

## DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORTS

**Application No(s): 191243/FUL & 191244/LBC**

**Address:** 10 Gun Street, Reading, RG1 2JR

**Proposal: 191243 Planning application:** Change of use from office (Class B1) to café / restaurant (Class A3) at ground to second floor level, including ground and first floor extensions following removal of previous. Erection of building to rear for microbrewery (Sui Generis) with associated access, part de-culverting of brook, external open area and various other alterations - scheme almost identical to previous Consent 151281 but without basement nightclub extension.

**191244 Listed Building Consent:** Various internal and external alterations including demolition of existing ground/first floor rear extensions, in association with change of use from office (Class B1) to café / restaurant (Class A3) at ground to second floor level, including ground and first floor extensions following removal of previous. Erection of building to rear for microbrewery (Sui Generis) with associated access, part de-culverting of brook, external open area and various other alterations.

**Case officer:** Brian Conlon

**Date received (valid from):** 29/07/2019

### 1. Site Description and Surrounding Area

The application site comprises an early 18th century Grade II Listed building located on the south side of Gun Street (List entry Number: 1321918) as depicted in Fig 1. The site is within St Mary Butts / Castle St Conservation Area and adjacent to other Grade II listed buildings fronting onto Gun Street.

The site is located within Flood Zone 2/3 and like adjoining properties the culverted Holy Brook runs under the southernmost part of the rear yard. The site is also an archaeological potential area, within an Air Quality Management Area and is within the Reading Central Area. Within the Central Area the site is located within an existing active frontage, the Primary Shopping Area and the Central Core. St Mary's Churchyard is an identified important area of open space directly opposite. Nearby uses include a number of restaurants, bars and nightclubs, and the immediate area of Gun Street constitutes a central focus of Reading's night-time economy. Next door at 9 Gun Street is the long-standing Purple Turtle bar and late-night music venue, which is also under the ownership of the applicant. As with elsewhere in the locality, there are existing residential units located on the upper floors of buildings (e.g. 11-12 Gun St).

The building itself is of red brick construction, with grey diaper-work, a stucco string course to the second floor and moulded wooden eaves cornice. The roof is of plain tiles with a tile hung gable and four ranges of cross glazed sash windows. The early 19th century shop front has glazing bars to right and an 18th century door with architrave surround and a bracketed pediment hood and a modern three-light window on ground floor. Internally there is an 18th century stair with turned balusters and short moulded pendants. The building is in a very poor state of repair with some elements unsafe structurally as witness on the officer site visit.



*Fig 1: As viewed from Gun Street (2019)*

## 2. Proposal

The proposal seeks the change of use of the premises from office (Class B1) to café / restaurant (Class A3) at ground to second floor level, along with a ground and first floor rear extension following removal of previous extensions. In addition, the proposal seeks the erection of a detached out-building to the rear of the site to house a microbrewery (Sui Generis) with associated access, external open area and various other alterations.

It should be noted that the two applications are almost identical in nature to previous approved consents 151281/FUL & 151282/LBC, but no longer include a basement nightclub extension and part de-culverting of the Holy Brook. These applications have now expired and cannot be implemented.

The description of the most recent approved works was as follows:

### **151281/FUL**

*Change of use from office (Class B1) to café/restaurant (Class A3) at basement to second floor level, including replacement ground and first floor rear extension; Excavation of basement to rear as extension to existing nightclub (Sui Generis) at No. 9 Gun St; Erection of replacement two storey building to rear for micro-*

*brewery (Sui Generis) with associated access, part de-culverting of brook, external open area and various other alterations.*

### **151282/LBC**

*Various internal and external alterations including demolition of existing ground/first floor rear extensions, in association with change of use from office (Class B1) to café/restaurant (Class A3) at basement to second floor level, including replacement ground and first floor rear extension; Excavation of basement to rear as extension to existing nightclub (Sui Generis) at No. 9 Gun St; Erection of replacement two storey building to rear for micro-brewery (Sui Generis) with associated access, part de-culverting of brook, external open area and various other alterations.*

