

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: Harris Arcade, 15 Friar Street, Reading

Application No: 191611/LBC

Proposal: Various external alterations associated with repair works to Harris Arcade, including to parapets, external render, chimneys, walls, columns, cornices and roof level works.

Applicant: BAE System Pension Fund Trustees Ltd

Date received (valid from): 04/10/19

Target Decision date: 29/11/19

Case officer: Jonathan Markwell

1. Site Description and Surrounding Area

The application site is the Harris Arcade, which runs in a L shape with frontages on Station Road and Friar Street. As per the Historic Buildings Consultant's comments in section 4 below Harris Arcade, No 15 Friar Street, is Grade II Listed. The site is also within a specifically designated 'areas to the north of Friar Street and east of Station Road' location, as per Policy CR16. The site is also within the primary shopping area, central core, office core, active frontages, air quality management area, archaeological priority area, adjacent to a cycle route, but outside of the major opportunities area or tall buildings cluster.

2. The Proposal

- i. Listed building consent for various external alterations associated with repair works to Harris Arcade, including to parapets, external render, chimneys, walls, columns, cornices and roof level works. These are described in more detail in the Historic Buildings Consultant's comments in section 4 below.

3. Public Consultation

- i. Neighbour Consultation
A site notice was erected on 16/10/19, expiring on 06/11/19. A press notice was published on 24/10/19, expiring on 14/11/19. No responses have been received.

4. Consultations

i. RBC Historic Buildings Consultant:

Legislative and Planning Policy Framework

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Recent legal cases relating to issues of the setting of listed buildings have established that under section 70(3) the general power to grant planning permission under section 70(1) is expressly subject to sections 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 66(1), in the determination of applications affecting the setting of a Listed Building, states that:

‘in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.’

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

In March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaced the National Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). The NPPF was subsequently updated in 2018. The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and a key dimension of ‘sustainability’ is defined as ‘...protecting and enhancing our...historic environment’ (DCLG et al, 2018).

The NPPF recognises the historic environment as comprising all aspects of the environment which have resulted from the interaction between people and places through time (DCLG et al, 2018, Annex 2: Glossary). The elements of the historic environment that are considered to hold significance are called heritage assets (DCLG et al, 2018, Annex 2: Glossary).

The NPPF identifies heritage assets as:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

The glossary annexed to the NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

The NPPF (paragraph 189) requires that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Planning Practice Guide (PPG)

The Planning Practice Guide (PPG) (2014) clarifies this additional requirement under 'What is the main legislative framework for planning and the historic environment?' where it states that: In addition to the normal planning framework set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990....the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.

Any decisions relating to listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16, 66 and 72) as well as satisfying the relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan.
(See ID 18a-002-20140306).

Reading Borough Council Planning Policy

Within paragraph 4.2.12 of the Local Plan it also specifies that:

Planning is an important instrument for maintaining and enhancing the environment, and preserving built and natural heritage. Planning policy must therefore reconcile the need for development with the need to protect the natural and historic environment. Planning policy should also seek opportunities for development to secure the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, to better reveal its significance and to increase access to and enjoyment of that environment.

Listed Building Description

First Listed in 1957.

Harris Arcade, No 15 Friar Street, Grade II Listed. Late C18, 3½ storeys. A tall red brick front with simple bracketed stone cornice and parapet, 1920s stone shopfronts with central entrance to Harris's arcade; shop fronts have-mutule cornice, panelled fascia and side pilasters. 4 ranges of glazing bar sash windows. Tiled roof and 2 dormers. Professor Goldwin Smith (of local notoriety) born in this house.

Additional

The Harris Shopping Arcade was built around 1930 and consists of an L Shaped corridor with shops on either side. Access to the arcade is from Friar Street as well as Station Road. There have been more recent modifications, one of which is the construction of the office block at the corner of Friar Street and Station Road in the 1950s, although in-keeping with the historic character of the area.

A shopping arcade was built through the ground-floor reception rooms into the back garden in 1929, named after owner, Mr John Harris, owner of Great Western Motor Company. Later extended in 1930s to Station Road.

In 1823 Goldwin Smith was born in the house; after his death in 1909 a plaque erected outside birthplace and still exists.

Sally's Cafe was located at the entrance in 1950s and 60s, and manager was a Mrs St Nicholas, real name Eva von Sacher-Masoch, Baroness Erisso.

Harris Arcade received a makeover in 2007; frontage repainted, art-deco style lighting installed, new signage and shutters and the Friar Street frontage restored.

