

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: Maternity Block, Royal Berkshire Hospital, Craven Road

Application no: 201801/FUL

Proposal: To install a new HTM compliant set of air handling equipment on the roof of the Maternity Block

Applicant: WSP on behalf of Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

Target Decision date: 17/02/21

Case officer: Connie Davis

1. Site description and Surrounding Area

The application site is the Maternity Block of the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

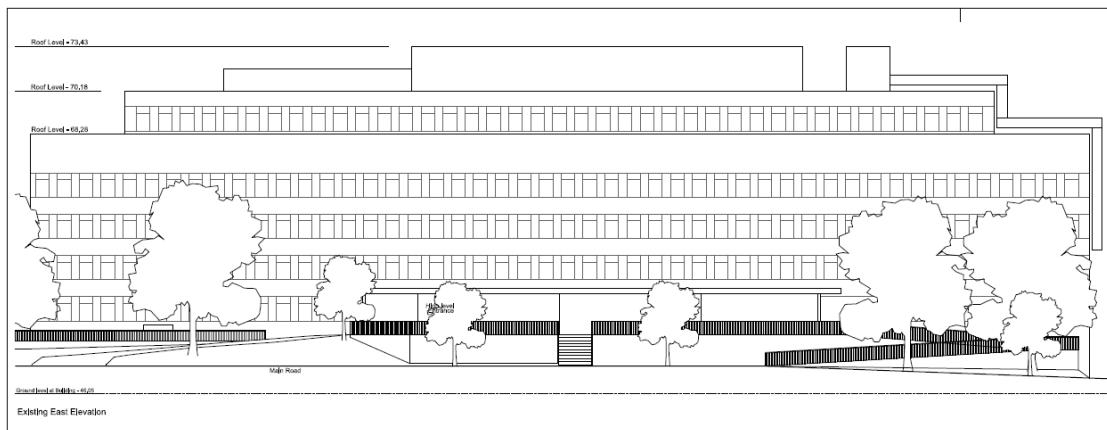
The Royal Berkshire Hospital (use class C2) is located partially on London Road, Redlands Road and Craven Road. The Maternity Block is located on the western side of Craven Road and set back from the highway by 35m.

The surrounding area mainly comprises of buildings facilitating the hospital. However, Reading Boys School also sits on the eastern side of Craven Road and a small portion of residential accommodation is located northwards (in excess of 100m away from the maternity block).

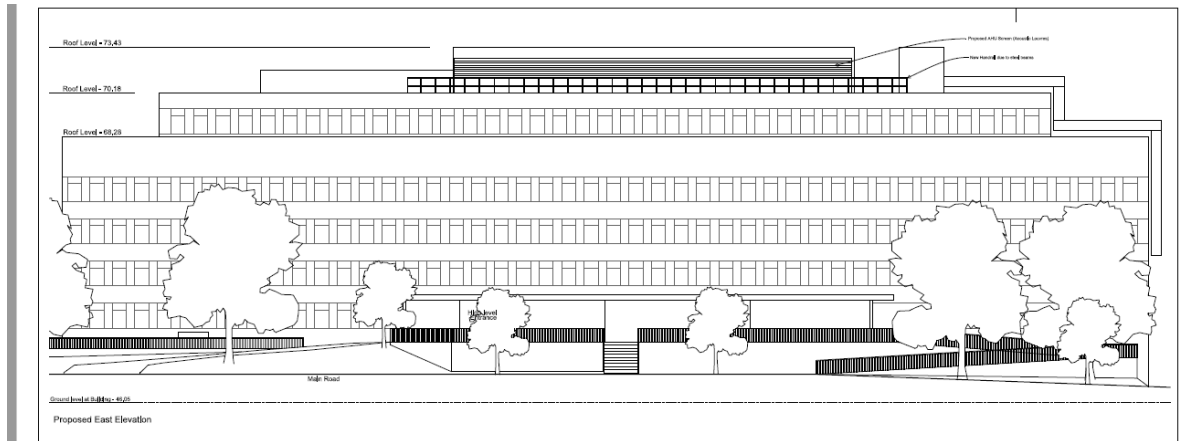
2. The Proposal

The proposal is for the installation of an air handling unit on the roof of the maternity block. The air handling unit would be screened by an acoustic louvre measuring a height of just over 2m. It would stretch across the part of the front elevation (as seen in the plans below) and would also extend so is visible from the side elevations of the building. There would also be a metal handrail installed around the unit for those accessing/ maintaining the equipment.