Following the applicant's wish not to implement the previous proposals and a number of revisions brought about in liaison with statutory consultees, the main changes between the approved scheme and this particular scheme are as follows:

- Removal of basement nightclub extension;
- Removal of the de-culverted section of the Holy Brook;
- The proposed brewery building to be 1400mm higher than the consented scheme;
- New enclosed staircase structure providing access to the brewery building in lieu of internal stairs;
- Existing front cellar to listed building not being converted to WCs and being retained as existing storage area;

As part of these proposals there remains the intention to provide an enhanced external open area to the rear of the building for customers (similar to other adjoining establishments along Gun Street) and the intention for the new micro-brewery to supply ale to the adjacent Purple Turtle as they fall within the same ownership.

Listed Building Consent is required for these works and associated internal alterations. A separate Listed Building Consent (191244) has been submitted and is considered in parallel to the planning application (191243).

In terms of the floorspaces involved, the existing building comprises 224sqm of office accommodation. The extended proposed building for Class A3 use totals 311sqm. As such, there is a net increase of 87sqm as part of this element of the proposal. The proposed sui generis elements (microbrewery and basement) total 171sqm. As such, the overall increase in floorspace at the site is 258sqm, from 224sqm to 482sqm.

### **3. Consultations**

#### **Statutory**

RBC Transport - No objection subject to conditions.

RBC Heritage Consultant - No objections.

*"The proposed alterations and extension to the rear of the property is similar in detail to consented application 151281. There are no objections to the proposals, in principal, subject to following conditions attached to consent"*

RBC Natural Environment Team - No objections.

RBC Environmental Protection - No objection subject to conditions.

RBC Ecology - No objection subject to conditions.

RBC Archaeology - No objection.

The Environment Agency - Object.

Five separate rounds of consultation were undertaken with the EA over the removal of the de-culverting from the proposals and can viewed on the public file. Concluding comments were as follows:

*"We welcome the amended layout illustrated in Drawing No. 004 Rev. P that shows the proposed brewery building to have been moved back so that it is no longer partially positioned over the culverted Holy Brook. However, the amended proposal does not include the opening up of the culvert, so we maintain our objection on these grounds.*

*We object to the proposed development as submitted due to the failure to restore the ecological value of the Holy Brook and recommend that planning permission should be refused on this basis."*

#### **Non-Statutory**

Historic England - No comment.

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) - No comments received.

The Canal and River Trust - No comment

Thames Water - No comment

#### **Public consultation**

Notification letters were sent to the adjoining properties, and the Council displayed a site notice on the site from 11 March 2019. No public letter of representation received.

#### **4. Relevant Planning History**

##### **10 Gun St (application site) Excluding 151281/FUL and 151282/LBC**

081139 / 08-01677-LBC - Works relating to the change of use from offices to A1 at ground floor with offices above to include demolition of existing extensions and erection of new extension and internal alterations. Withdrawn 16/2/09.

081187 / 08-01676-FUL - Change of use from offices to A1 at ground floor with offices above to include demolition of existing extensions and erection of new extension and internal alterations. Withdrawn 16/2/09.

091230 / 09/00928/FUL - Change of use from offices to A1 at ground floor with offices above to include demolition of existing extensions and stair enclosure, replacement extensions, replacement stair enclosure, minor internal alterations (Resubmission of 08/01676/FUL). Granted 14/8/09.

090612 / 09-00929-LBC - Works associated with the change of use from offices to A1 at ground floor with offices above to include demolition of existing extensions and stair enclosure, replacement extensions, replacement stair enclosure and internal alterations. (Resubmission of 08/01677/LBC). Granted 14/8/09.

091741 / 09-02111-FUL - Change of use to A3. Demolition of late extensions and stair enclosure (stairs retained), replacement extensions and stair enclosure. Granted 28/1/10.

090085 / 09-02154-LBC - Works associated with the change of use to A3. Demolition of late extensions and stair enclosure (stairs retained), replacement extensions and stair enclosure. Granted 28/1/10.

