

## DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

**Application No:** 220769/FUL

**Address:** 250 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UA

**Proposal:** External refurbishment works to the existing office building (Use Class E(g)), including alterations to the main entrance, elevations and roof (to include the installation of PV panels), landscaping works, and amendments to form an external cycle store

**Case Officer:** David Brett

**Applicant:** Deloitte LLP

**Received on (valid from):** 25/05/2022

**Target Date:** 25/10/2022, extension of time on decision agreed with agent from 20/07/2022

### Site Description and Surrounding Area

The proposal site consists of a four-storey office building located within Green Park. The building is set 100m from the highway along Brook Drive. Associated vehicle parking is provided to the front of the site. The surrounding area is considered predominantly commercial with a mix of three storey offices which vary in scale, design and appearance.

The site is located within Flood Zone 2 as designated by the Environment Agency.

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



Fig 1. Proposal Site. Photo taken by case officer on 28/06/2022

### Proposal

The proposed development seeks the refurbishment of the existing office building at 250 Brook Drive. External alterations are proposed, however, there would be no increase gross internal area at the site. Two trees to the frontage are to be removed as part of the refurbishment, with replacements proposed to the side and rear of the building. Internal alterations are also proposed; however, no change of use is proposed.

A new cycle storage provision is proposed to the southeast corner of the site. The area for the proposed cycle storage is the existing deliveries entrance to the building.

Solar panels are proposed to the roof of the building.

### Plans/Documents Considered

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

- Planning Statement / Cover Letter Deloitte
- Design and Access Statement - Dated 5 May 2022
- GA Proposed Ground - 154442-STL-01-01-DR-I-XXXX-10000-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed First - 154442-STL-01-01-DR-I-XXXX-10001-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Second - 154442-STL-01-02-DR-I-XXXX-10002-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Third - 154442-STL-01-03-DR-I-XXXX-10003-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Roof - 154442-STL-01-04-DR-I-XXXX-10004-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Roof - PV Panels - 154442-STL-01-04-DR-I-XXXX-10005-S4\_P02
- Atrium roof glazing - Sheet 1 - 154442-STL-01-XX-DR-I-XXXX-61010-S4\_P01
- Atrium roof glazing - Sheet 2 - 154442-STL-01-XX-DR-I-XXXX-61011-S4\_P01
- ~~- RLD - Cycle Storage External - 154442-STL-XX-00-DR-I-XXXX-22012-S4\_P01~~
- Location Plan - 154442-STL-XX-01-DR-I-XXXX-09001-S3\_P04
- Ground Floor Plan - Existing - 154442-STL-XX-00-DR-I-XXXX-E1000-S4\_P01
- First Floor Plan - Existing - 154442-STL-XX-01-DR-I-XXXX-E1001-S4\_P01
- Second Floor Plan - Existing - 154442-STL-XX-02-DR-I-XXXX-E1002-S4\_P01
- Third Floor Plan - Existing - 154442-STL-XX-03-DR-I-XXXX-E1003-S4\_P01
- Roof Plan - Existing - 154442-STL-XX-04-DR-I-XXXX-E1004-S4\_P01
- Proposed Site Plan - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-09003-S3\_P04
- Proposed South-East Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20001-S4\_P02
- Proposed North-East Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20002-S4\_P02
- Proposed North-West Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20003-S4\_P02
- Proposed South-West Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20004-S4\_P02
- Existing South-East Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-E2001-S4\_P01
- Existing North-East Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-E2002-S4\_P01
- Existing North-West Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-E2003-S4\_P01
- Existing South-West Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-E2004-S4\_P01
- Existing Block Plan - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-E9000-S3\_P04
- Strip Section Entrance - 154442-STL-ZZ-XX-DR-I-XXXX-61000-S4\_P01

Received on 25/05/2022

~~- RLD - Cycle Storage External - 154442-STL-XX-00-DR-I-XXXX-22012-S3\_C10~~

Received on 16/08/2022

~~- RLD - Cycle Storage External - 154442-STL-XX-00-DR-I-XXXX-22012-S3\_C11~~

Received on 18/08/2022

- RLD - Cycle Storage External - 154442-STL-XX-00-DR-I-XXXX-22012-S3\_C12

Received on 01/09/2022

- Proposed Site Plan - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-09003-S4\_P05

~~- Proposed tree plan & Detail - 920\_PL\_200\_P00~~

- Tree Survey (BS 5837:2012) - P2686-TS01 V2

Received on 06/10/2022

- Proposed tree plan & Detail - 920\_PL\_200\_P01

Received on 07/10/2022

### Relevant Planning History

990799/ADV - Installation of company logos and other directional signage on the building and precinct - Application Permitted on 13/11/2000

990373/FUL - Installation of 3 pole-mounted CCTV cameras, 3 ram raid bollards, a back-up generator and battery system - Application Permitted on 11/10/2000