Proposals

The main proposals include repairs works, investigative works, health and safety improvements and a general maintenance to the Harris Arcade. The main works proposed are:

General works:

- Overhaul main roof to County House (set aside paving slabs, remove vegetation, patch repairs to waterproofing course, tidying up loose insulation over the redundant ducting)
- Removal of redundant ducting
- Patch repairs to flat roof surfaces along all flat roofs to the rear of Harris Arcade and County House
- Cleaning and patch repairs to the pitched slate roof to the rear of Q club elevation
- Cleaning of all gutters and downpipes to the areas of work, undertake CCTV survey to establish condition and allowance for repairs where required
- Introducing a divider on the fire escape route internally to County House to prevent the pub guests going upstairs

Repairs

- Structural repairs to the spalling brickwork (Q club) front elevation
- Structural repairs to the stone panelling Pitcher and Piano
- Structural repairs to the concrete spalling lintels (rear elevation)
- Overhaul to the lift enclosure and the other enclosure on the County House roof (spalling lintels, repointing, splice repairs to doors and redecoration)
- Cracking to render to high level Harris Arcade (localise repair needed) - Station Road
- Spalling to concrete and corroding rebar repair - flat roof
- Displaced brickwork repair to low level rear elevation small flat roof to County House

Health and safety requirements:

- Handrail to the main County House roof rear elevation (compatible with abseil system)
- Handrail to the flat rear extension roof loading bay door
- Handrail to the rear small roof off the rear of the offices Station Road (where netting currently present)
- Overhauling the emergency lighting along the fire escape route to the rear flat roofs
- Provide steps over parapet walls to the rear flat roofs where currently missing
- Overhaul the fire escape staircases to the fire escape routes to the rear
- Environmental clean of all flat roof surfaces

Investigative works:

- Investigation of the cracks along the portal entrance to Harris Arcade on Station Road
- Investigation of the cause of bulging walls and possible rot to timber joists to the offices above Friar Street Harris Arcade entrance

The Proposed works to the building will involve the following investigation and repairs to the roof and external elements of the building's parapets, external render, Chimney's, bowing walls, columns, cornices, gutters and general roof repairs.

Urgent investigation is required on dangerous leaning chimney stack and Bulging wall to offices above Friar Street which may require taking down and rebuilding like for like, along with making safe/ repairing the live deboned render which is a hazard to the public.

However, given that these shopfronts continue throughout the length of the Harris Arcade it is considered prudent to seek an update to the relevant the List description and re-visit the site for a better understanding of its special interest.

Conclusions

The main works represent largely maintenance and repairs together with health and safety requirements, such as the proposals for the new, metal fire escape and new roof railings for a

safety lanyard attachments. The majority of the proposals affect features which are not of special interest located on the modern roofs which are not of special interest.

There are limited investigative works proposed to provide areas of opening-up, in order to determine what further repair works may be required. These are covered under Historic England's guidance as not requiring Listed Building consent.

The main works which would potentially affect the special interest of the Listed Building are considered to be the potential taking-down of the chimney (in order to re-build it), which does require LBC. Based on the structural assessments and their appearance the chimney and parapet wall do require substantial repairs. The proposals for the repair of the chimney only require taking-down in the worst case scenario whereas other options including re-pointing will be considered initially. Should taking-down of the chimney and other areas of wall be necessary for health and safety reasons, then re-building them in a matching brick, in a matching brick bond to the same design as the existing structure will be paramount.

In view of the nature of the works, as repairs and structural investigations together with health and safety requirements for safe access to the roofs, there are no objection in principles to the proposals as detailed, subject to the following conditions:

- Making good: works to match existing
- Material details: bricks re-used / matching bricks
- Details of Brick samples / description of joints, mortar mix & finish
- Details of pointing works

RBC Transport Development Control

Original comments:

There are no transport objections to this application. However, the proposed works include some structural repairs to the outside of the building. Given that Harris Arcade is located within a busy pedestrian and public transport area, any works must comply with the Council's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway which is available to view on line. It is therefore recommended that a Construction Method Statement is submitted before any works commence.

Construction Method Statement

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the local planning authority to provide for: (delete where inappropriate)

- space on site where vehicles of site operatives and visitors can be parked with details of how site operatives and visitors will be required to make use of the parking area provided
- location on site for storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- the erection and maintenance (including removal of any graffiti or fly posters) of security hoarding around the site
- any footpath closures or road closures needed during construction
- wheel washing facilities on site
- a scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction works

The measures within the approved Construction Method Statement shall be maintained and adhered to throughout the course of the development unless changes are agreed in advance and in writing by the local planning authority.

Revised comments following the submission of further information on 15/11/19:

It is noted that the applicant has indicated that the level of work should not have a wider impact on Station Road and that works area applies to the Harris Arcade entrance (other areas are not in the public domain).

