

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands

App Ref: 230321

Address: Royal Berkshire Hospital, London Road, Reading, RG1 5AN

Proposals: Construction of a new clinical block designed for the Urology Service.

Case Officer: Mr David Brett

Applicant: Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

Date received: 13/03/2023

Valid from: 23/03/2023

Target Decision date: 07/07/2023, extension of time on decision agreed with agent from 18/05/2023

1. INTRODUCTION

The Royal Berkshire Hospital is situated on London Road, Redlands Road and Craven Road. The relevant part of the site (as per the red line boundary) is to the south of the hospital site, close to Addington Road.

The surrounding area mainly comprises buildings facilitating the hospital and some residential properties. The Museum of English Rural Life sits on the western side of Redlands Road, which is a Listed Building situated within the Kendrick Road Conservation Area. To clarify, the application site is outside of a conservation area and does not include any listed buildings.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed development seeks the demolition of existing temporary building and erection of new two storey modular building with first floor link to main hospital block. Associated soft landscaping is also proposed.

Plans considered:

~~Location and Block Plan - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-100-P01 RBH ICS ER~~

- Existing SB Elevations - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-101.P01 RBH ICS ER
- Existing Site Plan - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-102.P01 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed GF - 7073-GBS-XX-GF-DR-A-003-P02 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed FF - 7073-GBS-XX-01-DR-A-004-P02 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed Elevations 1 - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-005-P01 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed Elevations 2 - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-006-P01 RBH ICS ER

~~Proposed Site Plan - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-007-P02 RBH ICS ER~~

- Proposed Link Bridge - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-008-P02 RBH ICS ER
- Design & Access Statement
- ERF Project - Plant Noise Assessment prepared by Hepworth Acoustics - P23-029-R01v1
- Arboricultural Report prepared by Sylva Consultancy - 22215

Received on 13/03/2023

- Location and Block Plan - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-100-P02 RBH ICS ER

Received on 23/03/2023

- Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust ERF - Ventilation Statement - P019694
- Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust ERF - Lighting Statement - P019694
- Royal Berkshire Hospital ICS Elective Recovery Building RIBA Stage 2 MEP Services Report - P.019694-RED-XX-XX-RP-Z-0001
- Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust Elective Recovery Facility - Sustainability and Energy Statement - P.019614 Sustainability Statement R001

- Royal Berkshire NHS Trust Our Green Plan 2022 to 2025
- Flood Risk Assessment Incorporating Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy prepared by Stantec - 330510926/2001 Rev 001

Received on 11/04/2023

~~Landscaping - 00122-GBS-99-02-DR-A-802~~

- Proposed Site Plan - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-007-P03

Received on 06/06/2023

- Landscaping - 00122-GBS-99-02-DR-A-802-P01

Received on 21/06/2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Various planning applications at Royal Berkshire Hospital, none of which are particularly relevant to this application.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Reading Borough Council, Transport - Response received on 13/04/2023

- In principle there are no Transport objections to this application, no parking is being lost as a result if the proposed works, the area is heavily restricted with extensive parking restrictions around the site preventing unauthorised parking.

Reading Borough Council, Environmental Protection - Response received on 21/04/2023

- Noise arising from development
- Construction and Demolition phase

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Response received on 26/05/2023

- This location at the Hospital has been subject to a number of applications in the past, the last one I commented on being in 2014 (141659) - application was approved but not implemented. It is evident from the Tree Survey submitted at that time and from the current situation that felling of trees has taken place, possibly pre-emptively prior to submission, including the felling of one of the most significant trees on the site; that being a Redwood.
- Whilst the felling that would have been allowed, had 141659 been implemented, includes these trees categorised as A and B category in 2014, i.e. those that should pose a constraint to development, since that approval (and prior to their felling), RBC have adopted a New Local Plan. A new Tree Strategy was also adopted in 2021 which may have resulted in a different 'on balance' view of proposals involving the removal of these trees.
- It is obviously disappointing if trees have been felled for no sound arboricultural reasons, particularly given their high amenity value and the acknowledgement of the benefits of greenery for patients (and staff), in Section 6 of the DAS and in the Trust's Green Plan.
- The Arb report includes 4 trees; one being an off-site street tree (Hornbeam) in Craven Road not impacted by the proposals. The report confirms that none of the remaining trees need to be removed to allow for the proposal and that this is impingement into the RPA of T2 Sycamore for a path, to be dealt with by use of a cellular confinement system (note the location of a path on the AIA plan is different to that on the Proposed Site plan). It also confirms that tree protection measures will be required - fencing and ground protection. The route of services is not known by the author, hence these details of these will need to be secured to avoid no conflict with retained trees, or new trees.

