

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Application No: 201099/FUL

Address: 41 Minster Street, Reading, RG1 2JB

Proposal: Proposed to remove glass panes from two windows on the ground floor southeast elevation. Two aluminium louvres will be installed and fixed to the metal window frames (Amended Description).

Case Officer: David Brett

Applicant: British Telecom PLC

Received on: 03/08/2020

Valid on: 11/08/2020

Target Date: 06/10/2020

Application No: 201143/LBC

Address: 41 Minster Street, Reading, RG1 2JB

Proposal: Proposed to remove glass panes from two windows on the ground floor southeast elevation. Two aluminium louvres will be installed and fixed to the metal window frames (Amended Description).

Case Officer: David Brett

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Site Description and Surrounding Area

The proposal site is a Telephone Exchange at 41 Minster Street. The Telephone Exchange is a Grade II Listed Building (listing 1302939). The listing describes Telephone Exchange, 41-45 Minster Street as:

"MINSTER STREET 1. 5128 (South Side) No 41 to 45 (consec) (Telephone Exchange) SU 7173 SE 3/131A 26.7.73. II 2. Circa 1900. Architect Leonard Aloysius Stokes (a Voysey/Lethaby follower who had married Miss Gane daughter of the General Manager of the National Telephone Company). His aim was to develop a British style of architecture, free from revivals of past styles. The building consequently appears somewhat plain. 3 storeys of red brick with stone dressings in an attenuated Georgian style. Concealed roof. 5 bays wide, the end bays project slightly. To right is door with cornice and lunette window above. To left a window treated in a similar runner. Centre 3 bays divided by chamfered piers supporting cornice at 2nd floor level. Large windows between on each floor, 6 windows on 2nd floor. Single sash windows in breaks."

It is also within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). It is outside a conservation area (CA), but adjacent to St Mary's Butts / Castle Street CA and close to Market Place/London St CA too.

Proposal

The proposal seeks the following:

- Full planning permission for a proposed to remove glass panes from two windows on the ground floor southeast elevation. Two aluminium louvres will be installed and fixed to the metal window frames (Amended Description).
- Listed building consent for proposed to remove glass panes from two windows on the ground floor southeast elevation. Two aluminium louvres will be installed and fixed to the metal window frames (Amended Description).

Internal Consultations

Reading Borough Council, Conservation & Urban Design Officer - Response received on 05/10/2020

- The subject building is at the rear of the site and will generally not change the design of the façade;
- It is a modern building built c.1960s, after 1947, and is of low significance, and

- There have been other similar changes to the external façade;
- As long as the new grills match the existing new grills already in place;
- The proposed development is not considered to detrimentally impact the character or significance of the of the Grade II listed Building.

External Consultees

A site notice was displayed from Wednesday 19th August 2020, expiring on Wednesday 9th September 2020. A press notice was published from Thursday 27th August 2020, expiring on Thursday 17th September. No responses have been received.

Plans/Documents Considered

The agent supplied the following plans for applications 201099 and 201143:

- Block Plan Layout for Reading Central Telephone Exchange - 120250-301
- Proposed Planning Layout for Reading Central TE Ground Floor - 120250-300
- Design & Access Statement

These plans were received on 3rd August 2020

- Heritage Statement of Significance and Impact

This document was received on 11th August 2020

Relevant Planning History

161633/FUL - Removal of 3no. fixed window panes on the ground floor and replacement with aluminium weather louvres to match existing. - Application permitted on 28/10/2016

172295/FUL - Upgrade of existing rooftop base station comprising the relocation of an existing antenna and the provision of additional 3 No antennas together with feeder cables, steelworks and ancillary development thereto. - Application permitted on 27/04/2018 (Committee Decision)

172296/LBC - Upgrade of existing rooftop base station comprising the relocation of an existing antenna and the provision of additional 3 No antennas together with feeder cables, steelworks and ancillary development thereto. - Application permitted on 27/04/2018 (Committee Decision)

181231/FUL - It is proposed to recover the glazing from two windows on the ground floor and install two aluminium Louvres as per the submitted drawings and photos. The louvres will be powder coated white to match the existing windows and louvres on the same elevation. Application permitted on 30/11/2018

181476/LBC - It is proposed to recover the glazing from two windows on the ground floor and install two aluminium Louvres as per the submitted drawings and photos. The louvres will be powder coated white to match the existing windows and louvres on the same elevation. Application permitted on 30/11/2018

191386/LBC - Remove glass panes from three windows on the ground floor west elevation. Three aluminium louvres to be installed and fixed to the metal window frames. The finish will be silver to match existing louvres already installed in the building. - Application permitted on 29/10/2019

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

Application 201099

- 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).

