

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 221486/LBC

Address: Old Shire Hall, The Forbury, Reading, RG1 3EH

Proposals: The proposal seeks to improve the current alarm system. This would be achieved via installation of new concealed cabling and an alarm control keypad, mounted on one wall of exit lobby (ground floor).

Case Officer: David Brett

Applicant: AFM South East HMCTS Property Directory - Ministry of Justice

Date received (valid from): 25 October 2022 **Target Decision date:** 20 December 2022

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal site is a Grade II listed building (list entry number 1113476) located at Old Shire Hall, The Forbury, Reading. The listing describes “ASSIZE COURTS, THE FORBURY” as:

“THE FORBURY 1. 5128 Assize Courts SU 7173 NE 1/306 II GV 2. 1861. Said to be by J B Clacy. Baroque revival style in channelled Bath stone ashlar. 2 storeys with 2 1/2 storey corner pavilions which break forward. Cornices on ground and 1st floors, panels with palmettes over caps. 5 bay centre with flanking 1x1 bay wings. Ground floor Doric with engaged rusticated columns, paired to pavilions. Ionic 1st floor. C19 glazed sash windows, round headed on 1st floor, segmental headed on ground floor, with architrave surrounds and keys. Ground floor of centre projects between flanking pavilions and has 3 bay arcaded portico with balustrade over. Attics have elaborate recessed scroll terminals above entablature forming aedicules. Extensive buildings to rear. Interior: large central top lit and galleried hall. Street wall with 2 pairs of high cruciform piers with rusticated rebates to corners and ball-finials. Heavy lozenge pattern panels of rails.”

Site visit date: 26/10/2022

Site visit photos:



Fig 1. Old Shire Hall. Site photo taken by Case Officer on 26/10/2022

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal seeks to improve the current alarm system. Listed Building Consent is sought for the installation of new concealed cabling and an alarm control keypad, mounted on one wall of exit lobby (ground floor).

Plans considered

- Ground Floor - As Existing - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-1000 Rev P01
- Ground Floor - As Existing - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-1001 Rev P01
- Exit Lobby Plan and Internal Elevations - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-1002 Rev P01
- ~~- Site Location - 241784-PUR-XX-SL-DR-A-1004 Rev P01~~
- Ground Floor - As Existing - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-2002 Rev P01
- Ground Floor - As Existing - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-2003 Rev P01
- Exit Lobby Plan and Internal Elevations - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-2004 Rev P01
- Reading Crown Court - Heritage Impact Assessment Portrait Report prepared by Purcell - dated November 2022

Received on 03/10/2022

- Site Location - 241784-PUR-XX-SL-DR-A-1004 Rev P02

Received on 25/10/2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

220907/LBC - To install wall mounted electric car charge points and associated cabling. The charge points will be surface mounted to the concrete supporting columns to the rear staff car park (enclosed). - Application Permitted on 24/10/2022

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Reading Borough Council, Conservation & Urban Design Officer - No response received.

The site notice was displayed from Wednesday 26th October 2022, expiring on Wednesday 16th November 2022. A press notice was published on Thursday 3rd November 2022, expiring on Thursday 24th November 2022. No responses 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:

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

6. APPRAISAL

Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

In accordance with policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, all proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits. In addition, applications affecting Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their setting.

Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) states that; *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

As explained within the Heritage Statement submitted for this application; the proposed development is taking place internally and consists of the installation of an alarm control keypad mounted to the wall of the exit lobby, which would be linked via a cable hidden within the wall.

The development, which consists entirely of internal works, is considered very minor in scale and would not have a detrimental impact on the historic fabric of the heritage asset. The development is considered a requirement to the running of the Court House, with an improvement to the existing security systems at the premises. The proposed development is considered in accordance with Policies EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and the NPPF (2021).

7. CONCLUSION

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

8. RECOMMENDATION

Application Permitted

Recommended Conditions:

LB1: Time Limit Listed Building (Works)

The works hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

LB2: Listed Building (Works Specification)

The works to the Listed Building hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans or specifications:

- Ground Floor - As Existing - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-2002 Rev P01
- Ground Floor - As Existing - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-2003 Rev P01
- Exit Lobby Plan and Internal Elevations - 241784-PUR-XX-GF-DR-A-2004 Rev P01

Received on 03/10/2022

- Site Location - 241784-PUR-XX-SL-DR-A-1004 Rev P02

Received on 25/10/2022

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Listed Building Consent hereby approved Policy EN1 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

MLB: Listed Building Materials (To Match)

All new external and internal works and finishes, and any works of making good, shall match the existing original fabric in respect of using materials of a matching form, composition and consistency, detailed execution and finished appearance, except where indicated otherwise on the drawings hereby approved.

REASON: In order that the special architectural and historic interest of this Listed Building is safeguarded in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Recommended 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 consent to be granted within the statutory timescales for the decision to be issued.

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

Listed Building Consent

For the avoidance of doubt, no other works are approved except those as authorised by this Consent. Any other works required to the Listed Building may require a separate application for Listed Building Consent and/or an application for Permitted Works to a Listed Building.