



Arcitek Building Design
Enterprise Way
Kings Lynn
PE30 4LJ

Giorgio Framalicco
Head of Planning, Development
& Regulatory Services

Civic Offices, Bridge Street,
Reading, RG1 2LU

☎ 0118 9373787

Our Ref: 171273

Direct: ☎ 0118 9372286

e-mail: alison.amoah@reading.gov.uk

27 September 2017

Your contact is: Ms Alison Amoah, Planning

Dear Shane,

PRE PLANNING APPLICATION ENQUIRY RESPONSE

Enquiry Reference: 171273

Address: 28 Southampton Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 2QL

Proposal: Pre-application advice for 6 x 2 bedroom flats on land adjacent to 28 Southampton Street

Without prejudice

Thank you for your enquiry.

Further to your pre-application request received on 28th July 2017 here is my advice in relation to your proposal.

The Proposal

To erect an 'l' shaped 4 storey building comprising 6x 2 bed flats, with 2no. flats split over two floors (ground and first and second and third respectively).

Information reviewed is as follows, received 28th July 2017:

- Pre-application form
- Site Layout Plans - Drawing no: 17063-01
- Floorplans and Elevations - Drawing no 17063-02

Site Description

The application site is a vacant overgrown plot with a couple of trees, comprising a large advertisement board, and appears from os plans to be the site of a former electricity substation. It is on the edge of Reading centre, adjacent to two listed buildings nos. 26 and

28 Southampton Street (northwest) and a vacant pub (Red Lion), believed to recently have been sold at auction, with an attached house, currently up for sale, to the south east. To the east is the listed St. Gile's Church and tombstones.

It is an irregular shaped plot with a total area of just over 157m². You have informed me that there is a shared access with the pub to the southern side.

Part of the site is within Flood Risk area Zone 2, it is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and is located within the area covered by the Reading Central Area Action Plan.

Relevant Planning History

None

It is worth noting that the adjacent Red Lion PH has been sold, so it would worth checking on the Reading BC website, over the next few weeks, for any applications that might have been submitted, incase there could be some synergy between the sites/ options for more comprehensive redevelopment.

Consultation Responses

Environment Agency: We operate a charging system for non-statutory work which includes providing pre-planning advice to Planning Authorities and developers. Therefore, we will not be providing bespoke comments on this consultation.

Please note that we will only comment on consultations to which we are a statutory consultee as indicated on our external consultation list.

Canal and River Trust: This application falls outside the notified area for its application scale. We are therefore returning this application to you as there is no requirement for you to consult us in our capacity as a Statutory Consultee.

Historic England: You contacted them direct and they provided the following response "As you advise that the proposals won't be attached to the Grade II Listed building we don't feel that Historic England would need to engage in any pre-application advice."

Natural Environment: Included below

Transport: Included below

Relevant Policies:

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document, (2008, altered 2015) - CS

Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)

Policy CS2 (Waste Minimisation)

Policy CS3 (Social Inclusion and Diversity)
Policy CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)
Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)
Policy CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities)
Policy CS14 (Provision of Housing)
Policy CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix)
Policy CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)
Policy CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources)
Policy CS35 (Flooding)
Policy CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology)
Policy CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)
Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009) - RCAAP
Policy RC5 (Design in the Centre)
Policy RC9 (Living in the Centre)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, altered 2015) - SDPD

Policy SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
Policy DM1 (Adaption to Climate Change)
Policy DM3 (Infrastructure)
Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)
Policy DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
Policy DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)
Policy DM18 (Tree Planting)

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)
Planning Obligations Under S106, April 2015

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle
- b) Design, Layout, Scale, Mix
- c) Residential Amenity
- d) Landscape & Ecology
- e) Transport/ Parking & Bins
- f) Environmental Matters
- g) S106 & Community Infrastructure Levy
- h) Submitting a planning application

a) Principle

The use of the site for residential is acceptable in principle, subject to meeting other policy considerations as set out below. It would provide additional housing, which would accord with Policy CS14.

b) Design, Layout, Scale, Mix

Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy and Policy RC5 of the Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) set out the requirements with regard to design of new development. Any proposal should be developed in the context of these and to the design, including heights, building lines, and plot coverage, of adjacent sites, specifically the listed buildings.

The proposed scheme is considered to be an overdevelopment of the plot. The proposed arrangement of built form up to all the boundaries of the plot and at the heights proposed is considered to create a poor relationship to the surrounding buildings.

It is recommended that a smaller footprint is used, which pulls the built form off the side boundaries and reduces the overall footprint by removing the rear 'l' shaped projection. This would assist with creating an area for amenity space and would provide some privacy distance between the rear elevation and the office building to the west. Leaving space around the building would also provide opportunities for access to cycle store/ bins.

The proposed height of four storeys is considered to be too high in the context. A taller element to reflect the pub could be appropriate combined with a stepping down in scale adjacent to the listed buildings. Similarly a building line which is staggered would enable the proposed building to better 'sit' within the existing context and reduce the overall bulk to the street, whilst providing the opportunity for landscaping/ tree planting to the front.

Although it is noted that the proposed design has sought to include some traditional elements, it is advised that a more simple design is used which reflects, for example, adjacent roofscapes, proportions of fenestration, and building materials/ finishes.

