works, fuel tank, car parking and associated works for temporary period of six years.

Application No. 210594 dated November 2021

Staircase and louvre panel at 400 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UU

Application No. 221342 dated October 2022

Pre Application Advice for security and access improvements to existing office building.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Veritas Software Ltd, 350 Brook Drive, Green Park, Reading, RG2 6UH
Lockheed Martin, 350 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UU
450 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UU

No letters of representation have been received.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

EN18 Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle of development
- b) Design and impact on the character of the area
- c) Natural Environment
- d) Flood Risk

a) Principle of development

The principle of security and access improvements are generally considered acceptable based on the supplied documents as part of this application. The proposals are considered acceptable regarding design, scale, and not causing adverse impact to neighbouring properties.

b) Design and impact on the character of the area

Policy CC7 requires that all development be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. From the documents supplied it is not expected that the proposal will cause an adverse effect to the character and appearance of the area of Reading.

c) Natural Environment

Policy EN14 states that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance and vegetation cover will be extended. The quality of waterside vegetation will be maintained or enhanced.

The proposal intends to keep the existing berms and construct two additional berms with planting on top made up of a number of different plants - the landscaping changes will provide additional security benefits as well as improving the aesthetic of the building. From the documents supplied, the proposal is not expected to have a detrimental effect on trees, hedges or woodlands. Trees, hedges and woodland must be properly protected throughout the construction of the development.

A Lighting Assessment has been provided as part of this application and confirms existing lighting will remain as currently installed. The proposal includes additional lighting fixtures above doors will be motion activated. The proposed fixtures will be positioned 3.9m high and designed to avoid light spill to wildlife habitat within or the surrounding the site.

Fencing where possible (for security reasons) has been designed to allow wildlife to pass underneath.

The proposal complies with policies CC7, EN12 and EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

d) Flood Risk

The site is within Flood Zone 2. The proposed works do not increase the building footprint so there will be no changes to the flood risk to the building arising from new floorspace. The proposal therefore complies with policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

TL1

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