Existing front elevation



Proposed front elevation



3. Consultation

Internal Consultees

Environmental Health - The applicant submitted a noise assessment but this is indicative as the final plant specification is not known. A new assessment will need to be submitted based on the exact specification of the plant and this can be secured via a condition. Subject to this condition, there were no objections.

External Consultation

A site notice was displayed between 8th January 2021 - 29th January 2021

No responses have been received.

4. Plans and Documents Considered

6975/FY21-007/DWG/101 Rev 02 - Site & Location Plan
 6975/FY21-007/DWG/102 Rev 02 - Existing Plan Maternity Level 7 Roof Plan
 6975/FY21-007/DWG/104 Rev 02 - Existing East Elevation
 6975/FY21-007/DWG/106 - Existing North & South Elevation
 6975/FY21-007/DWG/103 Rev 02 - Proposed Plan - Maternity Level 7
 6975/FY21-007/DWG/105 - Proposed East Elevation
 6975/FY21-007/DWG/107 - Proposed North & South Elevation
 6975/FY21-007/DWG/108 - Existing and Proposed West Elevation
 Maternity AHU Noise Assessment on behalf of Gray Baynes + Shew prepared by Hepworth acoustics. Report No: P20-450-R01v1 dated December 2020
 Planning Statement

Received 23rd December 2020

5. Relevant Planning History

There is extensive application history at the Royal Berkshire Hospital but none are considered of particular relevance to this application.

7. Discussion with applicant/ agent

Advised the agent that a further noise assessment will be required in light of the Environmental Health Officer's comments. This will be secured via a condition which was agreeable.

8. Relevant Planning 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 (2019).

The '*National Planning Policy framework*' ('NPPF') 2012 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 Development Framework (LDF) (Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019) 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). Accordingly, the 'NPPF' and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

9. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Policy Guidance;

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
CC7 Design and the Public Realm
CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
EN16 Pollution and Water Resources
EN17 Noise Generating Equipment
ER3 Royal Berkshire Hospital

10. Appraisal

a) Principle of development

The public benefit of development to help the efficiency and quality of environment at the hospital is understood and accepted. In addition, Policy ER3 (Royal Berkshire Hospital) states that development will be supported where it complies with the following criteria:

▫ Where development would result in an increase in staff or visitors, it should be accompanied by measures which ensure that development does not have an adverse effect

on the functioning of the highway, either as a result of increased use or by resulting in additional on-street parking in surrounding streets - **it would not.**

▫ Development will conserve the listed main block on London Road and 17 Craven Road, ensuring that their use is consistent with its conservation - **this proposal does not relate to the Listed part of the hospital.**

▫ Development would not result in adverse effects on the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas - **it would not.**

▫ There will be no significant detrimental impact on neighbouring residential properties - **it would not result in detrimental impact; see section (b) of the appraisal.**

b) Impact of the proposal on the surrounding area

The proposed new air handling unit would be located at roof level. The building has existing ducting and equipment installed on it that is viewable from ground level. In light of this, the proposed addition, whilst slightly higher than other equipment on the roof (due to the proposed louvres surrounding the unit), would not be considered harmfully out of keeping given the context of the site and surrounding area which comprises of an array of structures and equipment to facilitate the effectiveness of the hospital. The equipment will be surrounded by acoustic louvres that will reduce the aesthetic impact of the proposal.

Whilst Craven Road primarily comprises of hospital buildings and so a constant level of some noise is likely, the LPA aims to ensure that the new air handling units would result in a harmful level of additional noise to the surrounding area generally and so a more detailed noise assessment is required to be submitted before any mechanical plant is to be installed (as the original noise assessment submitted was not based on the specific air handling unit proposed). Craven Road does also comprise of a few residential properties, but these are located over 100m away and so would unlikely be affected or disturbed by the proposal. However, any potential issues relating to noise should be identified within the noise assessment and appropriate measures taken.

Overall, the proposal is not considered to conflict with policies CC7, CC8 and ER3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) subject to condition.

c) Environmental Health Matters

The proposal is considered acceptable from an Environmental Health perspective subject to conditions. Recommended conditions include a noise assessment being submitted prior to any mechanical plant being installed.

With the inclusion of these conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to Policies EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

11. Recommendation

Grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. TL1
2. Approved Plans
3. No mechanical plant to be installed without a noise assessment being submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority

Informatives

1. Terms
2. Building Control
3. Complaints about construction
4. Encroachment
5. Positive and Proactive