

## DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 210655/FUL

Address: Aldwych House, 2 Blagrove Street, Reading, RG1 1AZ

Proposals: Erection of external staircase

Case Officer: Julie Williams

Date received (valid from): 27 April 2021

Target Decision date: 22 June 2021

Extended to 7 July 2021

### PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed development seeks the construction of an external staircase to improve the usability and fire escape provision of the building and thereby its attractiveness to existing and potential tenants. The proposed staircase would run from the basement to the fifth floor and be positioned to the rear boundary of the building. This would result in the loss of two existing car parking spaces that serve the building. Amended plan provided to clarify that the two service bays are to be retained.

The building currently has two staircases but an additional staircase is required in order to comply with travel distances and to allow each wing of the building to be subdivided.

The existing cladding of the building is to be retained due to structural limitations and a single curtain wall panel is being replaced with a solid panel and access door. The cladding is proposed to match the existing grey panels. The stair well will be clad with perforated full-height metal panels to provide adequate fire protection and provide daylight into the space. The route allows maintenance access.

A green roof will be incorporated to the basement level.

### Plans considered

| Drawing Title                                            | Drawing Reference                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Existing General Arrangement Location Plan               | 010ZZ-LOCATION REV. PL01                       |
| Existing General Arrangement Site Plan                   | 010ZZ-SITE REV.PL01                            |
| Existing General Arrangement Basement Level              | 0110B1 REV.PL02                                |
| Existing General Arrangement Ground Level                | 01100 REV.PL01                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement Level 01                    | 01101 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement Level 02                    | 01102 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement Level 03                    | 01103 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement Level 04                    | 01104 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement Level 05                    | 01105 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement Level 06                    | 01106 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement North Elevation             | 01200 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement South Elevation             | 01201 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement Lightwell - North Elevation | 01202 REV.PL00                                 |
| Existing General Arrangement West Elevation              | 01203 REV.PL00                                 |
| Proposed General Arrangement Basement Level              | 0310B1 REV.PL02 - amended to show service bays |
| Proposed General Arrangement Ground Level                | 03100 REV.PL00                                 |
| Proposed General Arrangement Ground Level                | 03100 REV.PL01                                 |
| Proposed General Arrangement Level 02                    | 03102 REV.PL00                                 |

## CONSULTATIONS

### Public

The following addresses were consulted by letter and site notice displayed.

Tangent House, 14 Forbury Road, Reading, RG1 1SB

Valentinos Bar And Ph, 17-19 Valpy Street, Reading, RG1 1AR

Flat 4, 17-19 Valpy Street, Reading, RG1 1AR

Flat 1, 17-19 Valpy Street, Reading, RG1 1AR

Flat 5, 17-19 Valpy Street, Reading, RG1 1AR

Flat 3, 17-19 Valpy Street, Reading, RG1 1AR

Flat 2, 17-19 Valpy Street, Reading, RG1 1AR

Flat 6, 17-19 Valpy Street, Reading, RG1 1AR

The Corn Stores Ph, 10 Forbury Road, Reading, RG1 1SB

No letters of representation have been received however one neighbour contacted the case officer to ask for more information on the construction methods and how resident's parking spaces may be impacted.

This concern was passed to the applicant and they explained I have spoken to the project manager and we do not yet have a construction method statement sorted at this stage. This will become available once a contractor is on board. Happy to discuss this becoming a condition to allay any concerns.

### Internal:

#### Transport commented:

*I have looked back at the applications for Aldwych House and the basement car park includes the provision of 2 service bays which this application has now removed and not 2 car parking spaces as have been stated by the applicant.*

*Although I would have no objection to the loss of 2 car parking spaces given that there are limited areas of parking in the vicinity of the site for overspill to occur the Highway Authority cannot agree to the loss of the service bays from the proposal.*

*A revised drawing will therefore be required illustrating the provision of 2 service bays within the basement car park.*

*Please ask the applicant to submit suitably amended plans prior to determining the application.*

Amended plans provided to retain the service bays.

Construction Methods condition and one to retain service bays needed.

### 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 policies in 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 current development plan is:

**Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)**

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CR2 (Design in Central Reading)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)

**Assessment**

The development is not harmful to the character or appearance of the site or its surroundings and does not have a detrimental impact on the original building or neighbouring properties.

The amended plans confirm service bays retained which partly address the resident's concerns. The site retains 8 parking spaces on site, which are confirmed as acceptable for this town centre location. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and CC8 (Safeguarding amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Grant