

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Application No: 230226/FUL

Ward: Battle

Address: 60 Portman Road, Reading, RG30 1EA

Proposal: 3rd floor upward extension to provide new office floor space with additional fenestration.

Case Officer: David Brett

Applicant: McClure Fisher Family Pension

Received on: 22/02/2023

Valid from: 14/03/2023

Target Date: 01/06/2023, extension of time on decision agreed with agent from 09/05/2022

Site Description and Surrounding Area

The proposal site is a two-storey office building located in the Portman Road Core Employment Area (EM2h) as identified in Policy EM2 (Location of New Employment Development) in the Reading Borough Local Plan. Vehicular access is from Loverock Road at the rear with pedestrian access from Portman Road. The surrounding area comprises industrial/commercial uses to the north, east and west and residential on the south side of Portman Road.

The proposal site is not within a Conservation Area or Listed.



Fig 1. Front of 60 Portman Road. Photo taken by case officer on 11/05/2023

An unaccompanied site visit was carried out on 11/05/2023

Proposal

This application seeks the following:

- An upward extension to create a third floor.
- New glazed frontage to the Portman Road (front) elevation.
- External alterations to materials, with contemporary cladding and glazing.
- Green wall to the Portman Road (front) elevation.

- Photovoltaic panels (PV) to the roof.

Plans/Documents Considered

The following plans and documents have been supplied for this application:

- Location Plan - 3755/100 Rev B
- Transport Statement - 3755
- Existing Ground Floor Plan - 3755/102 Rev A
- Existing First Floor Plan - 3755/103
- Existing Second Floor Plan - 3755/104
- ~~- Existing Elevations - 3755/105~~
- Block Plan - 3755/200 Rev B
- ~~- Proposed Ground Floor Plan - 3755/203 Rev B~~
- ~~- Proposed First Floor Plan - 3755/204 Rev B~~
- ~~- Proposed Second Floor Plan - 3755/205 Rev B~~
- ~~- Proposed Third Floor Plan - 3755/206 Rev A~~
- ~~- Proposed Elevations 1 of 2 - 3755/207 Rev B~~
- ~~- Proposed Elevations 2 of 2 - 3755/208 Rev B~~
- ~~- Proposed Street Scene - 3755/210 Rev A~~

Received on 22/02/2023

- Sustainability Statement - 3755
- ~~- Planning Statement - 3755~~
- ~~- Existing Sections - 3755/107~~
- ~~- Existing Roof Plan - 3755/108~~
- ~~- Proposed Sections - 3755/211~~
- ~~- Proposed Roof Plan - 3755/212~~

Received on 14/03/2023

- Planning Statement - 3755 Rev A
- Proposed Second Floor Plan - 3755/205 Rev C
- ~~- Proposed Third Floor Plan - 3755/206 Rev B~~
- Proposed Elevations 1 of 2 - 3755/207 Rev C
- Proposed Elevations 2 of 2 - 3755/208 Rev C
- Proposed Street Scene - 3755/210 Rev B
- Proposed Sections - 3755/211 Rev A
- Proposed Roof Plan - 3755/212 Rev A
- Construction Method Statement
- Proposed Construction Management Plan - 3755/213

Received on 19/05/2023

- Existing Elevations - 3755/105 Rev A
- Existing Sections - 3755/107 Rev A
- Existing Roof Plan - 3755/108 Rev A
- Proposed Third Floor Plan - 3755/206 Rev C

Received on 30/05/2023

Relevant Planning History

890583/FUL - Change of use from computer bureau and warehouse to warehouse and industrial manufacturing. - Application Permitted on 23/11/1989

221770/FUL - Two new glazed areas to front elevation to replace brick panels. - Application Permitted on 27/01/2023

Internal Consultations

Reading Borough Council, Environmental Protection - Response received on 15/03/2023

- Contaminated Land
- Construction and Demolition phase

Reading Borough Council, Waste Services - Response received on 20/03/2023

- No comment on this application.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Responses received on 13/04/2023

- There are no transport objections to this application subject to conditions.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Responses received on 19/05/2023

- There are no Natural Environment objections to this application. Details of green wall to be secured via condition.

Reading Borough Council, Ecology - Responses received on 28/03/2023 and 25/05/2023

- There are no Ecology objections to this application. Details of green wall to be secured via condition.

External Consultees

60 Portman Road, Reading, RG30 1EA - No response received.

62 Portman Road, Reading, RG30 1EA - No response received.

119 Loverock Road, Reading, RG30 1DZ - No response received.

121 Loverock Road, Reading, RG30 1DZ - No response received.

123 Loverock Road, Reading, RG30 1DZ - No response received.

Unit 1, 58 Portman Road, Reading, RG30 1EA - No response received.

