

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Application No: 200889/FUL

Address: 1 Station Road

Proposal: Alteration to existing shopfront to Friar Street and Station Road comprising the part removal of the existing glazed shopfront / signage band and replacement with a new part glazed and brick elevation, alteration to louvers to Station Road elevation (amended)

Applicant: Wendy's Restaurants of UK Ltd

Case Officer: Connie Davis

Target Date: 14/10/20

Site Description and Surrounding Area

The application site relates to a Locally Listed building located on the corner of Friar Street and Station Road, although the majority of its frontage is on Station Road. The building was designated locally listed in February 2020 and has been vacant since 2018 when Nationwide relocated from the site. The building comprises of 5 storeys and Prior Approval has been granted to change the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors from office to residential, although it is not believed that this has been implemented. The site is located within the Reading Central Area, Central Core, Primary Shopping Area and within an existing designated Active Frontage.

Permission has been granted from the change of use from a bank (A2 use class) to a restaurant/ takeaway (A3/A5 use class). The site will be occupied by American chain, Wendy's.

Proposal

The proposal seeks a replacement shopfront. More specifically, the shopfront would include the removal of some of the existing glazed frontage and replace with Flemish bond brick. Fascia boards are also to be replaced with metal panels painted dark grey (Stormy Gray). A stone plinth is also to be reinstated, along with the installation of a window on the Station Road elevation as a delivery hatch. The existing louvre is also to be painted and slightly recessed.

During the course of the application the proposals have been amended, with particular emphasis on the proposed materials.

For clarity, this is one of two current applications at the site. As such, whilst signage is shown on the proposed plans, this is not assessed as part of this application. An informative will be included on the decision notice to clarify this.

Internal Consultations

Heritage: No objections to the revised scheme.

External Consultees

The following addresses were formally consulted via letter on 02/07/20:

3-5 Station Road
23 Friar Street

In addition, a site notice was sent to the agent on 02/07/20.

No responses have been received.

Plans/Documents Considered

The agent supplied the following plans:

A0.100 Rev A - Site Plan
PL.1510 - Existing Elevations

Received 26th June 2020

Planning Statement

Received 29th June 2020

SK-05 Rev B - Proposed Elevation
SK-06 Rev A - Proposed Elevation
CGI Image

Received 8th October 2020

A1.15 Rev B - GA Plan Rendered

Received 9th October 2020

Relevant Planning History

200890/ADV - Installation of 1 x internally illuminated and 1 x non-illuminated fascia sign to both Friar Street and Station Road elevations. 2 x internally illuminated projecting signs, (one on both Friar Street and Station Road elevations) (amended description) - Under consideration

200845/FUL - Change of use of the ground floor and part of lower ground floor from A2 financial and professional services to a mixed-use A3 / A5 restaurant / take away use and associated works including external ventilation louvre to station road elevation - Application Permitted

200827/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (Noise assessment), 4 (Odour assessment) and 5 (Station Road Louvres) of application 200343 - Conditions Discharged

200846/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 6 (refuse Strategy) and 7 (Litter Strategy) of application 200343 - Conditions Discharged

200863/OPA - Change of use of 2nd and 3rd floors from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 7 flats. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - Prior Approval Not Required

200343/FUL - Change of use of ground floor from A2 Financial & Professional Services to mixed-use A3/A5 Restaurant/Take away use & associated works including external ventilation Louvre to Station Road elevation - Application Permitted

191588/FUL - Erection of second and third floor rear extension (for residential purposes to create 3 additional dwellings) to existing building (linked to Prior Approval application 191446) - Under Consideration

191589/FUL - Installation of additional windows into rear (west-facing) elevation and erection of new dormer window to front roof slope (linked to Prior Approval Application 191446) - Under Consideration

191446/OPA - Change of use of 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 12 flats. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - Prior Approval Not Required

182109/OPA - Change of use 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors of building from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 15 dwellings. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - Prior Approval Not Required

181997/FUL - Change of Use of ground and basement floors from A2 (financial/professional service) to A3 (Restaurant and café) use - Application Returned

Discussion with applicant/ agent

A series of discussions were held with the agent and applicant via telephone calls and a video meeting. Officers' main concern was the proposed materials to be used on both the Friar Street and Station Road elevation (aluminium cladding). A sample was submitted but was not considered a sensitive choice for the heritage asset. As such, revised materials were selected, along with making other changes to accord with design and heritage policies.

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 the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted November 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 Plan 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).

Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework 2012;
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards;

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
- OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines
- RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres
- CR2: Design in Central Reading
- CR7: Primary Frontages in Central Reading

Appraisal

The main issues considered in this proposal are as follows:

- a) Land use principles
- b) Design and impact on Locally Listed Building

a) Land use principles

The alterations to the shopfront and associated works are considered to assist in maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the Central Reading area, complying with Policy RL1.

b) Design and impact on Locally Listed Building

In accordance with Reading Borough Local Plan policy EN4:

Development proposals that affect locally important heritage assets will demonstrate that development conserves architectural, archaeological or historical significance which may include the appearance, character and setting of the asset.

Planning permission may be granted in cases where a proposal could result in harm to or loss of a locally important heritage asset only where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the asset's significance. Where it is accepted by the Local Planning Authority that retention is not important, recording of the heritage asset should be undertaken and submitted alongside development proposals. Replacement buildings should draw upon heritage elements of the previous design, incorporating historical qualities that made the previous building significant. This may include appearance, scale and architectural quality.

As part of the change of use of the building to a Wendy's restaurant, substantial re-design to the shopfront is proposed. The proposed design has been informed by the historic features of the building and with the aim of bringing some traditional features of the building back into the design which were lost as part of the former Nationwide frontage. Namely it includes bringing additional brickwork to ground floor level, which will remove a portion of the glazed frontage on both the Friar Street and Station Road elevations. Policy CR7 and OU5 seek to retain glazed shopfronts, and although acknowledged some glass panels are to be blocked by the brick detailing (where advertisements are to be displayed - subject to separate advertisement consent), it is considered that the Heritage benefits outweigh this consideration in this particular instance. A good level of glazing will still remain, particularly on the Friar Street elevation, as negotiated as part of the application. Fascia boards will also be retained, as per Policy OU5.



Historic photo of the site

The proposal also seeks to re-instate a plinth along the Station Road and Friar Street elevations and insert a window to the Station Road elevation as a delivery hatch. This is particularly essential given the current Covid-19 pandemic and the increased reliance on the delivery of food. It is considered that the addition of the window is acceptable given its proportions are somewhat in keeping with the remainder of the frontage, and that a traditional window sill element is to be reinstated.

Overall the scheme is considered to enhance the Locally Listed building, and its design more in keeping with the detailing and materials of the upper floors, and its historic appearance. It is acknowledged that the building was only Locally Listed in February 2020 and so these considerations were not as well considered or implemented during previous shopfront applications at the site. However this application presents an opportunity to enhance features of the building that have previously been lost. The site is also surrounded by Listed Buildings (Queen Victoria Street, Café Nero, Pitcher and Piano) and so the proposal is considered to positively respond and integrate with its surroundings.

As such, the proposal is considered to enhance the Locally Listed and to be in accordance with design policies as referenced.

Conclusion

The development has been assessed and the works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and planning permission can be granted.

Recommendation

GRANT permission

Conditions

- 1) Time Limit
- 2) Approved Plans
- 3) Materials as specified on the plans

INFORMATIVES

- 1) Terms
- 2) Building Control
- 3) Complaints about construction

- 4) Encroachment
- 5) Adverts will require separate consent
- 6) Positive and Proactive