100759 / 10-01343-FUL - Change of use of first, second, attic floors from B1a (offices) to A1 (retail) in association with permitted ground floor conversion and extension (ref: 09/00928/FUL). Granted 9/9/10.

120577 / 12-00939-EXT - Application for an extension of time limit for implementation of permission 09/00928/FUL for change of use from offices to A1 at ground floor with offices above to include demolition of existing extensions and stair enclosure, replacement extensions, replacement stair enclosure, minor internal alterations. Granted 7/8/12.

120578 / 12-00940-LBC - Application for an extension of time limit for implementation of permission 09/00929/LBC for works associated with the change of use from offices to A1 at ground floor with offices above to include demolition of existing extensions and stair enclosure, replacement extensions, replacement stair enclosure and internal alterations. Granted 7/8/12.

121736 / 12/01308/FUL - Change of use to A1 (Retail) or A3 (Restaurant). Refurbishment and alterations including single storey rear extension. Granted 15/10/12.

121737 / 12/01309/LBC - Works Associated with the change of use to A1 (Retail) or A3 (Restaurant). Refurbishment and alterations including single storey rear extension. Granted 15/10/12.

### **9 Gun St (Purple Turtle) Adjoining**

950935 / 95-00677-FUL - Change of use from retail shop (Class A1) to premises for the sale of food and drink (Class A3). Granted 19/10/95.

101474 / 10/00615/FUL & 101475 & 10/00616/LBC - Internal refurbishment, minor new build and garden refurbishment (resubmission of 09/02078/FUL). Granted 29/07/10 / 30/07/10.

## **5. 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.

## **6. 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. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which also states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

The following relevant planning policy and guidance is applicable to the assessment of this application. The following national policy, local policies and supplementary guidance is relevant in the considering of this application:

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Feb 2019)

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development  
Section 4 - Decision-making  
Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy  
Section 7 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres  
Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities  
Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport  
Section 11 - Making effective use of land  
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places  
Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change  
Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment  
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION  
CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE  
CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE  
CC6: ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT  
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM  
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY  
EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT  
EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS  
EN5: PROTECTION OF SIGNIFICANT VIEWS WITH HERITAGE INTEREST  
EN6: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT  
EN11: WATERSPACES  
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK  
EN15: AIR QUALITY  
EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES  
EN17: NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT  
EN18: FLOODING AND DRAINAGE  
EM4: MAINTAINING A VARIETY OF PREMISES  
TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY  
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS  
RL2: SCALE AND LOCATION OF RETAIL, LEISURE AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT  
RL5: IMPACT OF MAIN TOWN CENTRE USES  
RL6: PROTECTION OF LEISURE FACILITIES AND PUBLIC HOUSES

CR1: DEFINITION OF CENTRAL READING  
CR2: DESIGN IN CENTRAL READING  
CR3: PUBLIC REALM IN CENTRAL READING  
CR4: LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM IN CENTRAL READING  
CR5: DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS IN CENTRAL READING

#### Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)  
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

#### Other Reading Borough Council Corporate documents

Reading Tree Strategy (2020)

#### Other material guidance and legislation

National Planning Practice Guidance (2021)  
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015  
Section 66(1) of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
Section 72 of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (Amended 2015)

## **7. Appraisal**

The main issues are considered to be:

- Principle of development
- Heritage assets and visual impact
- Flood risk and water environment

#### Principle of development

In terms of the proposed Class A3 use, this revised proposal would continue to involve the loss of the existing office use at the site. It remains the case that the building has been vacant for a number of years and is in a poor state of repair and there now exists a greater economic and social to ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is supported. In terms of Class A3 use, such a use in this location (existing active frontage, the primary shopping area and the central core) is consistent with adjoining uses and welcomed in principle land use terms. With regard to the Local Plan and having due regard to previous permissions, there remains no in-principle objection to the proposed change of use.

Considering the proposed sui generis (micro-brewery use) at rear of the site, this is effectively a complimenting use to that of the Purple Turtle and sought used at 10 Gun Street. Moreover, such a use complies with the principles of the Local Plan. The amenity section below will go into more details regarding the specific potential impacts of the proposed use. Thus, in overall terms, no overriding land use concerns are raised with these revised proposals.