Application 201143

- 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) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 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 a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

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 Local Plan (November 2019)

- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
- EN6: New Development in a Historic Context

- EN15: Air Quality
- CR2: Design in Central Reading

Appraisal

The main issues considered for these two separate applications are as follows:

Application 201099 Appraisal - Full Planning Permission

- a) Character and Appearance
- b) Amenity, Security, Public Safety and Accessibility
- c) Air Quality

Application 201143 Appraisal - Listed Building Consent

- a) Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- b) Safeguarding Amenity

Application 201099 Appraisal - Full Planning Permission

- a) Character and Appearance

The proposed additional louvres to the ground floor windows are considered in keeping with the overall character and appearance of 41 Minster Street. The proposed louvres are located on the southeast elevation of the building. The building itself is situated off of the main road, in an area that is not considered of high-quality visual character. The building itself is situated in an enclosed space, surrounded by The Oracle shopping centre. The proposed aluminium louvres will be fitted to match the existing louvres already in place on the southeast elevation. The proposal is not considered unacceptable against Reading Borough Local Plan policies CC7 and CR2 due to the scale and location of the development. The proposals are considered to respond positively to the setting of St Mary's Butts / Castle Street CA and Market Place/London St CA.

- b) Amenity, Security, Public Safety and Accessibility

As no additional noise generating equipment has been specified within the plans, it is not considered that the proposal would detrimentally impact amenity to the surrounding area. The proposal site is situated in a predominantly commercial area of the town centre, with the nearest residential building being Minster Court, west of the proposal site. If an application for an additional air cooling unit is required further down the line, then it is recommended that a BS4142:2014 noise assessment be provided within the application.

- c) Air Quality

This proposal has been considered against Reading Borough Local Plan policy EN15, as the proposal site is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). As demonstrated in the policy, this proposal does not meet the requirements for an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) and is considered not enough of a detrimental impact air quality to warrant such an assessment due to the size and scale of the proposal.

Application 201143 Appraisal - Listed Building Consent

- a) Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

The proposed development is not considered to detrimentally impact the character and appearance of the Grade II Listed Building. The Telephone Exchange is situated to the highway along Minster Street, away from the proposal site, which is off the highway within

a gated area. While the listing specifically refers to the Telephone Exchange, the address on the listing is 41-45 Minster Street, hence why the proposal is seeking listed building consent in this instance.