It is agreed to remove the originally requested condition for a CMS to be submitted. However, the applicant should be advised that any works affecting the highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should be made aware that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the highway/footway closures should be requested in advance of any works. This should be included as an informative on any decision.

5. Plans / documents Considered

- i. The Council, in reaching its recommendation, has taken into consideration the following documents:

LOC-01 Location Plan

LOC-02 Block Plan

EX-02 Existing ground floor plan to Harris Arcade and County House

EX-03 Existing roof plan to Harris Arcade and County House

P-01 Proposed elevations to Harris Arcade and County House Areas of repair work required

P-02 Proposed ground floor plan to Harris Arcade and County House

P-03 Proposed roof plan to Harris Arcade and County House

Design Access and Heritage Statement Rev V1 by JLL dated 03/10/19

County House and Harris Arcade, Reading - Phase 1 - Roof, urgent structural and H&S works by JLL

Structural Engineers brief comments on Harris Arcade by HPM pages 135-140.

Email from Hurst Peirce + Malcolm LLP '[EXTERNAL] 23316 Harris Arcade - 15 Friar Street' dated 29/08/19

All received 04/10/19

EX-01 Rev A Existing elevations to Harris Arcade and County House

Email from Reading Borough Council Building Control '[EXTERNAL] RE: 23316 Harris Arcade - 15 Friar Street' dated 11/09/19

Received 17/10/19

Minor Opening up Works Method Statement by GLJ Contracts Ref CLW 5132 dated November 2019

Email from GLJ Contracts '[EXTERNAL] RE: Harris Arcade, Reading (191611)' dated 15/11/19

Received 15/11/19

6. Relevant Planning History

- i. There have been various applications at the Harris Arcade over the years, although none within the past two decades are specifically relevant to these proposals.

7. 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.

8. Relevant Planning Guidance

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.

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'.

9. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National
National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Policy Guidance

Reading Local Plan (November 2019)
EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
CR16 Area to the North of Friar Street and East of Station Road
TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-related matters

10. Appraisal

- i. As per the comments received during the application from the RBC Historic Buildings consultant (see section 4 above), the proposed works are considered appropriate subject to conditions. Furthermore, although this is solely a listed building consent application, the construction phase has been shown to sufficiently protect nearby amenity / highways (secured via condition) and the proposals would comply with the wider site allocation which seeks to maintain and, where possible, enhance the character of the retail units in the Harris Arcade.
- ii. Standard conditions relating to timeframes and the approved plans are also suggested, alongside standard informatives for a listed building consent.

11. Conclusion

- i. The local planning authority considers that the proposal is appropriate for the reasons set out in this report.

Recommendation

Grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions

Conditions:

1. 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.

2. The works to the Listed Building hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

P-01 Proposed elevations to Harris Arcade and County House Areas of repair work required

P-02 Proposed ground floor plan to Harris Arcade and County House

P-03 Proposed roof plan to Harris Arcade and County House

All received 04/10/19

Minor Opening up Works Method Statement by GLJ Contracts Ref CLW 5132 dated November 2019

Email from GLJ Contracts '[EXTERNAL] RE: Harris Arcade, Reading (191611)' dated 15/11/19

Received 15/11/19

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

3. Before the relevant work begins, details of the following shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a) a sample of the type of brick
 - b) a description of the joints, mortar mix and finish.

The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved details.

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.

4. Before the relevant work begins, proposals for the method and extent of repointing shall be submitted to and approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved details. No other repointing of brickwork is authorised by this consent without prior approval of the details. The use of cement-based mortar is not permitted. Any raking out of mortar is to be undertaken by hand: the use of power tools is not permitted.

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.

5. All new works, and works of making good to the retained fabric, whether internal or external, unless approved otherwise in writing by the local planning authority, shall be finished to match existing, original or adjacent work (as deemed appropriate by the local planning authority) with regard to the methods used and to materials, colours, textures, bonds and profiles.

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.

6. All areas of brickwork approved for dismantling as part of the works shall be carefully dismantled and the bricks retrieved and stored on site prior to their re-use in re-building.

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.

Informatives:

1. Approved works may require separate approval under the Building Regulations. Please contact the Council's Building Control service for further advice on (0118) 937 2449.
2. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this consent. Any development which is carried out but differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any conditions attached to the consent may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of listed building control. If you are in any doubt please contact the council.
3. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow consent to be granted within the prescribed target for the decision to be issued.
4. For the avoidance of doubt, no other works are approved except those as authorised by this Consent. Any other works required to the Listed Building may require a separate

application for Listed Building Consent and/or an application for Permitted Works to a Listed Building.

5. i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.

ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.