#### Heritage assets and visual impact

Local Authorities are required by Section 66 and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and effects upon listed buildings or their setting when considering development proposals that affect the setting or views into it. This is reflected locally within the Local Plan which requires proposals to protect and where possible enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.



Fig 2: Rear elevation (2019)

Along with the previous proposals, these revised proposals have been subject to extensive consideration and discussion with specialist conservation/heritage advisors, including the submission of a detailed Heritage Statement. The Council's Heritage consultant, also mindful of the recent planning history at the site, is content with the proposals subject to a range of conditions to be added to the application and accompanying Listed Building Consent.

The proposed development is considered to achieve the requirement of preserving the settings of the Listed Buildings and would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with the statutory requirements of Sections 66(1) and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the requirements of Reading Local Plan policies and guidance in the NPPF and guidance in PPG. The LPA has therefore discharged its statutory duties under the act.

#### Flood risk and water environment

The site is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3. Furthermore, part of the site is within the functional floodplain, owing to the culverted Holy Brook. The National Planning Practice Guide (NPPG) classifies restaurant uses (Class A3) as 'less vulnerable' uses in terms of flood risk. The submitted FRA submitted by the applicant demonstrates that any increase in footprint at the site will not require floodplain compensation. None is proposed.

The original consented scheme from 2015 included the part de-culverting of the Holy Brook through the rear of the site. This aspect of the scheme was strongly supported by both the EA and LPA from an environmental perspective. This current application no longer includes the de-culverting element, with the area originally de-culverted used for additional outdoor seating in connection with the proposed A3 use. The justification for the removal of the de-culverting works is that they would threaten the viability of the overall scheme and along with other aspects of the scheme like the extended nightclub in the basement, the applicant no longer wished to pursue them. The EA was of the view that such rationale was insufficient to remove the de-culverting from the application and share the LPA's view that there remains value in opening and enhancing at least part of the Holy Brook.

The LPA fully acknowledge that engineered river channels are one of the most severe examples of the destruction of ecologically valuable habitat. The restoration and enhancement of such watercourses is an objective of Policy EN11 'Waterspaces' of the Local plan. This is also supported by paragraphs 170 and 175 of the NPPF which recognise that the planning system should conserve and enhance the environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

In exploring the options available to overcome the EAs objection, the proposal would need to demonstrate how the watercourse would be restored and enhanced to a more natural state and maintained as such thereafter. This would specifically include the de-culverting of at least 50% of the Holy Brook through the site and channel enhancements such as the establishment of appropriate native vegetation and the incorporation of gravels. It should also ideally include details of how the brook will be managed in the longer term and who will be responsible for its management.

Currently the section of the Holy Brook running through the site is entirely culverted and covered over with hardstanding and therefore not visible from within the site. Whether in its current permitted use as B1 Office or proposed A3 use, there is no restriction on the land above the water course being used in connection with main use of the building, as it can be at present. It should also be noted, the current culverted section of the watercourse running through the site also provide no biodiversity value in its current state. Separate to the planning regime, an environmental permit would be required by the land owner for any activities which will take place on or within 8 metres of a culvert (Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016). The previous planning consent to de-culvert a section of the Holy Brook through the site has now expired, and whilst useful in understanding the principle and desirability of de-culverting works (which would be wholeheartedly supported by all parties), it is a fact that it is nevertheless unable to be implemented and no longer features as part of this current planning application. The existing condition of the site and the status of previous consents are an important material consideration in assessing any revised proposal.

The Council are unable to withhold planning permission on the basis that a current proposal no longer contains elements that a previous 'more desirable' proposal contained in the past, whether it be environmentally through de-culverting, or economically through the nightclub extension. Every planning application must be considered on their own merits, against the Local Plan and the existing use of the land at the time of the application.