011400/OUT - Erection of smoking enclosure on roof terrace of the building, and of a security barrier at the perimeter of the site. - Application Permitted on 27/03/2001

020425/FUL - Installation of 1 pole mounted CCTV camera (Retrospective). - Application Permitted on 18/06/2002

110768/APC - Discharge of conditions of planning permission 01/00049/OUT - No Conditions to Discharge on 04/10/2011

110766/APC - Discharge of conditions of planning permission 02/00502/FUL - No Conditions to Discharge on 23/09/2011

110678/APC - Discharge of conditions of planning permission 00/00795/FUL - No Conditions to Discharge on 04/10/2011

### **Consultees**

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Response received on 14/07/2022

- The loss of the two trees is regrettable but accepted as they appear to be in poorer condition than adjacent trees.
- A brief Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment is required, along with a proposed landscaping plan to compensate for the loss of the two trees to the frontage.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Response received on 06/10/2022 upon review of arboricultural information submitted on 06/10/2022

- The proposed net gain of trees (four trees to replace two) is acceptable, however, two of the trees proposed are not appropriate as they are of a species that susceptible to disease and decline.
- The tree planting is acceptable provided the species of the two trees in question are addressed appropriately.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Response received on 06/10/2022 upon review of revised tree details submitted on 07/10/2022

- The revised tree details are considered acceptable. These details should be secured via condition to any approval of this application.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Response received on 19/07/2022

- The proposed cycle layout is not acceptable as some of the cycle parking would be inaccessible due to the layout and type of storage unit selected.
- The applicant needs to confirm if there is existing cycle parking provision at the site.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Response received on 19/07/2022 upon review of amended cycle storage plan received on 16/08/2022.

- Clarification is required as to what type of cycle storage is proposed and the amount of spaces that will be provided.

- Specifications of the cycle storage facility also need to be provided to determine whether there is appropriate room in front of facilities so that the upper tier of the cycle storage can be suitably accessed.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Response received on 19/08/2022 upon review of amended cycle storage plan received on 18/08/2022.

- *As previously requested the specifications for such a cycle storage facility must also be provided to ensure that a sufficient depth is available to ensure access and egress from the cycle spaces. To clarify this is not just the depth of the store but the space required to the frontage of the store to allow suitable access.*

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Response received on 07/09/2022 upon review of amended cycle storage plan received on 01/09/2022. Case Officer also provides online link to cycle storage specification.

- *Following receipt of this information I am happy that I have no objections to the proposal.*

### **External Consultees**

300 Longwater Avenue, Reading, RG2 6GE - No response received.  
250 Longwater Avenue, Reading, RG2 6GB - No response received.  
200 Longwater Avenue, Reading, RG2 6GB - No response received.  
300 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UH - No response received.  
200 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UB - No response received.

A site notice was displayed on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022, expiring on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022. No further comments were received for this application.

### **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: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodlands
- EN18: Flooding and Drainage
- EM2: Location of New Employment Development
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- 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 this application are as follows:

- a) Principle of Development
- b) Design and Access
- c) Safeguarding Amenity
- d) Transport
- e) Natural Environment
- f) Flooding

- a) Principle of Development

The proposal site is located within the Green Park Core Employment Area, as defined within Policy EM2a of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Policy EM2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that “Non-employment uses that would support the area’s economic function may be located in the Core Employment Areas where they do not result in a loss of employment land”. No change of use is proposed within this application and 250 Brook Drive would retain its existing use as an office, providing employment.

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
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

As discussed previously, this application seeks the refurbishment of the existing building without any increase in gross internal area. No extensions for the existing building are proposed. A revolving entrance door is proposed to the southeast elevation along with a new curtain walling system.

The existing side doorway to the southeast elevation, which is proposed serve as external access to the cycle storage area from the proposed new shower facilities. The existing door consists of a timber door and frame. The replacement doorway consists of glass and PPC aluminium and in this instance is considered more attractive than the existing timber and louvre door.

New atrium roof glazing is proposed, positioned above the proposed canteen area to the ground floor. The atrium roof glazing would not be visible from ground level and is considered an enhancement to the existing building as it would provide increased levels of natural light to the atrium. PV installations are also proposed to the roof and would not be seen from ground level. The PV installations are considered a welcome addition and are encouraged as an option as an easy to install renewable energy system within the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019).

The height of the parapet wall is to be increased by 300mm, this is considered a very minor alteration that does not harm the character and appearance of the building.

The development is considered to be minor in size and scale and would harm the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area. The changes proposed are considered to improve the facilities at the office building through increased light levels, improved sustainability through the installation of PV panels, and provide cycle parking. The changes are considered to improve the conditions at the office to the benefit of future occupants. The removal of the two trees to the frontage is regrettable, as they soften the frontage of the building to some degree, however, suitable replacements are to be provided on site in more suitable locations that will give the trees a better opportunity to thrive. The development is therefore considered in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

#### c) Safeguarding Amenity

The nearest dwellings to the proposal site are located 300m to the northwest, along Longwater Avenue. The development proposed at 250 Brook Drive will not have a detrimental impact on the living conditions of current and future occupants of dwellings along Longwater Avenue.