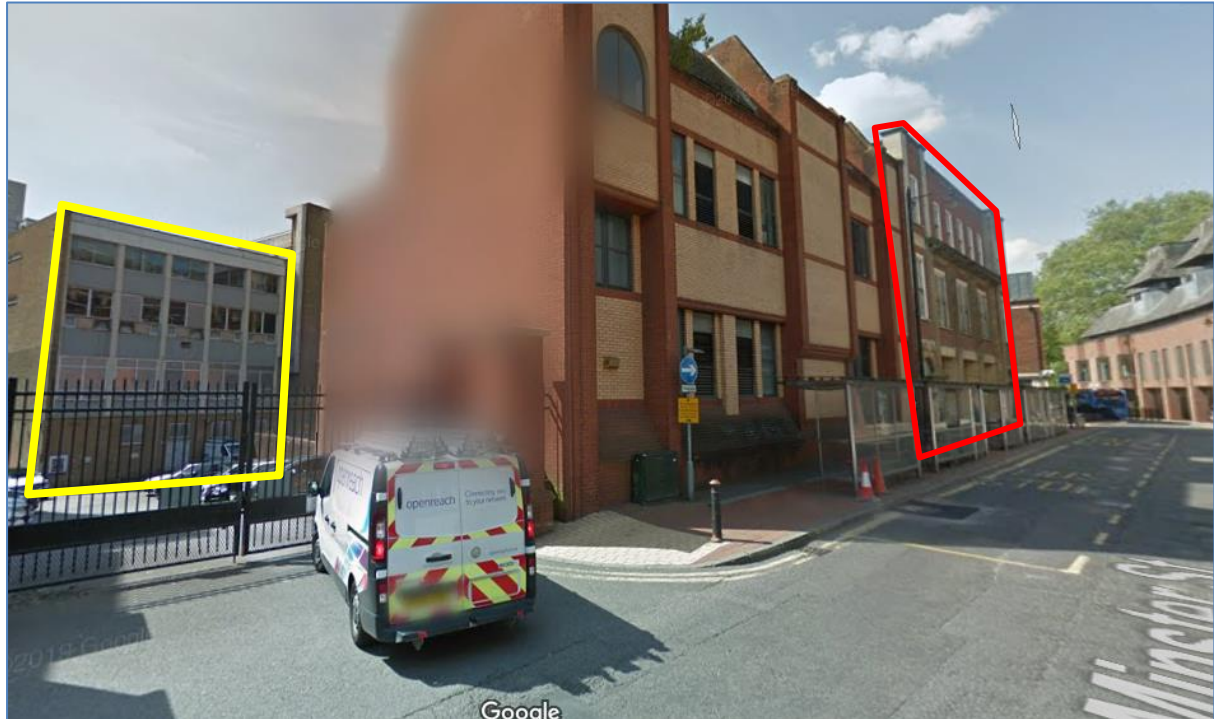


Fig 1. Southeast elevation (proposal site) of 41 Minster Street highlighted in yellow. Telephone Exchange referenced in listing 1302939 highlighted in red.

Due to the scale of the proposal, separation distance and the situation of the proposal site in relation to the Telephone Exchange, it is not considered that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance and setting of the Grade II listed building to the point of refusal. Therefore, the proposal is considered favourable against policies EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

b) Safeguarding Amenity

As no additional noise generating equipment has been specified within the plans, it is not considered that the proposal would detrimentally impact amenity to the surrounding area. The proposal site is situated in a predominantly commercial area of the town centre, with the nearest residential building being Minster Court, west of the proposal site. If an application for an additional air cooling unit is required further down the line, then it is recommended that a BS4142:2014 noise assessment be provided within the application.

Conclusion

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

201099 Recommendation

GRANT

201099 Conditions

TL1: Time Limit (Standard)

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

AP1: Approved Plans (Application 201099 only)

The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- Block Plan Layout for Reading Central Telephone Exchange - 120250-301
- Proposed Planning Layout for Reading Central TE Ground Floor - 120250-300

These plans were received on 3rd August 2020

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

M1: Materials (To Match)

The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

201099 Informatives

IF1: Positive and Proactive Working - approval

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the agreed timescale for the decision to be issued.

IF5: Terms

Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

IF6: Building Control

Your attention is drawn to the possible requirement for submission of a Building Regulations application for the proposed development. Please contact Building Control on 0118 937 2449 for advice.

IF7: Complaints about construction

Complaints are commonly received about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and smoke from bonfires

associated with the burning of waste on site. The developer is reminded that construction and demolition associated with the approved development will be subject to environmental health law.

201143 Recommendation

GRANT

201143 Conditions

LB1: Time Limit Listed Building (Works)

The works hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

LB2: Listed Building (Works Specification)

The works to the Listed Building hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans or specifications:

- Block Plan Layout for Reading Central Telephone Exchange - 120250-301
- Proposed Planning Layout for Reading Central TE Ground Floor - 120250-300
- Design & Access Statement

These plans were received on 3rd August 2020

- Heritage Statement of Significance and Impact

This document was received on 11th August 2020

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Listed Building Consent hereby approved Policy EN1 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

MLB: Listed Building Materials (To Match)

All new external and internal works and finishes, and any works of making good, shall match the existing original fabric in respect of using materials of a matching form, composition and consistency, detailed execution and finished appearance, except where indicated otherwise on the drawings hereby approved.

REASON: In order that the special architectural and historic interest of this Listed Building is safeguarded in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

201143 Informatives

IF1: Positive and Proactive Working - approval

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the agreed timescale for the decision to be issued.

IF5: Terms

Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission

Classification: OFFICIAL

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