This was discussed with the EA's Planning Adviser at length during the course of this revised application. The LPA made it clear that the principle of assessing the current scheme against a previous 'unimplemented and expired' permission was inappropriate, unjustified and would not comply with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. To impose such a requirement on any applicant would be disproportionate, unreasonable and incorrect application of planning practice.

Therefore, the starting point for the assessment of this current planning application is the existing building (vacant and laid to hardstanding at the rear), its permitted use (B1 office), status of the watercourse (culverted) and the Local Plan policies which are relevant to the specific description of this development (see below).



Fig 3: View southwards into rear yard (2019)

Policy EN11 'Waterspaces' states that Reading's waterspaces will not only be protected but enhanced and that development in the vicinity of watercourses will pursue opportunities for deculverting of watercourses (Officer emphasis). In addition, supporting paragraph 4.2.48 states that 'Development should seek to increase the prominence of the Holy Brook, and open up the brook for public access, as well as consider any opportunities for deculverting it, which will provide ecological and potentially flood risk benefits' (Officer emphasis). Policy EN12 '*Biodiversity and the Green Network*' states that *the green network which includes all of the Thames tributaries, shall be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced. Point c) states that 'On all sites, development should ... provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible.'*

In recognising the entire rear of the site is covered with hardstanding, the proposal proposes the erection of a new terrace seating area and new building to house a micro-brewery. This remains similar to the approved 2015 consent. The EA also objected to this new building as it would have rightly encroached over the culverted section of the Holy Brook. Despite no plans to de-culvert the watercourse, the LPA actively sought amendments and additional information to show the new micro-brewery building would no longer be built over the culverted section of the Holy Brook. This would therefore retain the option of the watercourse be de-culverted in the future should the current or any future land owner have the desire and financial means to do so.

In 'pursuing opportunities' for de-culverting this watercourse, the LPA engaged with the applicant over a significant period of time, sought amendments and additional information to allow de-culverting to occur in the future. In respecting the applicant's decision not to pursue de-culverting, additional options were explored to improve biodiversity on the site given the site's current level of hardstanding (covered in a later section). Therefore, whilst the LPA would of course have preferred de-culverting to be pursued, the tests required by Policy EN11 and EN12 of the Local Plan, namely to 'pursue' and 'consider' any opportunities' for de-culverting, have been adequately discharged.

In correspondence, the EA confirmed that if the LPA were minded to grant permission against their recommendation, they requested the LPA reconsult them for further representation. On the 14th May 2020, the LPA formally notified the EA that the application was being recommended for approval subject to relevant conditions securing a green wall and habitat enhancement (discussed later in this report). In response on the 12th June 2020, the EA maintained their objection due to the failure to restore the ecological value of the Holy Brook but confirmed that an FRA condition and Environmental Permit informative should be imposed if the LPA are minded to approve the application.

The development is therefore considered acceptable from a flood risk and water environment perspective, with compliance with the relevant tests of the Local Plan and with due regard to all other material considerations.

#### Natural Environment / Ecology

The Council's Ecologist is satisfied with the proposals following the submission of a Bat survey report. This is subject to a condition seeking for the recommendations within the report being followed. As per the Natural Environment observations, given a fairly largely

'open garden' area is proposed, details of the hard and soft landscaping details are required to be secured via condition.

As discussed, the LPA has been in detailed discussions with the applicant concerning securing nature conservation enhancements at the site. This is primarily in response to the fact the site currently makes no positive contribution to the natural environment. Agreement was secured for a green wall on the rear north facing façade of the micro-brewery building, and wider habitat enhancement scheme to be included along with hard and soft landscaping to the rear of the site.

Deliverable environmental benefits were negotiated by the LPA, which when compared with the current condition and limited contribution the site makes to the towns natural environment, constitutes a net gain in biodiversity. The Council's Ecology and Natural Environment Team duly raised no objections to the revised proposals subject to conditions.

### Amenity

Given the proximity of residential accommodation to the site (11-12 Gun Street to the east being the closest, while Minster Court further to the east is still relatively close to the site and the upper floors of the Purple Turtle to the west incorporates ancillary residential accommodation 'Turtle Towers'), it is considered that a number of conditions are required to be secured in order to maintain the amenity of nearby occupiers.

