

Application No: 191954/LBC

Address: The Maltings, Fobney Street, Reading RG1 6BT

Proposal: Internal alterations for inclusion of restrooms on each floor

Case officer: Anthony Scholes

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The site this enquiry relates to is the land and buildings associated with 'The Maltings', Bear Wharf, located on the southern side of Fobney Street, Reading RG1 6BT. The site is located within the boundary of the Reading Central Area. The nearby river path is a pedestrian route, Fobney Street is a cycle route and the site is within an area of archaeological importance, an Air Quality Management Area, Flood zone 2 & 3 and a designated Green Link. The site currently contains a two and a half storey building. Although presently vacant, it was previously occupied by the Loch Fyne Restaurant. The building is a Grade II listed building, the listing details are as follows:

FOBNEY STREET 1. 5128 Building now part of Courage's Brewery SU 7173 SW 2/481 II 2. Once probably a malthouse. Picturesque setting on the River Kennet. Early C19. Red brick. 2 1/2 storeys with mansard tiled roof. 7 bays, altered on north side which has 2 dormers. To South: large segmental headed windows on ground floor, small on 1st floor with wood lintels, cast iron glazing bars. Gable end lunettes.

Proposal:

It is proposed, following approval of permission 190619 (Change of use from A3 to B1(a)) to incorporate restrooms on all floors.

Documents Considered:

- Proposed Site Layout W-10 Rev T1
- Ground Flor GA plan W-20 Rev T1
- First Floor GA plan W-21 Rev T1
- Second floor GA plan W-22 Rev T1
- Section A-A W-30 Rev T2
- Section B-B W-31 Rev T2
- Construction build ups W-50 Rev T1
- Detail sheet 02 Section details W-81 Rev T1

Relevant Planning History:

930905 - LBC - Replace existing roof of single storey rear extension with ply and roofing felt APPROVED 24/9/96

980363 - LBC - Replace existing pavement grill with concrete/glass pavement light APPROVED 18/12/98

141394 - LBC - Add a cat flap to the external door leading from the rear porch into the garden APPROVED 7/11/17

151601 - LBC - External alterations to repair and redecorate the front of the property APPROVED 29/10/15

152189 - APC - Discharge of condition 2 (render mix/ finish details) of LBC 151601
APPROVED 29/10/15

190619/FUL - Change of use from use class A3 (restaurant and cafe) to B1(a) to provide new office accommodation and an application for changes to a listed building. APPROVED 18/6/19

190620/LBC - Change of use from use class A3 (restaurant and cafe) to B1(a) to provide new office accommodation and an application for changes to a listed building. APPROVED 18/6/19

Consultation Response:

Public consultation

A site notice has been displayed at the site since. No representations have been received.

Heritage officer:

RBC heritage consultant accompanied the assessing officer for a site inspection prior to the submission of the original application (190619/190620). The Heritage Officer noted a number of elements of original fabric which are to be retained as part of the original applications. This application does not include any modifications which would affect (without the ability to be easily reversed) the historic elements which include: cast iron columns, internal historic timberwork to mansard roof with iron reinforcing straps, crittel windows throughout, and timber flooring. The internal dog-leg staircase, and other staircases, are modern insertions (an external staircase originally existed, currently there are also two staircases at either end of the building).

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.

LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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 the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Historic England Good Practice Guide Note Number 2: managing significance in decision-taking

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

APPRAISAL

Historic Character and Appearance

Policy EN1 states that: *“All proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits ... and ... Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.”*

The proposed alterations to internal provision of rest rooms on each floor, with no external alterations proposed as part of this application. The building would have originally been used for the storage of goods delivered from the adjacent canal. The building was originally open with several floors of storage, with a large area toward the Fobney Street side not including full width flooring (having a void to allow elevations of goods). The building has also been subject to refurbishment for the previous use as a restaurant.

The building has a number of internal features of significance, particularly portions of flooring, and support beams. The proposed works would not result in the removal of any internal elements of historic value, and would therefore not have a significant detrimental impact on the heritage significance of the building.

Conclusion

The proposed works have been assessed and found to be acceptable as they comply with the identified policies, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Listed Building Consent