

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Target Date: 17/06/2020

Application No: 200591/FUL

Address: 2-4 Church Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7AE

Proposal: Removal of 1no existing external ATM. Existing ATMs cut out hole to be infilled by brickwork and to match existing. Removal of 1no existing night safe. Existing night safes cut out hole to be infilled by brickwork and to match existing.

Case Officer: David Brett

Applicant: Barclays Bank Plc

Received on: 22/04/2020

Valid on: 22/04/2020

Site Description and Surrounding Area

The proposal site is a two-storey former bank situated prominently on the corner of Church Road and Bridge Street, Caversham. The exterior of the eastern part of the proposal site is in a classical style, whilst the western part of the site consists of a smaller scale 1960s extension consisting of red brickwork at ground floor level, and hanging tiles at first floor level. The surrounding area consists of a mix of retail, cafes, and restaurants. The proposal site is situated within the St. Peters Conservation Area. Although not listed, it is identified as a building of townscape merit in the Conservation Area Appraisal document for St. Peter's Conservation Area (November 2018). The area around the site is also detailed as a key characteristic of the Conservation Area:

- *The junction of Church Road and Bridge Street includes some distinguished banks and similar commercial premises. The importance of Bridge Street as the visual corridor linking the village core with the bridge outweighs the poor treatment of some of its buildings, which nevertheless have a consistent scale and style.*



1. Existing Elevations. ATM and signage to be removed (N.B. removal of signage does not require planning permission in itself) highlighted in red. Image retrieved from Google Maps on 05/06/2020, image captured in July 2019.



2. Existing Elevations. ATM and signage to be removed highlighted in red. Image retrieved from Google Maps on 05/06/2020, image captured in July 2019.

The site is also within an Air Quality Management Area and Flood Zone 2, albeit neither of these site constraints are specifically relevant in the context of these specific proposals.

Proposal

The proposal seeks the removal of one existing external ATM. Existing ATMs cut out hole to be infilled by brickwork and to match existing. Removal of 1no existing night safe. Existing night safes cut out hole to be infilled by brickwork and to match existing. Various other elements are shown to be removed, but permission is not required for these (e.g. signage - as per condition 8 of 09/00798/ADV).

Internal Consultations

Heritage Consultant - Response received on 29/04/2020

- Overall the proposals are considered to be of a relatively minor and would overall enhance the appearance of the building of townscape merit and the Conservation Area as a whole.
- There are therefore no objections subject to a condition requiring a sample of brickwork to be supplied to match the existing, surrounding brickwork.

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee - No response has been received.

External Consultees

8 Church Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7AD - No response has been received.

8a Church Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7AD - No response has been received.

20 Bridge Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8AA - No Response has been received.

Plans/Documents Considered

The agent supplied the following plans:

- Location Plan - BY105981_140
- Block Plan - BY105981_141
- Ground Floor Layout As Existing - BY105981_202
- Front Elevation As Existing - BY105981_221
- Ground Floor Layout As Proposed - BY105981_212
- Front Elevation As Proposed - BY105981_231

These plans were received on 22nd April 2020

A site notice was displayed from 19th May, expiring on 9th June - no responses have been received.

Relevant Planning History

None

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 Development Framework (LDF) 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
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
- EN15: Air Quality

St. Peters Conservation Area: Conservation Area Appraisal (November 2018)

Appraisal

The main issues considered in this proposal are as follows:

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

a) Amenity, Character and Appearance

The proposal seeks the removal of an existing ATM and night safe to Barclays Bank (given the planned closure of the bank). The hole that would be left as a result of the removal of the ATM is to be infilled with brickwork to match the existing front elevation.

The works proposed to remove the existing internal night safe are not considered to have a visual impact on the external appearance of the proposal site or the surrounding area. As such, the proposed removal of the night safe and infill brickwork is considered acceptable.

Overall, the proposals are considered small in scale and are likely to have very little visual impact to the setting of the St. Peters Conservation Area; in-fact their replacement with matching brickwork (as secured via a compliance condition - it is not considered necessary on this occasion for specific samples of this small area of brickwork to be provided/approved, predominantly as the applicant has specified on the plans it will be matching and the development is required to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans) would enhance the conservation area. The proposals are considered compliant with Reading Borough Local Plan policies EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas.

b) Security, Public Safety and Accessibility

This proposal has also been assessed against Reading Borough Local Plan policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity, which states that proposals are acceptable where they will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties with regard to:

- Privacy and overlooking
- Access to sunlight and daylight
- Harm to outlook
- Crime and safety

The proposal is not considered to detrimentally impact the amenity to the surrounding area (in-fact the removal of an ATM is likely to reduce opportunities for crime at this point) and is considered compliant with policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity of the Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019).

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.

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

Conditions

TL1

AP1: Approved Plans

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

- Location Plan - BY105981_140
- Block Plan - BY105981_141
- Ground Floor Layout As Proposed - BY105981_212
- Front Elevation As Proposed - BY105981_231

These plans were received on 22nd April 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 Policies CC7 and EN3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

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 prescribed target 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.