

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 221547/FUL

Address: Unit 3 Apex Plaza, Forbury Road, Reading

Proposals: Installation of metal louvre grills to shop front

Case Officer: Ryan Allen

Date received (valid from): 17 October 2022 Target Decision date: 12 December 2022

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

Apex Plaza is a large office building situated on Forbury Road, Reading. The building itself is not listed, nor is it situated within a conservation area, but is near the Market Place/London Street conservation area. Apex Plaza is mentioned in policy CR11d of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019), which states: *This area will be developed for a mix of uses at high density, including residential and/or offices. Retail and/or leisure uses will activate the ground floor facing the southern station square. Development should seek to enhance the setting of nearby heritage assets, and views from within the conservation area and Forbury Gardens should be carefully considered.*

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for the installation of metal louvre grilles to the shop front located in Apex Plaza. The metal louvres would be situated above the glazing on the shopfront and facilitate internal works to the unit, such as an internal plant needed to ventilate a new shower room.

Plans considered

Received 17/10/22

Plant Noise Guidance

Planning Statement

Location Plan - Drawing No. 0300 rev. P02

Block Plan - Drawing No. 0301 rev. P02

Existing Ground Floor Plan - Drawing No. 0302 rev. P01

Proposed Ground Floor Plan - Drawing No. 0303 rev. P01

Existing South Elevation - Drawing No. 0304 rev. P01

Proposed South Elevation - Drawing No. 0305 rev. P01

Received 09/12/22

Plant Noise Impact Assessment - Project Reference 89905

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Retail Unit 2, Apex Plaza, Forbury Road, Reading, RG1 1AX

Letters of representation have been received as follows:

None.

Internal Consultees:

Environmental Protection

A noise assessment has been submitted, which proposes a suitable noise limit for the plant. However, no information has been submitted regarding the detail of the proposed plant to confirm how the noise limit will be complied with.

I therefore recommend the following condition.

➤ **N2 MECHANICAL PLANT (NOISE ASSESSMENT REQUIRED)**

No mechanical plant shall be installed until a noise assessment of the proposed mechanical plant has been submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall be carried out for in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 methodology. The predicted specific sound level (LAeq,TR) (with reference to BS:4142) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive facade shall be at least 10dB below the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation. The predicted rating level, LAr,Tr (specific sound level plus any adjustment for the characteristic features of the sound) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive façade (habitable window of a dwelling) shall not exceed the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation. The plant shall thereafter only be installed in accordance with the assessment and shall thereafter be maintained so that it operates to the same standard.

REASON: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally, in accordance with Policy CC8 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Following the submission of a Plant Noise Impact Assessment, colleagues in Environmental Protection confirmed that the assessment demonstrates the internal plants will meet required noise levels and recommended condition N10.

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 and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

OU5: SHOPFRONTS AND CASH MACHINES

CR11(d): STATION/RIVER MAJOR OPPORTUNITY AREA (BRUNEL ARCADE AND APEX PLAZA)

SPG/SPD

Design Guide to Shopfronts (2022)

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APPRAISAL

- i) Design
- ii) Environmental Health Matters

Design

The proposal for metal louvre grilles to be placed above the existing glazing at the unit's frontage is considered acceptable in relation to its design and how it relates to the host building. Similar metal louvres are present at the neighbouring shop frontage and overall changes to the shopfront are minimal, meaning significant changes aren't proposed, thus complying with policies CC7, OU5 & CR11d of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019).

Environmental Health Matters

The proposed louvres are to be added to the shopfront in order to facilitate internal works at the application site. Internal works include the installation of a new plant to ventilate a shower room at the unit. A noise assessment was requested by colleagues in Environmental Protection to demonstrate compliance with local criterion. A Noise Impact Assessment was submitted **09/12/22** and was conducted in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 methodology and deemed compliant by Environmental Protection, with a recommended condition of N10 to secure the plant is installed with the specifications recommended in the Noise Assessment. Overall, the proposal is seen to be compliant with policies CC8 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019).

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

Subject to the following conditions:

TL1

AP1

M3

N10