Policy RC9 also requires that residential schemes consider a mix of unit sizes, with respect to numbers of bedrooms, so consideration should be given to some larger units.

It is recommended that when developing the internal layout that reference is made to the national space standards

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard____Final_Web_version.pdf
and also ensure the appropriate stacking of rooms.

Please note that there is a local Design Review Panel, comprising local architects, landscape architects and other relevant professionals, who could review any scheme and provide independent comments. Therefore should your client wish to pursue further pre-app for an alternative option then this would be a recommended option available.

c) Residential Amenity

Policy RC9 includes the requirement to demonstrate how the issue of potential noise disturbance from neighbouring land uses and other sources, and air quality implications of residential development, have been considered and if necessary, mitigated. New residential development should not be located next to existing town centre uses where those uses would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance to the occupiers of the new scheme, unless this can be mitigated. Of course at present the pub is vacant, but consideration does need to be given to the use of that site, the future use of which at present is uncertain.

Further advice regarding noise and air quality is provided below.

standard is met. Where appropriate, the noise assessment data should also include noise events (L_AMax) and the design should aim to prevent noise levels from noise events exceeding 45dB within bedrooms at night. Design measures can reduce the need for additional noise mitigation measures.

Flood Risk:

As a 'more vulnerable' use within Zone 2 a sequential test would need to be submitted to demonstrate that there are no suitable alternative sites within a lower risk area. The EA's standing advice as attached provides some useful links as well as the Government's information - see the following link

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-the-sequential-test-for-applicants>

g) S106 & Community Infrastructure Levy

Policy RC9 requires residential developments in the centre to contribute towards affordable housing, details for which are set out in Policy DM6 of the SDPD and the Affordable Housing SPD. Policy RC9 also states that *"In the central area, an over-concentration of social renting for single persons will be avoided."* An Affordable Housing Statement would need to be submitted. If the affordable housing offer were not policy compliant then a viability assessment would need to be submitted along with the required fee for the Council to assess it (as set out in the validation checklist (link below).

In addition Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would apply at a rate of £134.59 per sqm (2017). Please refer to the CIL guide: http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/2791/Community-Infrastructure-Levy-Advice-to-Applicants/pdf/CIL_Advice_to_Applicants.pdf

These would accord with Policies CS9 and DM3.

h) Submitting a Planning Application

The Council's validation requirements are set out at the following link:
http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/2660/Validation-Checklist-2016/pdf/Validation_Checklist_Final_Dec_16.pdf Updated-Dec-

Conclusion

To conclude, the principle of residential development would be acceptable. However the proposed scheme is not considered to meet relevant policy with regard to its design, scale, layout, landscape and amenity space. A scheme on the basis of the pre-application submission would not be supported. The above provides advice as to ways in which the scheme could be amended to make it more acceptable.

This advice is given on a without-prejudice basis and in good faith and will not over-ride the formal consideration of a planning application by the Council. If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter, please contact me on the number given above.

The fee paid includes for one meeting, which would be to discuss this response and not further options, which would need to be the subject of further pre-application enquiries.

Any amenity space would need to be well screened with a suitable landscape scheme, which could also provide some privacy, especially as there is a commercial building to the rear with windows facing the site.

d) Landscape & Ecology

The proposed building is shown hard up to the pavement edge. Any proposal should consider setting the building back to enable new suitably scaled trees to be planted on the frontage. This would accord with Policy DM18: Tree Planting. Objective 2 of the Council's Tree Strategy refers to enhancing the appearance of important transport routes and corridors, of which Southampton Street is one. Objective 3 refers to the enhancement of areas lacking tree cover (the site is within an area that has been identified within the strategy as having 10% or less of tree canopy cover and as such is a priority area for tree planting).

Development should not undermine the stability of existing trees in close proximity to the site. Any formal submission should include details of the existing tree cover on site and propose mitigation as part of a landscaping plan.

e) Transport/ Parking & Bins

The application site is within walking distance of the town centre and is therefore accessible to good public transport links, town centre services and employment areas.

A car free scheme would be acceptable in this location, but it is advised that should a scheme be granted permission then a condition would be attached regarding no rights to parking permits, for surrounding streets, for future occupants.

In accordance with the Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide 0.5 cycle parking spaces per 1-2 bed flats. Cycle storage should be in the form of a lockable covered store and equipped with 'Sheffield' type stands. The location of the cycle store should be conveniently situated in relation to the building entrance(s).

The scheme would need to be provided with suitable bin storage in accordance with the Council's Waste Management Guidelines (link below)

http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/5931/Waste-management-guidelines-for-property-developers/pdf/Waste_Management_Guidelines_for_Reading_V1_2.pdf

f) Environmental Matters

Air Quality: The site lies within an AQMA and further air quality investigations/remediation measures are advised in order to satisfy the requirements of the Council's LDF Core Strategy Policy CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources).

Noise: A noise assessment should be submitted in support of applications for new residential proposed in noisy areas. The noise assessment will be assessed against the recommendations for internal noise levels within dwellings and external noise levels within gardens / balconies in accordance with BS 8233:2014 and WHO guidelines for Community Noise. The report should identify any mitigation measures that are necessary to ensure that the recommended

Yours sincerely,

A. Amoah

Alison Amoah
Principal Planner, Planning Section

