

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: 13 Market Place, Reading

Application No: 210874/LBC

Proposal: Various internal alterations at ground - second floor level, including: removal of remaining partitions, lifts, mechanical and electrical ducts in the ceilings, suspended ceilings, and existing toilets. The blocking up of the existing link stairs.

Applicant: Eurospeak Academy Ltd

Date received (valid from): 26/05/21

Target Decision date: 21/07/21

Case officer: Jonathan Markwell

1. Site Description and Surrounding Area

- i. The application site is located on the east side of Market Place and comprises the now vacant NatWest Bank building. It is Grade II Listed (see full listing within section 4 below) and is situated in the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The site is within the Central Reading Area and close by to a number of other listed buildings and structures.

2. The Proposal

- i. Listed building consent for:
 - Various internal alterations at ground - second floor level, including: removal of remaining partitions, lifts, mechanical and electrical ducts in the ceilings, suspended ceilings, and existing toilets. The blocking up of the existing link stairs.

3. Public Consultation

- i. Neighbour Consultation
A site notice was erected on 09/06/21 by the applicant (owing to Covid pandemic restrictions), expiring on 30/06/21. A press notice was published on 17/06/21, expiring on 08/07/21. No responses have been received.

4. Consultations

- i. RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer:

Planning Constraints

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- Section 16(2) requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- Section 72 (1) requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Section 16
- National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Council - Local Plan 2019

- Conservation Area: Market Place / London Street
- Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- Policy EN4: Locally important Heritage Assets

Other guidance

- Historic England Good Practice Guide Note Number 2: managing significance in decision-taking.
- Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)
- Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)

Site Notes

Fig. 1: The site is a listed Grade II building in Market Place and is circled in RED.



The building is within Market Place / London Street Conservation Area, and is a Grade II listed Building.

Historic England listing:

MARKET PLACE 1. 5128 (East Side) Yes 13 to 16 (consec) (National Westminster Bank) SU 7173 NE 1/333 SU 7173 SE 3/333 26.7.73. II GV 2. Mid C19. Renaissance palace style. 3 storeys. Bath stone ashlar with Portland balustraded parapet. 3 bays, the outer ones project slightly with corner piers. Astragal to moulded modillion cornice. Tripartite plate glass sash windows with enriched lintels and side pilasters with relief panel carvings supporting enriched entablature. 2nd floor centre bay has paired architrave windows. Modillion cornice over ground floor. Outer doorways with pink granite pilasters and round headed doors in rusticated concave jambs; similar surrounds to 2 central windows.

Conservation Comments

The host building is a former Bank, but it is currently unoccupied. The Listed Building consent is to strip out later modern building works and office fit-outs. It is anticipated that a future application will be submitted for further works. The impact of the current works is clearly stated in the Heritage Consultant's summation, below. The Heritage Statement was prepared by W.H.H. Van Sickle. It states:

"The proposals have no adverse impacts on the architectural or historic significance of the designated heritage assets of the building and the conservation area. Indeed, the stripping-out is an essential enabling exercise which, by establishing whether any features of interest survive behind the modern insertions, will inform the planning and design of the forthcoming conversion and redevelopment of the building."

The scheme is appropriate and supported as it will allow the host building to be refurbished for a new tenant.

Conclusion

There are no objections to the proposal and **Approval** is recommended.

- ii. Reading CAAC: Formally consulted, but no response was received.

5. Plans / documents Considered

- i. The Council, in reaching its recommendation, has taken into consideration the following documents:

21/16/01A - Site Location Plan, as received 26/05/21

21/16/03A - Existing Plans, as received 26/05/21

21/16/04A - Existing Sections Elevation, as received 26/05/21

21/16/10 - Proposed Internal Strip Out, as received 26/05/21

Design and Access Statement for stripping out works to the existing Listed building, by Danks Badnell Architects Ltd, as received 26/05/21

Former NatWest Bank 13-16 Market Place, Reading Heritage statement regarding stripping-out works by W.H.H. Van Sickle, dated June 2021, as received 08/06/21

6. Relevant Planning History

- i. Numerous applications at the site, with the most recent being:

191894 - De-commissioning of existing Natwest branch. Removal of non-original fixtures, fittings, furniture and equipment relating to the operation of the branch, as shown on plans by red dashed lines. No works to redecorate. Removal of all associated mechanical and electrical items and making safe. Removal of 3no. external ATMs and filling the apertures with sandstone to match existing. Removal of all signage from external elevation and making good. Granted 27/03/2020.

7. 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.

8. Relevant Planning Guidance

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.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

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'.

9. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies/guidance/documents:

National
National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Policy Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

Other guidance

- Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal
- Historic England Good Practice Guide Note Number 2: managing significance in decision-taking.
- Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)
- Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)

10. Appraisal

- i. As per the comments received during the application from the RBC CUDO (see section 4 above), the proposed internal works are considered appropriate.
- ii. Standard conditions relating to timeframes and the approved plans are suggested, alongside standard informatives for a listed building consent.

11. Conclusion

- i. The local planning authority considers that the proposal is appropriate for the reasons set out in this report.

Recommendation

Grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions

Conditions:

1. 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.

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

21/16/01A - Site Location Plan, as received 26/05/21

21/16/03A - Existing Plans, as received 26/05/21

21/16/04A - Existing Sections Elevation, as received 26/05/21

21/16/10 - Proposed Internal Strip Out, as received 26/05/21

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Former NatWest Bank 13-16 Market Place, Reading Heritage statement regarding stripping-out works by W.H.H. Van Sickle, dated June 2021, as received 08/06/21

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.

3. 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.

Informatives:

1. Approved works may require separate approval under the Building Regulations. Please contact the Council's Building Control service for further advice on (0118) 937 2449.
2. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this consent. Any development which is carried out but differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition (s) attached to the consent may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach. If you are in any doubt please contact the council.
3. Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant to determine the application within the statutory timeframes for determining such applications.
4. 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.