

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Application No: 210032/FUL

Address: Q2, Watlington Street

Proposal: To carry out the installation of new external cladding consisting of aluminium support brackets, cavity barriers and cement fibre cladding panels and associated metal fixings

Target Date: 13/04/21

Case Officer: Connie Davis

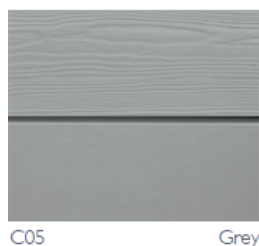
1. Site Description and Surrounding Area

The 'Q2' building is situated on the south-eastern corner of the Queens Road, Watlington Street, and Kings Road gyratory system with Kennet Street running along its northern boundary. The Q2 building is a purpose built 9 storey development of 86 residential units with a ground floor commercial unit and associated car parking and landscaping. The application relates to a retail unit on the ground floor of the Q2 building on the Watlington Road. The surrounding area comprises the adjacent residential development at 'Q1' and a mix of commercial and residential properties of varying ages and design.

To the south of the site is the Eldon Square Conservation Area; however the application site itself does not fall within the Conservation Area. There are also a number of Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the application site, including the Wesley Methodist Church.

2. Proposal

The proposal comprises of the installation of new cladding to parts of the south and east facing sides of the building. The cladding would be grey cement fibre cladding with wood grain appearance.



The works are proposed in light of the Grenfell Tower disaster as the existing cladding has been identified as not suitable in terms of fire safety.

3. Internal Consultations

Transport - Construction Method Statement required to confirm how the cladding will be installed given the location of the building. Following the receipt of the CMS, and this being deemed acceptable, there are no objections.

4. External Consultees

A site notice was displayed between 11/03/21 - 01/04/21.

No comments have been received.

5. Plans/Documents Considered

Construction Traffic Management Plan dated 26/03/21

Received 26th March 2021

D01 Rev D1 - Existing Elevation

D01 Rev D1 - Existing Elevation

Received 16th February 2021

Existing Highlighted Elevation Photograph

L001 Rev P3 - Cedral Cladding Layout Queens Road Elevation

L002 Rev P3 - Cedral Cladding Layout Queens Road Elevation Ground Floor

L003 Rev P3 - Cedral Cladding Layout East Elevation Above Roof Terrace

L004 Rev P3 - Cedral Cladding Layout East Elevation Above Adjacent Building

Received 10th February 2021

Brochure produced by Cedral

Letters from Management Company to residents

Received 8th January 2021

6. Relevant Planning History

None of particular relevance to this application.

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 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. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Local Development Framework 'Core Strategy' 2008 (Altered 2015).

The 'National Planning Policy framework' ('NPPF') 2019 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).

9. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework 2019;
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards;

Reading Borough Council Local Plan

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
CC7 Design and the Public Realm
CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas
TR3 Traffic, Access and Highway-Related Matters

Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)

10. Appraisal

The main issues are considered to be:

- Principle and design
- Impact on adjacent Conservation Area and nearby Listed Building
- Amenity
- Transport/ Highway Matters

i) Principle of development and design

There is no strong resistance to the principle of replacing the existing cladding, subject to being considered an appropriate design.

The existing cladding is a pale wood grain, whereas the proposed would be light grey, but the texture of similar appearance (woodgrain). The colour grey is a feature on the building, notably window frames, and is considered a colour choice that has some linkage to the wider site. Cladding is also to be replaced on specific parts of the building, rather than full coverage of the elevations. In terms of scale, the proportion of cladding on the elevations will remain the same. As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

ii) Impact on the adjacent Conservation Area and nearby Listed Building

The proposed cladding would be visible southwards on Watlington Street which is part of the Eldon Square Conservation Area. It would also be within the vicinity of the Grade II Listed Wesley Methodist Church. However, when the proposal is assessed in relation to the existing building, it is not considered that the revised materials would be substantially harmful to the setting of the Heritage assets. Whilst the colour change may be noticeable, the proposed grey is considered to suitably relate to the features of the existing building and therefore would not be considered a stark contrast when viewed from the Conservation Area/ in relation to the listed building.

As such, there is not considered resistance to the application in terms of policies EN1 and EN3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

iii) Amenity

The proposed replacement cladding is not considered to cause harm to the residents of the blocks in terms of loss of light and privacy.

One aspect that has to be considered is that development would not cause detrimental effect on the living environment of residential properties in terms of safety. In this type of application, the proposal's acceptability from a fire safety perspective is critical following the Grenfell Tower disaster. This planning application has not assessed the suitability of the proposal from a fire safety perspective as this is beyond the remit of the planning process. Separate Building Control Approval should be sought to confirm the proposal's acceptability in this regard before installing the cladding. This will be advised to the applicant by way of an informative.

From a planning perspective, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

vi) Transport/ Highway Matters

A Construction Method Statement was provided detailing how works would be carried out given the building is situated close to the highway on all elevations. This was reviewed by Transport officers and considered acceptable. As such, a compliance condition will be attached to the permission requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with

the CMS in order to be considered acceptable in terms of Policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

11. Conclusion

Having regard to the material considerations and all matters raised, the Local Planning Authority considers that the balance of considerations therefore weigh in favour of granting consent subject to conditions.

Recommendation

GRANT

12. Conditions:

1. TL - Standard time limit
2. AP - Standard approved plans
3. M2 - Materials as proposed
4. CMS - As specified

Informatives:

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