Unit 2, 58 Portman Road, Reading, RG30 1EA - No response received.

Unit 3, 58 Portman Road, Reading, RG30 1EA - No response received.

A site notice was displayed on 20/03/2023, expiring on 10/04/2023. No further responses were 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.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

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 (adopted November 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 Plan 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).

Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework 2021;
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards;

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaption to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
- EM1: Provision of Employment
- EM2: Location of New Employment Development
- EM3: Loss of Employment Land
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Other documents

Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (2019)
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Appraisal

The main issues considered for these three separate applications are as follows:

- a) Principle of Development
- b) Design and Access
- c) Safeguarding Amenity
- d) Natural Environment and Ecology
- e) Transport
- f) Air Quality
- g) Pre-Commencement Conditions

a) Principle of Development

The application site is located within a Core Employment Area as defined in Policy EM2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (EM2h: Portman Road). Policy EM2 requires proposals not to result in a loss of employment land. This application proposes a third-floor extension to provide additional offices to 60 Portman Road.

Therefore, the principle of the development proposed is acceptable, provided that the policy requirements of the Reading Borough Local Plan are satisfied.

b) Design & Access

Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires all development to be of high-quality design and maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding area. In this specific case, this concerns the following components:

- Layout
- Landscape
- Density and mix
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

As existing 60 Portman Road is a purpose-built office block. The proposed third floor level retains its office block appearance and is considered in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing building and the industrial/commercial area in which it is located.

The design of the third-floor extension has been amended during the course of the application due to officer concerns that despite the setback the design of the third floor would appear top heavy in relation to the host building. Revised plans were therefore requested, reducing the height of the third floor further. The height of the third floor and officers are satisfied that the height of the development has been reduced as much as reasonably possible taking into account services required within the roof.

The proposed upward extension would sit directly above the existing building, and the plant room on the roof would be removed. The materials would consist of brickwork and metal cladding. These materials have been selected as they respect the character and appearance of the existing building and the wider commercial surrounding area.

During negotiations suggested that a green wall be introduced to the front elevation of the existing building and the proposed extension. The idea being to add visual interest to the building and increase biodiversity. Revised plans were forthcoming which included a green wall, the specific details of which will be secured via condition to any approval. The green wall is considered a visual enhancement of the building and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area in what is a rather limited area in terms of soft landscaping. A green roof was also suggested; however, the application includes photovoltaic panels to the roof. Therefore, a green roof was not pursued.

The proposed development is therefore considered in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

In accordance with Policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan; *“Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change. To meet these requirements: (...) All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM ‘Very Good’ standard as a minimum;”*

Therefore, prior development commencing on site, a copy of the Interim BREEAM Certificate will be submitted to and approved by the LPA. A condition will also be included for the submission of a Final BREEAM Certificate, confirming that the development has achieved a ‘Very Good’ rating. This is to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards in accordance with Policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

c) Safeguarding Amenity

This proposal has also been assessed against Reading Borough Local Plan policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity, which states that proposals are acceptable where they will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties with regard to various factors, including (amongst others):

- Privacy and overlooking
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of development
- Noise and disturbance
- Dust and fumes

The proposal site is located on the north side of Portman Road within a commercial area. Residential properties are located on the south side of Portman Road; however, the development is not considered to result in any harmful levels of noise, disturbance or harm to living conditions of residents south of Portman Road.

The proposal was considered against the criteria specified within Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The proposed development would not harm the amenity of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

d) Natural Environment and Ecology

As discussed in the design section of this report, a green wall has been secured within this development. There are no Natural Environment or Ecology objections to this application, however, final details of the green wall are required to secure appropriate species and a maintenance schedule. The development is therefore considered in accordance with Policy EN12 and EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

e) Transport

As per the response from Transport Development Control, the development proposes a provision of parking that is above the requirements of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. 5 electric vehicle charging points are also proposed and are considered acceptable from a Transport perspective. The final details for cycle parking, however, are to be secured via condition to any approval of this application. The cycle parking was originally proposed to the second floor of the building via the access ramp to the rear of the building from Loverock Road. Transport Officers consider a ground floor provision of cycle parking should be explored.

Subject to conditions, including the details of a Construction Method Statement, the development is considered in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

f) Air Quality

This proposal has been considered against Reading Borough Local Plan policy EN15, as the proposal site is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). As demonstrated in the policy, this proposal does not meet the requirements for an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) and is considered not enough of a detrimental impact air quality to warrant such an assessment due to the size and scale of the proposal.

g) CIL

The proposal includes the addition of more than 100sqm of new floor space and so would be CIL liable. The standard informative is recommended to be included on the decision notice to advise the applicant of this separate process and requirement.

h) Pre-Commencement Conditions

All pre-commencement conditions were agreed with the agent in accordance with Section 100ZA (5) of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Conclusion

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

The use of the development would be within Class E. Alternative uses of the premises under Class E which may otherwise be permitted by virtue of the General Permitted Development Order could be harmful to amenity, traffic generation, vehicle parking and the employment needs of the area in accordance with Policies TR1, TR3 CC8, and EM2 of the Reading Local Plan 2019. Therefore, the development will be restricted to office uses listed under Class E.