The proposal was further 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) Transport

A new cycle storage facility is proposed to the southwest corner of the building. Two cycle storage facilities are proposed and consist of a Space Chelsea Two Tier Cycle Shelter. Both shelters can accommodate up to 25 cycles each. The proposed cycle parking plan illustrates that there is suitable space to the front of the storage facilities so that both tiers of the storage units can be suitably accessed. A bike maintenance station is also proposed to one of the shelters. The bike drop off point is located to the left of the main

staff entrance to the building. There is direct access to the shower facilities within 250 Brook Drive through a separate entrance.

The proposed cycle storage layout has been revised during the course of the application to address concerns from Transport Development Control as to the accessibility of the cycle storage unit.

As there was not an existing cycle storage facility at 250 Brook Drive, the proposed cycle storage unit is considered a welcome addition that improves the overall facilities available to future occupants.

No changes are proposed to the existing vehicle parking arrangement. Therefore, the proposed development is considered in accordance with Policies TR3, TR4 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

#### e) Natural Environment

Two trees are to be removed from the front of 250 Brook Drive, with four replacement trees proposed to the side and rear of the building.

The tree survey states that the T1 is in decline, with a high proportion of deadwood in the crown. There is also a large amount of necrosis on the main stem. T2 is described as having minor dieback on branch tips, with the tree lacking significant future potential. There are also signs of necrotic bark on the lower stem. On that basis, the tree survey recommends the removal of both trees.

The replacement planting represents a net gain in trees at the site, with the locations of the trees selected considered more appropriate than the location of the two existing trees to be removed.



Fig 2. Proposal Site - two trees to be removed pictured either side of the vehicle. Photo taken by case officer on 28/06/2022

The details of the proposed landscaping have been approved by the Natural Environment Team and will be secured via condition to any approval of this application.

The proposed landscaping is considered in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

#### f) Flooding

The site is located within Flood Zones 2 as designated by the Environment Agency and therefore Policy EN18 (Flooding and Sustainable Drainage System) would apply.

A brief statement has been provided by the applicant stating that the proposals “do not change any of the finished floor levels of the existing building, nor do they result in any new floorspace. It is not considered that the minor, primarily aesthetic proposals will have any impact to flood risk conditions on site”.

Given that the size, scale and nature of the development, the development is not considered to worsen the existing situation at the site or increase flood risk to the surrounding area. Therefore, the development is considered in accordance with Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

## **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.

## **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:

- Planning Statement / Cover Letter Deloitte
- Design and Access Statement - Dated 5 May 2022
- GA Proposed Ground - 154442-STL-01-01-DR-I-XXXX-10000-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed First - 154442-STL-01-01-DR-I-XXXX-10001-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Second - 154442-STL-01-02-DR-I-XXXX-10002-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Third - 154442-STL-01-03-DR-I-XXXX-10003-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Roof - 154442-STL-01-04-DR-I-XXXX-10004-S4\_P02
- GA Proposed Roof - PV Panels - 154442-STL-01-04-DR-I-XXXX-10005-S4\_P02
- Atrium roof glazing - Sheet 1 - 154442-STL-01-XX-DR-I-XXXX-61010-S4\_P01
- Atrium roof glazing - Sheet 2 - 154442-STL-01-XX-DR-I-XXXX-61011-S4\_P01
- Location Plan - 154442-STL-XX-01-DR-I-XXXX-09001-S3\_P04
- Proposed Site Plan - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-09003-S3\_P04
- Proposed South-East Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20001-S4\_P02
- Proposed North-East Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20002-S4\_P02
- Proposed North-West Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20003-S4\_P02
- Proposed South-West Elevation - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-20004-S4\_P02
- Strip Section Entrance - 154442-STL-ZZ-XX-DR-I-XXXX-61000-S4\_P01

Received on 25/05/2022

- RLD - Cycle Storage External - 154442-STL-XX-00-DR-I-XXXX-22012-S3\_C12

Received on 01/09/2022

- Proposed Site Plan - 154442-STL-XX-ZZ-DR-I-XXXX-09003-S4\_P05
- Tree Survey (BS 5837:2012) - P2686-TS01 V2

Received on 06/10/2022

- Proposed tree plan & Detail - 920\_PL\_200 P01

Received on 07/10/2022

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.

### **L4A: Landscape Implementation (As Specified)**

The hard and soft landscaping of the development hereby permitted shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved landscaping plans and documents. The soft landscaping shall take place no later than during the first planting season following the date when the development hereby permitted is ready for occupation or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

REASON: In order to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the landscaping hereby approved in accordance with Policy CC7, EN12 and EN14 of the Reading Borough 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.

### **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>