

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Target Date: 14/02/2020 (later extended to 2/3/2020 to allow for assessing and agreeing appropriate noise mitigation measures)
Application No: 191597/FUL
Address: 6 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2BH
Ward: Abbey
Case Officer: James Schofield
Proposal: Change of use from A1 to A2, changes to ventilation system, repairs to first floor windows and replacement shopfront including doors, windows and ATM installation.

1. SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

The development site relates to a high-street shop (use class A1) most recently in use as a shoe shop. The shop has large glass shopfront windows, fascia boards and an illuminated projecting sign. The area is best characterised as a busy commercial pedestrianised street opposite a well-used entryway to the Oracle Shopping Centre; being the closest for foot traffic inbound from the train station to the north. The site is within the Market Place/London Street Conservation area and one door down from 2, 3 and 3A Broad Street which is a Grade II Listed 18th century building at the corner of Butter Market and Broad Street (Listing NGR: SU7164473433). The building under consideration in the application appears to be a relatively unremarkable mid-twentieth century four-storey building. The rear of the site backs on to a small utilitarian courtyard shared by the businesses, offices and numerous residential flats between 4-8 Broad Street and 37-42 Market Place.

2. PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for works associated to a new Royal Bank of Scotland branch occupying the site including the change of use class from A1 (shops/retail/etc) to A2 (financial/professional services), changes to the ventilation system with condenser units in the rear courtyard, repairs to first-floor front elevation windows and replacement of the shopfront windows including the installation of an ATM with associated fascia boards for various advertisements (related advertisement application ref: 191598).

3. CONSULTATION

a) Neighbours

A site notice was displayed from the 7th of November 2019 and the following addresses were consulted by letter:

4-5 Broad Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 2BH
7-8 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2BH
Flat 7, 37 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DE
Flat 12, 37 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DE
Flat 5, 37 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DE
Flat 8, 37 Market Place, Reading, Berks, RG1 2DE
38 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DE
39 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DE
41 Market Place, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 2DE
Flats 1-20, 42 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DE

No responses were received.

b) Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Officer raised objections on the basis of noise arising from the development in their initial comments on the 11th of November 2019. Concerns specifically related to the levels of noise generated by the proposed new plant in the rear courtyard and the capacity for it to result in a detrimental effect on the amenity of the numerous flats around it. As such, a noise impact assessment was requested and provided by the agent on the 19th of December 2019. A need to seek clarity as to which unit was being proposed by the applicant resulted in modest delays as did the Christmas closure. Discussions between the Environmental Health Officer and the Planning Officer took place between the 13th and 27th of January 2020 concluding that the proposed plant [Daikin REYQ10U] remained too loud at 10 dBA louder than the existing surrounding environment, but that a noise mitigation enclosure and a condition limiting time of operation could sufficiently safeguard residential amenity. As such, plans for a noise enclosure were sought and provided by the agent on the 13th of February 2020.

c) Transport

No objections.

d) Thames Valley Police Service

Officers sought further information about the security details of the proposed ATM on the 5th of November 2019, this was supplied on the 14th of November; no further comment was received from TVPS prior to determination.

4. PLANS/DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED

The agent supplied the following:

Drawing No: E6617-SK-E1 Front Elevation Existing with Demolitions
Drawing No: E6617-GA-E1 Front Elevation Proposed
Drawing No: E6617-SK-E2 Rear Elevation Proposed (**superseded on 14 October 2019**)
Drawing No: E6617-EX-GA Ground Floor Existing with Demolitions
Drawing No: E6617-GA-GA Ground Floor General Arrangement E&W T1
Drawing No: E6617-E1-DT Signage Detailing Proposed
Drawing No: E6617-EX-LP Location Plan (**superseded on 14 October 2019**)
As received 2 October 2019

Drawing No: E6617-EX-LP Location Plan
Drawing No: E6617-E1-DT Signage Detailing Proposed
Drawing No: E6617-SK-E2 Rear Elevation Proposed (**superseded on 13 February 2020**)
As received 14 October 2019

Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Report
As received 19 December 2019

Drawing No: E6617-GA-E2 Rear Elevation Proposed
Drawing No: G20817-01 Proposed Condenser Discharge Silencer Model: C100-1-Spec
Daikin Air Conditioning Technical Data REMQ-U, REYQ-U
Outdoor Unit REMQ-U, REYQ-U Sound Data
As received 13 February 2020

5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

LPA ref: 150199

Description: Change of use of first floor to a dental practice.

Decision: Permitted 1/4/2015

LPA ref: 161787

Description: 1 no. internally illuminated fascia and 1 no. internally illuminated projecting sign.

Decision: Permitted 1/12/2016

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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.