This firstly comprises the hours of operations considered appropriate at the site. For the Class A3 use the applicant is seeking 0800 - 0000 on a daily basis. This is consistent with previous consents for the use and agreed.

In terms of lighting, no details have been submitted. Given that a fairly large garden area and an external terrace area at first floor level are proposed, it is considered necessary to secure details of any external lighting (if subsequently proposed) via condition. Similarly, no finite details concerning waste storage and collection are specified on the plans, meaning this matter will also be secured via condition.

Other conditions recommended to be added to protect nearby amenity include the standard noise condition and a specific noise condition in terms of details concerning the proposed micro-brewery. Furthermore, it is considered appropriate and necessary to limit the use of the external areas proposed to 2300 daily (consistent with recommendations by the Environmental Protection officer). Furthermore, during the construction period, the standard working hours condition is also recommended.

With the conditions above secured, it is considered that the proposals would not introduce any harmful new uses to the immediate area or result in significant harmful amenity impacts for nearby occupiers. With the above in mind, it is therefore considered that the proposals complies with the amenity objectives of the Local Plan.

### Transport

As per the transport observations above, no significant adverse transport impacts are envisaged from the proposals.

### Other matters

*Sustainability* - The applicant has submitted a sustainability statement, which specifies that the key sustainability objectives for development at the 10 Gun Street site. It is considered necessary and appropriate for a two-stage BREEAM condition (final design stage prior to occupation and post completion certificate) to be secured in this instance.

*Archaeology* - Berkshire Archaeology are content with the information provided with the application, subject to a condition securing an archaeological investigation at the site prior to the commencement of works.

*Air Quality* - Although the application site is located within an air quality management area, Environmental Protection colleagues have raised no concerns with the proposals in this regard.

*CIL* - The applicant has submitted CIL liability information. Based on this, the proposals will not attract a CIL contribution (in line with the charging schedule).

## **8. Conclusion**

The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development running through both plan-making and decision-taking. The three dimensions to achieving sustainable development are defined in the NPPF as: economic, social and environmental. Both the adopted Local Plan and the NPPF require a positive approach to decision-taking to foster the delivery of sustainable development. These three dimensions of sustainable development are also central to the Council's Local Plan core Policy CC1.

The proposal would see a vacant Listed building in disrepair brought back into an active complimentary use along Gun Street. Whilst not significant, during the construction phase the proposed development would clearly contribute to and encourage associated economic activity by directly sustaining jobs in the borough. This would be supported further and in the long term by new employment opportunities in the hospitality sector, at a time where the economic recovery of the borough and hospitality sector is of paramount importance due to Covid19 .

In terms of the social role, the proposal will secure the reuse of a heritage asset, ensuring the building is protected and valued in the future. In terms of health and wellbeing, the current Covid19 requires Local Planning Authorities to actively ensure new development maintain peoples' health, wellbeing, safety and overall comfort. The internal and external space is considered good quality, with the use of external seating facilitating safe social interaction.

Finally, with regard to the natural environment and the role this development will play in meeting the challenge of climate change, it is recognised that a refurbished and extended building would inherently meet an enhanced level of sustainability than existing through compliance with up-to-date building regulation standards. The introduction of on-site soft landscape planting, a green wall and habitat enhancement scheme would provide visual and environmental benefits, thereby allowing the site to confidently perform a far greater environmental role than it does as present. Whilst the de-culverting of the Holy Brook is no longer proposed, the proposals are considered to perform a more positive environmental role than at present and safeguard the ability to de-culvert in the future.

In summary, the proposal provides notable and tangible benefits, fulfilling many aspects which contribute to achieving the three dimensions of sustainable development. Having regard to all matters raised, it is concluded that these combined environmental, economic and social benefits outweigh any principle objection to the failure to de-culvert that section of the Holy Brook that runs through the site. Therefore, when applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations presented, this planning application and accompanying LBC is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

## Recommendation

Grant Planning Permission / Listed Building Consent subject to conditions