Recommendation

GRANT

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:

- Location Plan - 3755/100 Rev B
- Block Plan - 3755/200 Rev B

Received on 22/02/2023

- Proposed Second Floor Plan - 3755/205 Rev C
- Proposed Third Floor Plan - 3755/206 Rev B
- Proposed Elevations 1 of 2 - 3755/207 Rev C
- Proposed Elevations 2 of 2 - 3755/208 Rev C
- Proposed Street Scene - 3755/210 Rev B
- Proposed Sections - 3755/211 Rev A
- Proposed Roof Plan - 3755/212 Rev A

Received on 19/05/2023

- Proposed Third Floor Plan - 3755/206 Rev C

Received on 30/05/2023

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/or 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.

C2: Construction Method Statement (To Be Submitted)

No development shall commence on site, including any works of demolition, until a site specific Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall provide for:

- a) Space on site where vehicles of site operatives and visitors can be parked with details of how site operatives and visitors will be required to make use of the parking area provided;
- b) Location on site for storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;

- c) The erection and maintenance (including removal of any graffiti or fly posters) of security hoarding around the site;
- d) Identification of any footpath closures or road closures needed during construction;
- e) Required wheel washing facilities on site;
- f) A scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction works.
- g) Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes;
- h) Required measures to control the emission of dust, dirt and other airborne pollutants during demolition and construction;
- i) Provisions to be made for the control of noise coming from the site during demolition and construction;
- j) Full details of pest control measures following any demolition required. Where necessary, capping of drains/sewers and baiting arrangements.

The measures within the approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of protecting the amenity of local land uses or neighbouring residents, the character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Details Of PV (To Be Approved)

No development shall commence on site until full details of the proposed roof mounted Photovoltaics shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include a roof plan showing the location and position of the Photovoltaics, their dimensions, manufactures specification, and ongoing maintenance arrangements. The approved Photovoltaics shall thereafter be installed in accordance with these approved details and maintained in good working order to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change in accordance with Policy CC3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Green Wall

Prior to first occupation of the extension hereby approved, full details of the biodiverse green wall/roof including planting plans and maintenance schedules shall be submitted and approved in writing by the council. The wall/roof shall thereafter be installed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: This condition will result in biodiversity improvements in and around the development in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the NPPF and Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

SU5: BREEAM Non-Resi - Interim (To Be Approved)

No development shall commence on site until a copy of an Interim BREEAM Certificate in accordance with the BREEAM Sustainability Standard demonstrating compliance with a minimum standard of BREEAM Very Good rating has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards in accordance with Policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

SU6: BREEAM Non-Resi - Post Construction (To Be Approved)

Prior to first occupation of the extension hereby approved, a copy of a Final BREEAM Certificate in accordance with the BREEAM Sustainability Standard following a post-construction stage review carried out by a licensed assessor has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, demonstrating that the development has attained as a minimum the standard set out in the Interim BREEAM Certificate referred to in condition [INSERT NUMBER].

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards in accordance with Policy CC2 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

DC6: Cycle Parking (To Be Approved)

No development shall commence on site until a plan showing how 12 cycle parking spaces can satisfactorily be provided on site is submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking spaces shall be provided in full accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation and thereafter kept free of obstruction and retained in accordance with the approved details and shall remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to encourage travel by sustainable alternatives to private vehicle in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

DC1: Vehicle Parking (As Specified)

The extensions hereby permitted shall not be occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

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 agreed timescale for the decision to be issued.

Pre-Commencement Conditions

In accordance with Article 35 (DMPO 2015) some conditions have been highlighted to make clear that they require approval from the Local Planning Authority before any development begins. This is because the details need to be designed or works

implemented before any other works start on the site or are of a nature that it would be impractical to consider after work has started.

IF3: Highways

- i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.
- ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.

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 possible 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.

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:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/party-wall-etc-act-1996-guidance>

Contaminated Land

You are advised that the development lies on a potentially contaminated site. Due to the nature of the historic land use there is the potential of contaminated land being present. The developers must be aware that any ground or enabling works may bring receptors into contact with the aforementioned contaminants. You may wish to satisfy yourself that the details of the construction proposals take the necessary account of the possibility of contaminants from that source.