- The arboricultural impact of the proposal appears acceptable, however an Arb Method Statement will need to be secured via condition, if not provided prior to a decision.
- Some loose principles for the landscaping are provided between the DAS, Proposed Site plan and Green Plan but no landscape principles plan demonstrating what will be included within the proposals. I had expected this at a minimum, with details being able to be secured via condition. This should be requested.
- In conclusion, it is likely that the application could be supported in tree and landscape terms, although further landscape principles are required prior to a decision. If these are not to be requested, a landscaping condition will be required, along with an Arboricultural Method Statement condition.

A site notice was erected on Thursday 30th March 2023, enabling consultation for a period of 21 days and which expired on Thursday 20th April 2023.

No consultation responses have been received for this application.

5. 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.

6. 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. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

The '*National Planning Policy framework*' ('NPPF') 2021 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019) according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given).

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

EN1 Protection and enhancement of the historic environment

EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland

TR3 Traffic, Access and Highway-Related Matters

ER3 Royal Berkshire Hospital

Other guidance

Kendrick Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 Development at Royal Berkshire Hospital

In accordance with policy ER3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, development will be supported where it complies with the following criteria:

- *Where development would result in an increase in staff or visitors, it should be accompanied by measures which ensure that development does not have an adverse effect on the functioning of the highway, either as a result of increased use or by resulting in additional on-street parking in surrounding streets;*

As per the comments received from Transport, the proposed development does not include alterations to existing vehicular or pedestrian access routes or parking arrangement. Therefore, the proposed development is considered to accord with this criteria.

- *Development will conserve the listed main block on London Road and 17 Craven Road, ensuring that their use is consistent with its conservation;*

The proposed development affects a modern, non-listed part of Royal Berkshire Hospital and will in no discernible way affect the listed main block that fronts London Road. The proposed external alterations are not considered to harm the reasons for listing of 17 Craven Road due to the location of the proposed development, which is obscured by modern buildings within the hospital site.

- *Development would not result in adverse effects on the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas; and*

The proposed development is not considered to adversely affect the setting of listed buildings in the surrounding area or nearby Alexandra Road, Eldon Square and Kendrick Road Conservation Areas. The proposed development is located centrally within the site, towards the south near Addington Road. The development does not look out of place amongst the backdrop of the existing large modern buildings at Royal Berkshire Hospital. The proposed development is also considered not to harm the setting of the nearby Listed Building at The Museum of English Rural Life.

- *There will be no significant detrimental impact on neighbouring residential properties.*

The proposed development is not considered to detrimentally impact the living conditions to residents in the surrounding area. The proposed works are considered appropriate in terms of size, scale and location. The immediate surrounding area to residents along Addington Road, Craven Road and Redlands Road, which is a mix of hospital use, education use, and residential. It is considered unlikely that harm would be caused to the nearby residents.

7.2 Design and Access

The existing modular building within the site is considered dated and of very little architectural merit. The existing building is not considered in any way integrate to the character and appearance of the existing site and surrounding area, in a positive sense. The proposed removal of the existing building is considered acceptable in design terms.

The benefits of the proposed development include providing additional and updated facilities to the hospital, which weighs heavily in favour of the development. A number of changes are also proposed around the building to make it accessible, including the addition of a walkway to the first floor of the proposed development from the existing maternity block.

The proposed replacement building would be larger in size, scale and footprint to the existing building, however, the level of on-site vehicle parking is to be retained. In terms of materials, cladding and render is proposed which would appear at odds with the existing buildings within the site. Despite this, the existing buildings to the south of the Royal Berkshire Hospital appear to be tired, dated and not of any visual merit. The proposed development would appear different within the site by virtue of its age and materials but is not considered to be a harmful addition. In the context of the purpose that the proposed development serves, the proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of size, scale and appearance and does not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development also does not harm the setting of the nearby Kendrick Road Conservation Area to the west of the proposal site.