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'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019):

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

CR2: Design in Central Reading

CR7: Primary Frontages in Central Reading

CR15: The Reading Abbey Quarter

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines

EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

8. APPRAISAL

8.1 Principle of development

The application seeks alterations to the front and rear elevations at ground and first floor levels in order to accommodate the change of use of the site from A1 (shoe shop) to A2 (bank). Such works are supported in principle by the policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) subject to a number of criteria ensuring the effects of the development are not harmful. This will be considered in more detail in the following sections.

8.2 Character

Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) requires development to be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in Reading in which it is located. Policy OU5 provides further clarity as to what high design quality is for shopfronts, indicating that;

- fascia boards should be lower than first floor windows,
- avoid visually combining multiple units,
- present an active frontage to the street at all times, and that
- canopies and blinds should be for shading purposes and retractable.

The character of the proposed changes to the shopfront, fascia and first floor windows are considered to be broadly like-for-like, and best described as a modest update in line with what would be expected for a change of use from a shoe shop to a bank. Fascia boards are lower than first floor windows, the proposal avoids visually combining multiple units, presents an active frontage to the street, and offers no canopies. Overall, the proposed works offer an appearance which would be modern and to a high design standard; as one would expect from high street bank in a busy town centre location. The appearance of the ATM is largely a product of its intended function. Its design is not considered to result in any material harm to the immediate character or appearance of the shop for which it is part, the wider building in which it is located. While the design of the other proposed works are modern, these changes are not considered to result in any material harm to the immediate character or appearance of the Conservation Area, nearby Listed Building, the building itself or the wider street-scene.

The proposed site is within the Market Place/London Street Conservation area, near a Grade II Listed Building and located within the Reading Abbey Quarter. As such, it is necessary for the proposal to demonstrate it would protect and enhance the historic, educational, open space and economic opportunities of this part of Reading. Both the Oracle Shopping Centre entryway opposite to the proposed site and the building to which the proposed site is constituent, are modern additions to the context of this part of Broad Street. And the proposed works are considered to be appropriate within this context and no more modern or harmful to either the Conservation Area or the Listed Building than these elements already in place.

Additionally, the proposed development and change of use is considered likely to provide decent employment opportunities and a supportive role to other economic functions such as retail and leisure within the town centre.

As discussed in the preceding analysis, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies CC7, CR2, CR7, CR15, EN1, EN3 and OU5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

8.2 Amenity

Policy CC8 requires development to refrain from causing a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or creating unacceptable living conditions for residents. Policy CR2 requires development within the Reading Central Area to preclude further development or cause an unreasonable burden on the potential for future development of adjacent sites.

No changes to the front or rear are considered likely to affect the amenity or viability of adjacent sites except for the issue of novel noise pollution arising from the proposed plant in the rear courtyard. Due consideration by the Environmental Health and Planning Officers determined the proposed plant would avoid causing unacceptable living conditions for existing nearby residents and is not likely to cause an unreasonable burden for future development of adjacent sites, and as such, the proposal would accord with Policies CC8 and CR2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). This assessment has been conducted on the basis of:

- the proposal employing the condenser (DAIKIN REYQ10U) and discharge silencer units (C100-1-SPEC) as shown on *Drawing* No: E6617-GA-E2 and *Drawing* No: G20817-01 as received on the 13th of February 2020, and
- a condition is included with any decision to grant planning permission which limits the time of operation of the condenser unit to between 0700 hrs and 2300 hrs.

Any deviation from this basis would require a reassessment of noise pollution in relation to the proposed development and Policies CC8 and CR2.

At times the timing of construction works can lead a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties; as such a condition limiting construction works to ordinary working hours is considered prudent in order to safeguard the amenity of those living in nearby flats.

8.3 Transport

No works considered by this application could cause a physical obstruction to members of the public using the highway. Light pollution is considered a possible danger to the safe operation of the transport network. The Professional Lighting Guide indicates that signs in urban areas up to 10 m² should have a maximum permitted recommended luminance of 600 cd/m². In line with this, Transport Officers recommended a condition to control advert luminance. The signage proposed includes two static internally illuminated fascia signs up to 600 cd/m² and a projecting static internally illuminated sign at 600 cd/m². However, it is considered that the proposal is in line with recommended upper limits to illumination and that any condition limiting this is done best through the related advertisement consent application (ref: 191598). As such the proposal under consideration by this application is acceptable in terms of Policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

9. CONCLUSION

In light of the above assessment the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of the development plan and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

10. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

11. CONDITIONS

1. TL1 Standard Time Limit
2. AP1 Approved Plans
3. M3 Materials as Specified
4. N12 Ventilation & Extraction (as specified)
5. N3 Machinery (hours permitted)
6. N8 Noise Levels of Plant/Equipment Restricted

APPENDIX

Site visit photos taken as on the 7th of November 2019.



Classification: OFFICIAL



Classification: OFFICIAL

Classification: OFFICIAL



Classification: OFFICIAL