Overall, the proposed development is considered in accordance with policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. In accordance with CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019), the applicant has committed to achieving a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'. An interim certificate and a final certificate confirming that the development has achieved a 'Very Good' rating will be secured via condition to any approval of this application.

7.3 Natural Environment

Prior to the submission of this planning application, substantial clearing of the site took place which involved the removal of several large, mature trees within the site between the existing building (to be demolished) and the maternity block at Royal Berkshire Hospital. This disappointment was expressed to the applicant, with the applicant encouraged to provide landscaping principles that would compensate for the loss of these mature trees. An indicative soft landscaping plan has been provided, however, final details concerning species and ongoing maintenance have not been provided. Therefore, the final details for soft landscaping will be secured via condition to any approval of this application, along with details of ongoing maintenance.

Due to the clearing that has already taken place within the site, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment was carried out following the clearing. As a result the assessment of course concluded that the development would not be harmful to nearby trees. Nevertheless, there are still trees within the site that will be affected by the development. Therefore, an Arboricultural Method Statement will need to be submitted for consideration to the LPA via a planning condition to any approval of this application.

In summary, it is very disappointing that substantial clearing of mature trees has already taken place within the site. In the interest of moving forward, however, it is considered reasonable to secure the details of soft landscaping that would suitably compensate for the loss of trees within the site. The applicant has agreed to such conditions concerning landscaping and an Arboricultural Method Statement. The development is therefore considered in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

7.4 Transport

Reading Borough Council Transport have been consulted on this application to determine if there are any highway concerns for this application. As per the response from Transport Development Control, there are no transport objections to the application. The Proposed Site Plan has been amended to indicate that there will be covered cycle storage within the site. The proposed

development is considered acceptable in accordance with policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

7.5 Safeguarding Amenity

Concerns have been raised by the Environmental Protection Team regarding noise generating equipment. Of course, with a building designed for this purpose there will inevitably be noise generating equipment and planting proposed. The details of which are to be secured via condition to any approval of this application.

Overall, the development is considered typical of the Royal Berkshire Hospital site and would not give rise to harmful levels of noise and disturbance to neighbouring residents. The development is therefore considered in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed and the proposed works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and planning permission can be granted.

9. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

10. CONDITIONS

TL1: Time Limit (Standard)

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

AP1: Approved Plans

The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- Proposed GF - 7073-GBS-XX-GF-DR-A-003-P02 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed FF - 7073-GBS-XX-01-DR-A-004-P02 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed Elevations 1 - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-005-P01 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed Elevations 2 - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-006-P01 RBH ICS ER
- Proposed Link Bridge - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-008-P02 RBH ICS ER

Received on 13/03/2023

- Location and Block Plan - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-100-P02 RBH ICS ER

Received on 23/03/2023

- Proposed Site Plan - 7073-GBS-XX-XX-DR-A-007-P03

Received on 06/06/2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

M3: Materials (As Specified)

The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall be as specified on the plans and application forms unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Construction Method Statement (To Be Submitted)
Arboricultural Method Statement (To Be Submitted)
Landscaping (To Be Submitted)
BREEAM Non-Resi Interim (To Be Submitted)
BREEAM Non-Resi Post Construction (To Be Submitted)
Mechanical Plan
Hours of Construction/Demolition
No Bonfires

11. INFORMATIVES

IF1: Positive and Proactive Working - approval

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the prescribed target timescale for the decision to be issued.

Pre-Commencement Conditions

IF5: Terms

Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

IF6: Building Control

Your attention is drawn to the requirement for submission of a Building Regulations application for the proposed development. Please contact Building Control on 0118 937 2449 for advice.

IF7: Complaints about construction

Complaints are commonly received about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site. The developer is reminded that construction and demolition associated with the approved development will be subject to environmental health law.

IF8: Encroachment

During the course of construction, the developer should take care to ensure that no part of this development (foundations, eaves, guttering, etc.) would encroach on, under or across the boundary line with the adjoining property, as the requisite Notice has not been served on the owner of that property. This permission does not confer any right of access onto land that is not under the developer's control. The developer should also be mindful of the obligations and requirements of the Party Wall Act (1996) details of which can be found at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/partywall